

THE THEORY OF ORATURE  
AND ITS APPLICATION TO  
CARLETON'S AND PACÉRÉ'S  
WRITINGS

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## NUI MAYNOOTH

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English Department  
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# THE THEORY OF ORATURE AND ITS APPLICATION TO CARLETON'S AND PACÉRÉ'S WRITINGS

# Thesis for the degree of Ph.D. in English Literature

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Storytelling will never end, for there will always be someone to say ‘Tell me a story’, and somebody else who will respond ‘Once upon a time...’ To be sure, the old stories are giving way to new ones, more multi-plotted, multi-vocal and multi-media.

R. Kearney, *On Stories* (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 126.

A language is for thinking in (...). The original images are sometimes in Irish, he said, and the English occurs only by way of explanation. Sometimes, with concepts, the opposite is true. The new language is merely the learning of an old and well-tried discipline, he said, for which our senses—tired of the language we usually express ourselves in—cry out. A language will return to its source, even in a stranger’s head. The great joy is selecting from various languages what best expresses the content of the mind.

D. Healy, *A Goat’s Song* (London: Flamingo, 1994), p. 178.

Pag yûu noabga, a sén toolê, baad sigri

La femme a bu du prunier sauvage, là où elle se dirige est une saison pluvieuse.

(A woman has drunk a drink made of a wild plum tree; anywhere she goes will be a rainy season.)

*Zabyuure* of Frédéric Titinga Pacéré

F. T. Pacéré, *Pensées africaines* (Paris : L’Harmattan, 2004), p. 9.

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## Summary

### *The Theory of Orature and its Application to the Writings of W. Carleton and F. T. Pacéré*

Orature designates both an interdisciplinary aesthetic form that weaves together many genres and a theoretical method of assessing literary works as potentially hybrid and performative. Using ‘spoken literature’ as an inclusive term for all literatures that are expressed vocally or through sign and drummed languages, orature shows that an interdependent relationship exists between this and ‘written literature’. Before systems of writing were introduced, literature existed in an unwritten form, preserved through the use of meter, rhyme and *zabyuya* or mottos, transmitted through human voice, gestures and instruments (e.g. *bendre* in Burkina Faso). Early ‘written literature’ absorbed elements of ‘spoken literature’ and was orally appropriated through reading (aloud). The concept and practice of orature reduce the often held opposition of ‘spoken’ and ‘written’ literatures as transcendent categories by acknowledging the cyclical and complex interaction of these modes of literature over time. Today, the invention of new media to convey literature extends and reinforces this relationship by showing that literature is not dying but instead circulates from one medium (e.g. ‘spoken’, print) to another (e.g. digital). Pacéré and Carleton lived in cultures in which ‘spoken literature’ was listened to in a communal setting, and they sought to transcribe this literature for future performances by using abbreviations, page layout and many other typographical techniques to transcribe wordpower and aurality. Our approach to Carleton’s *Traits and Stories* and Pacéré’s poetry from the perspective of orature shows these works to be a mixture of performance genres such as stories, drawings, plays, music and song, and highlights the devices each writer used as incentives to the performativity of his printed texts. The sophistication of these literary forms can only be fully comprehended with the benefit of an understanding of the conventions of orature.

## Abbreviations and Remarks

*Ainsi:* F.T. Pacéré, *Ainsi on a assassiné tous les Mossé* (Québec : Editions Naaman, 1981)

*Angola:* F.T. Pacéré, *Poèmes pour l'Angola* (Paris : Editions Silex, 1982)

*Ça tire:* F.T. Pacéré *Ça tire sous le Sahel*, (Paris : P. J. Oswald, 1976)

*Du Lait:* F.T. Pacéré, *Du lait pour une tombe* (Paris : Editions Silex, 1984)

*Entrailles:* F.T. Pacéré, *Des entrailles de la terre* (Ouagadougou : Maison Pousga, 1990)

*Hayley, Carleton's Traits and Stories:* B. Hayley, *Carleton's Traits and Stories and the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Anglo-Irish Tradition* (Gerrards Cross: Colin Smyth, 1983).

*Koryo:* F.T. Pacéré, *Poème pour Koryo* (Ouagadougou : Maison Pousga 1987)

*Le langage:* F.T. Pacéré, *Le langage des tam-tams et des masques en Afrique* (Paris : L'Harmattan, 1991)

*Life, vol. 1:* D. J. O'Donoghue, *The Life of William Carleton: Being His Autobiography and Letters; and an Account of His Life and Writings, from the Point the Autobiography Breaks Off*, 2 vols., vol. 1 (London: Downey and Co., 1896)

*Life, vol. 2:* D. J. O'Donoghue, *The Life of William Carleton: Being His Autobiography and Letters; and an Account of His Life and Writings, from the Point the Autobiography Breaks Off*, 2 vols., vol. 2 (London: Downey and Co., 1896)

*Mélanges offerts:* Université de Ouagadougou, *Mélanges offerts à Maître Titenga Frédéric Pacéré* (Paris : L'Harmattan, 1996)

*Poésie:* F.T. Pacéré, *La poésie des griots* (Paris : Editions Silex 1982)

*Quand:* F.T. Pacéré, *Quand s'envolent les grues couronnées*, (Paris : P. J. Oswald, 1976)

*Refrains:* F.T. Pacéré, *Refrains sous le Sahel*, (Paris : P. J. Oswald, 1976)

*Saglego:* F.T. Pacéré, *Saglego ou le poème du tam-tam pour le Sahel* (Ouagadougou : Fondation Pacéré, 1994)

*T.&S. 1:* W. Carleton, *Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry*, New edition, 2 vols., vol. 1 (Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe Ltd, 1990, reprinted in 2002), facsimile of 'new edition', 2 vols., vol. 1 (Dublin and London: William Curry and William S. Orr and Co., 1843)

*T.&S. 2:* W. Carleton, *Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry*, New edition, 2 vols., vol. 2 (Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe Ltd, 1990, reprinted in 2002), facsimile of 'new edition', 2 vols., vol. 2 (Dublin and London: William Curry and William S. Orr and Co., 1844)

N.B. 1. All translations and illustrations are mine unless the name of the translator or illustrator is stated. The French system of punctuation and referencing for quotations in French is followed.

N.B. 2. Each title of Carleton's stories at first mention will be followed by two dates: the first date of its publication in either periodical or book edition and the date of the edition from which the quotation is taken.

## General Introduction

Writing is usually considered as the materialisation of the spoken word. However, it is a partial representation that far from covers all the nuances of the spoken word such as male or female voice, adult or young voice, speed and pitch level, angry or calm voice, dialectal accents, etc. Writing cannot replace the spoken word in all its richness and complexities. To make amends for these deficiencies inherent in writing, some writers, William Carleton (1794-1869) and Frédéric Titinga Pacéré (1943-) for instance, used typographic devices, namely, dashes, lay-out on page, italicisation and capitalisation, to represent some of the nuances of speech. William Carleton also resorted to phonetic transcriptions in a bid to represent English as it was spoken by the Irish. Nonetheless, even with these typographic procedures, writing is still far from being able to express all the fluctuations of the uttered word. The undeniable fact remains that writing impoverishes the spoken word in attempting to set it down. The spoken word is, as Makhily Gassama puts it in his study on African literature, ‘a travelling pigeon refractive to domestication’ or appropriation.<sup>1</sup> All these arguments point to the fact that what is written should rather be considered as an aid to performance than as a fossilisation of the spoken word. The consideration of writing in this perspective, as support to performance, shows that performance reconverts the ‘dead’ ‘written literature’ into the oral or spoken world, thus establishing a complementarity between what is written and what is spoken. The literary works of Carleton and Pacéré are examples of such writings, as they emerged from and were meant for use in oral-print cultures.

The dissociation of writing from performance partly explains the flourishing of new audio-visual technologies in order to palliate the deficiencies of writing in the memorisation of the spoken word. Already in 1960, Moreau, in his book on literary criticism, was pointing out the progressive substitution of the letter by the image, showing how film criticism was becoming an annex to literary analysis.<sup>2</sup> It is now an integral part of literary criticism. In this day and age, technical transformations are bringing about changes in the world of literature, eclipsing the print medium which used to be the only material way to preserve literature. The print medium is no longer the only access to

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<sup>1</sup> M. Gassama, *Kuma : interrogation sur la littérature nègre de langue française* (Dakar-Abidjan : Les Nouvelles Editions Africaines, 1978), p. 22.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. P. Moreau, *La critique littéraire en France*, 3<sup>ème</sup> ed. (Paris : Armand Colin, 1960), p. 181.

literature. The works of James Joyce, for example, are now available in audiotapes and compact discs.<sup>3</sup> More people have arguably seen the film adaptation of novels by Austen, Dickens, Trollope and others than have actually read the novels themselves in modern times. The reign of printed literature is in decline. Irish critic Angela Bourke observes how our thought processes which have been formed by our familiarity with handwritten and printed text are at present being reshaped by electronic media.<sup>4</sup> Radio, cassettes and compact disks, computer, cinema, television, video, the internet and the camcorder are superseding the print form of literature. Many well known and influential Chinese writers today, observes Miller in his recent book on literature, are writers whose works are turned into television series. He also links the decline of the major monthly journal printing poetry in the People's Republic of China, from 700,000 to a 'mere' 30,000, to the development of these new recording technologies. From these examples, Miller makes the following comment about the end of the print age:

Printed literature used to be a primary way in which citizens of a given nation [or] state were inculcated with the ideals, ideologies, ways of behaviour and judgement that made them good citizens. Now that role is being increasingly played, all over the world, for better or for worse, by radio, cinema, television, VCRs, DVDs, and the Internet.<sup>5</sup>

Two main factors account for the thriving of these new media: firstly, the dissociation of performance from print literature, which results in the turning of printed material into a dead material; secondly, the re-emergence in the reading public of the medieval liking for listening rather than for silent reading. In the Middle Ages, the accepted way to read was to read aloud; silent reading was considered a sin, Professor William Harris explains.<sup>6</sup> A monk read to his community members at meals and family readings were a common entertainment.<sup>7</sup> Today, more and more people are developing a penchant for hearing rather than for reading silently. An ever increasing number of professions (politicians, pop stars, poets and journalists, etc.), observes the linguist Claude Hagège, when they come to give

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<sup>3</sup> Cf. <[http://www.themodernword.com/joyce/audio\\_1.html](http://www.themodernword.com/joyce/audio_1.html)> (Accessed on 8 March 2006).

<sup>4</sup> Cf. A. Bourke, ed., 'Oral Traditions', in *The Field Day Anthology of Irish Writing*, vol. iv: *Irish Women's Writing and Traditions* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2002), p. 1195.

<sup>5</sup> J. Hillis Miller, *On Literature* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), p. 9.

<sup>6</sup> <[www.middlebury.edu/~harris/latinBackground/silentReading.html](http://www.middlebury.edu/~harris/latinBackground/silentReading.html)> (Accessed on 20 March 2004).

<sup>7</sup> Cf. 'Review by Bob Williams', in <[http://www.themodernword.com/joyce/audio\\_1.html](http://www.themodernword.com/joyce/audio_1.html)> (Accessed on 8 March 2006).

information or to entertain, read out what they have written.<sup>8</sup> The new audio and video technologies thrive as they meet these needs for hearing and seeing.

The importance and merits of these new technologies cannot be denied. However, these new findings are not without some problems, as some of them bring with them a new language. Signs or symbols previously used in writing are being replaced by other symbols. For example: @ is used for 'at', 1 for one, 2 for two, to, too, 4 for 'four' and 'for', 'r' for 'are', 'b' for 'be' and 'bee', 'c' for 'see', 'q' for 'queue', 'u' for 'you', 'y' for 'why', '♥' for 'love', L8R for 'later', 'KIT' for 'Keep in touch'. A sentence can be like this: ? r u, I ♥ u, c u @ 4. (Where are you? I love you, see you at four), or 'Dnt B L8' for 'Don't be late', 'wan 2 C a moV' for 'I want to see a movie'.<sup>9</sup>

Interestingly, this new written linguistic code derives its fullest meaning from performance or reading aloud, especially when one encounters it for the first time. This type of language suits people's preference for hearing rather than for silent reading. Notwithstanding the performative aspect of this language, this insurgence of new symbols signals a retrogradation, rather than a progression in our language system. Rousseau classifies writing into three categories: the first form of writing is painting objects, the second is painting sounds or representing words and phrases by conventional letters, and the third form is making symbols correspond to syllables.<sup>10</sup> From the point of view of this classification of forms of writing, the new linguistic written code is a retrogradation from the third form of representation of the voice syllabically, to the second form of representation of words by conventional characters such as those referred to above, which are similar in some ways to Chinese writing.

Other new electronic devices, in their quality as voice recorders in lieu and place of writing, create additional problems in the long run. Whereas writing helps many people speaking variants of the same language to understand one another through using the same symbols to represent different sounds, the new recording machines do not have this faculty and so serve to distance variants of the same language from each other. In the long run, dialects may well become languages of their own.

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<sup>8</sup> Cf. *L'Homme de paroles : contribution linguistique aux sciences humaines* (Paris : Fayard, 1985), p. 94.

<sup>9</sup> For more examples, See

<[http://www.sasktelmobility.com/productsservices/digitalpcs/html/text\\_messaging\\_language.html](http://www.sasktelmobility.com/productsservices/digitalpcs/html/text_messaging_language.html)> (Accessed on 20 March 2004).

<sup>10</sup> Cf. J.-J. Rousseau, *Essai sur l'origine des langues* (Paris : Hatier, 1983).

The consequences of these evolutions for literature are manifold. Should one expect the advent of novels, short stories, poems and plays written in this linguistic system? If the future holds good for this linguistic code, writers would have to use its new signs to reach their readers or to record their fiction in tapes and compact discs, as some have already started to do. Secondly, this new language promotes reading aloud and so decreases the number of silent readers. Listening takes the lead on reading. Should the future be promising for this new linguistic system, literary works would become fossils for linguistic archaeology to dig up, similar to the study of ancient languages such as Aramaic, Greek, Hebrew and Latin and all dead languages, which are the reserve of specialists, accessible only to few scholars but a 'burnt library' for many. In fact, with more and more writers recording their fictions or thoughts in tapes or compact discs, the danger is looming that in a near future discotheques will replace bibliothecae. This makes the study of the performance of literary works a topical subject for examination.

Looking for possible solutions to these issues, a historical survey of literature as a phenomenon is deemed necessary. The examination, in the first part of this research, of literature in its spoken and written media of expression will serve to cast light on the difference between content and container, as regards literature (content) and its media of communication (container). The new technologies are other channels of expressing the same literature so that one can say that literature is not dying; only its media of conservation change from one epoch to another, as print serves as memory to a literature that exists in many other forms of performance. Writing and the new electronic devices only record or transmit literature; they are not literature itself. Performance is the bridge between the printed material and the audience.

A historical survey has also the merit of providing us with models of writing that answer the need for performance which people feel today. Social conditions and some practices of the times led pioneering writers, such as William Carleton and Frédéric Titinga Pacéré, to produce works that are meant to be read aloud with the written material as support to memory, works that answer the need for performance for an audience, works in which the printed material is treated as a servant of the spoken language. To assess works of this kind which partake of both oral and written traditions, a literary criticism that considers the work of art as a holistic multifaceted entity is called for. The second chapter of the first part of this research offers a definition of orature, the proposed new

theory and literary form, and its identifying elements. The objective of this research is to introduce this new literary form and to apply it to the works of Carleton and Pacéré. The specific style of writing of these two writers inspired the research at its very beginning. To the best of my knowledge, none of the existing methods of literary criticism has ever highlighted the particularities and richness of these works, especially Carleton's *Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry*, as a mixture of traditions and performance genres. This research would like to contribute to developing a literary theory of orature (as both theory and literary form) and to apply it to Pacéré's poetry and Carleton's *Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry*.

Three main reasons justify the choice of Pacéré and Carleton: the literary value of their writings, the performance nature inherent in these works, and my personal reasons, namely my knowledge of Pacéré's mother tongue, of his country, and my being currently in Ireland where Carleton lived. The points of similarities between Ireland and Burkina Faso, which emerged progressively as my research was conducted, decisively confirmed my choice of the two writers. For example, the countries of both writers were colonised, which posed problems for the identity of the colonial literature produced in the language of the colonizer, as a national literature presupposes the existence of a nation and of a national language. With the Act of Union in 1800, Ireland became legislatively part of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. Likewise, Burkina Faso, ex Upper Volta, was made a French colony in 1919, then in 1932 the territory was divided and added to the Ivory Coast, Niger and Sudan. It is only after the Second World War that it was reconstituted as a colony, in 1947. These historical events also help to explain how the literature produced at that time was partly addressed to a foreign audience in France or Britain.

In some literary works produced in or about the two countries in these respective historical periods, the character of the indigenous people was depicted in a way that favoured the coloniser's viewpoints. In the colonial literature about ex-Upper Volta or the African continent in general, the natives appeared as elements of decor, referred to in the third person with zoomorphic or apelike words; Africa itself was described as a tropical forest peopled with animals, insects and diseases.<sup>11</sup> A similar ill-treatment befell the Irish

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<sup>11</sup> Cf. L. F. Céline, *Voyage au bout de la nuit* (Paris : Gallimard, 1952), p. 115, p. 126, pp. 131-2, 142, p. 167. He describes Africa as an 'immense réserve pullulante de bêtes et de maladies' (p. 149). Also A. Daudet, *Tartarin sur les Alpes* (Paris : Flammarion, [1886], 1966), p. 167 ; A. Daudet, *Tartarin de Tarascon*

national character in the literature produced before Carleton as he himself would complain later: ‘From the immortal bard of Avon down to the writers of the present day, neither play nor farce has ever been presented to Englishmen, in which, when an Irishman is introduced, he is not drawn as a broad grotesque blunderer, every sentence he speaks involving a bull.’<sup>12</sup> It was incumbent on the patriots of either country to give to the world a corrected image of the national characters of their countries and to produce a literature that would be expressive of their cultural traditions (even if in the colonizer’s language) instead of trying to ape the culture of the coloniser. This is what Carleton and Pacéré tried to do in their own ways. Seamus Deane explains how the Irish national character was the main, if not the one theme, with which Carleton and his contemporary writers were preoccupied.<sup>13</sup>

Ireland and Burkina Faso, the countries of origin respectively of Carleton and Pacéré, share some common traits in their traditions and histories. The culture of both Burkina Faso and Ireland, prior to or at the time of the authors under study, was characteristically a ‘spoken’ culture. Storytelling around the fireplace or under the tree of palavers was commonplace. It usually took place at evening time or at night. ‘To tell stories in the evening time is part and parcel of tradition’ writes the storyteller, poet and dramatist Bernard Dadié. ‘Because if one tells stories at day time, one would lose one’s father or mother. No! This would prevent from working, from doing one’s duty. And it is an African saying that poverty is the daughter of idleness.’<sup>14</sup> At these evening performances, music was played, songs sung, and traditional dance performed, as illustrated in the sketches below. The emblem of Ireland, the lyre, underlines the musical tradition of the country. Carleton tells how the Irish people have been ‘kept under the softening influence’ of their own music and poetry which, ‘whether streaming of a summer evening along their pastoral fields, echoing through their still glens, or poured forth at the winter hearth, still, by its soft and melancholy spirit, [stirred] up a thousand

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(Paris : Flammarion, [1872], 1886) ; and R. Hubert, *Au Pays Bobo* (Paris : Joret, 1932).

<sup>12</sup> W. Carleton, ‘General Introduction’, *Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry*, 2 vols., vol.1 (Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe Ltd, 1990), facsimile of ‘new edition’, 2 vols., vol. 1 (Dublin and London: William Curry and William S. Orr and Co., 1843), pp. i-ii. Hereafter referred to as *T. & S. I.*

<sup>13</sup> Cf. S. Deane, ‘Irish National Character’, in T. Dunne, ed., *The Writer as Witness: Literature as Historical Evidence* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1987), pp. 90-113.

<sup>14</sup> B. Dadié, ‘Role de la légende dans la culture populaire des Noirs d’Afrique’, in *Présence Africaine*, 14-15 (juin-septembre 1957), 167-168 : ‘conter le soir fait partie de la tradition. Car si l’on contait le jour, on perdrat son père ou sa mère. Non ! Cela empêcherait de travailler, de faire ce que l’on doit. Or la pauvreté, dit l’Africain, est la fille de la paresse.’

tender associations that must necessarily touch and improve the heart'.<sup>15</sup> He sees music as having a softening effect on Irish character. Leopold S. Senghor also describes the life-stirring aspect of music, in the West-African context, as a characteristic penchant of African people for music and dance when he writes: 'We are the people of dance whose feet come back to life by striking the hard ground.'<sup>16</sup>

Carleton's ballads and Pacéré's poetical works have drawn inspiration from the traditional music and culture in which their authors were raised. Literature for solitary reading has rarely achieved a large readership in many African countries including Burkina Faso; this was also the case in parts of nineteenth-century Ireland.<sup>17</sup> In some parts of Africa the book remains a precious product reserved for a small elite; it fails to interest the whole population. Solitary reading is much more a means of individual promotion on the social ladder than a pastime.<sup>18</sup> People in both countries rather prefer a mixed literature that comprises and transcends many of the current subdivisions of literature into genres. The following two sketches<sup>19</sup> give an idea of how a holistic literature can be represented.

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<sup>15</sup> *T.&S. I*, p. xxiii.

<sup>16</sup> L. S. Senghor, *Poèmes* (Paris : éd. du Seuil, 1964 et 1973) : 'Nous sommes les hommes de la dance dont les pieds reprennent vigueur en tappant le sol dur.'

<sup>17</sup> Cf. N. Ó Ciosáin, *Print and Popular Culture in Ireland, 1750-1850* (London: Macmillan Press Ltd, 1997), pp. 186-201; H. Dorian, *The Outer Edge of Ulster: A Memoir of Social Life in Nineteenth-Century Donegal*, edited by B. Mac Suibhne and D. Dickson (Indiana: University Notre Dame Press, [1889-90], 2000), pp. 138-150.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. J. Chevrier, *Littérature nègre* (Paris : Armand Colin, 1984), pp. 223-226.

<sup>19</sup> Sketch one by Mongo Sisé originally illustrated Manga Bekombo's 'Le regard des ethnologues', in *Magazine Littéraire*, 195 (mai 1983), 37; the Irish sketch appears in the front page of *T.&S. I*.



Fig. 1. Impressions of Burkina Faso



Fig. 2: 19<sup>th</sup> Century Ireland

Setting aside some degree of idealisation inevitable in both sketches, one can notice in each of them the collective dimension of cultural life and entertainment. In fig. 1, a sketch by Mongo Sisé, the children eat together and are supposed to do so in silence, the women work together, the old men sit together, drink and talk to each other, the young men drum and dance. Only the ethnologist stands alone with a book and a microscope. He certainly comes from another planet where individualism is prioritised over the collectivity. Though we can distinguish different groups, in reality the line of demarcation between them would be hard to find as the different activities happen all at once. The women are busy cooking and hair-dressing while listening to the music and looking at the dance. In the group of the old men, with music serving as a background, one of them is standing up, performing an account or a story. The old woman is also engaged in telling a story to the other women. It is similar in the Irish sketch (fig. 2), a reworked version by Wrightson of W. H. Brooke's illustration for the dance before the Mass in 'The Midnight Mass'.<sup>20</sup> It has been chosen (probably by Barbara Hayley) to feature in the front page of her edition of the first volume of *Traits and Stories* as the most illustrative etching of its contents. In this figure, while some play music, others are dancing and still others drink and tell each other (love) stories or hug each other.

These two sketches, representative of cultural aspects of Burkina Faso and nineteenth-century Ireland, illustrate that in both cultures, music, dance, poetry, drama and storytelling are combined in the literary entertainment the people of these lands enjoyed as pastime. In both etchings too, the viewer is invited to take part in the process of representation itself for which the ethnologist offers a general framework depiction, or to draw one's own representation using the etchings as guidelines or models, following the example of Wrightson using Brooke's etching. The viewer is invited to take part in a task of re-creation, like the Barthesian reader who recreates the work *here and now* by reading it,<sup>21</sup> or like spectators who, at public performances of orature, individually see what their motivations or education direct them to set their eyes on and to appreciate it with

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<sup>20</sup> For Brooke's etching, see W. Carleton, *Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry*, second series, vol. 1 (Dublin: Wakeman, 1833), after p. 48. T. & S. 1 (1843), p. 342 for Wrightson's version. What appears on the front page is a coloured version (by whom?) of Wrightson's reworked etching of Brooke's. The commentary on the etchings is mine.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. R. Barthes, 'The Death of the Author', in D. Lodge, ed., *Modern Criticism and Theory: A Reader* (London and New York: 1988), p. 170.

interpretive strategies belonging to their respective communities.<sup>22</sup> Regardless of the composition of the audience, orature, as a mixed literary form, has the potential to appeal to each spectator or reader individually.

One of the main aspects of this literature, and one that embraces many genres, is performance for a listening audience. When invited to Ireland to talk about his writings, the Cameroonian writer, Francis Bebey, accompanied his talk with music and from time to time invited his audience to sing with him. Introduced to the audience as writer and musician, he corrected this description by saying that he was neither a writer nor a musician but simply a man, showing that the different genres are intertwined: 'In African life there is music, but also storytelling and also all the other things which are not put together in Europe.'<sup>23</sup> All the performance arts form a unity in traditional and often in modern West African literature.

The need to meet the penchant of the audience for listening and also the need to remain true to the traditional holistic literature led some writers to read their works aloud to audiences. Jacques Chevrier, author of *Littérature nègre* and director of the collection *Monde noir* on African literature, in giving his impressions of Africa, refers to some African authors involved in reading their works aloud, under the shade of a tree or in a bar, for illiterate people. He underlines that, by so doing, these authors recreate the whole tradition of the oral culture.<sup>24</sup> Others try to use typographic devices that impel readers to read their works aloud. This is the case with some newspapers in Burkina Faso. The desire of Burkinabe people for reading aloud, not in correct well-written French, but broken French written as the people would speak it, is met by some periodicals, such as *Journal du Jeudi (JJ)*, that include a section on reading aloud. Here is an example from the section 'Moi Goama' in *JJ*, a satirical newspaper published every Thursday in Burkina Faso. It is written as the illiterate would speak their broken street French. The section is always followed by the indication 'to be read aloud' / 'à lire à haute voix' in brackets after the title as in the example below, which deals with the theme of education:

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<sup>22</sup> Cf. S. Fish, 'Intrepreting the *Variorum*', in D. Lodge, ed., *Modern Criticism and Theory*, p. 327.

<sup>23</sup> F. Bebey, 'Propos sur l'écriture et la musique', in J. P. Little and R. Little, eds., *Black Accents: Writing in French from Africa, Mauritius and the Caribbean* (Valencia : Grant and Cutler, 1997), p. 257: 'Dans la vie africaine, il y a la musique, mais aussi le conte, mais aussi toutes ces choses que l'on ne met pas ensemble en Europe.'

## IN BON ICOLE PÉ ÊTE IN MONVAIS ICOLE

(à lire à haute voix)

Auzougd'hi, quand que ti wouvres in zoug'nal ubein ti dégagdes le télémévigion, c'est le pibilcité de les icoles qui pé crever ton l'eil. Y a des zense qui dit que é c'est enfantine zousqu'à collèze, les autres c'est collèze plis enternant, y a n'a encore c'est des icoles sipérières spécialistes dans ceci ubein ça ubein des inivresités pîrvées. Y a des môgô pichants qui coupent net poug dit "coumment vous pé étidier à sez le Blanc". Sans balgue! Moi ze félchite tous ces zense qui aident le Itat à édiquer les n'enfants pisque le gofnerment ne pé pas assirer tout.<sup>25</sup>

In addition to the special spellings, attention is to be drawn to the use of local words, such as 'môgô', which means 'powerful people'. In the Irish context, Carleton wrote his stories with the Irish pronunciation of English and with some Irish words and phrases, as below:

"Well, Mat, *ma bouchal*, how duv ye like your sitivation? I believe, for all your larnin', the Findramore boys have *sacked* you at last!"

"Ay," exclaimed another, "he *is* sacked at last, in spite of his Matthew-maticks."<sup>26</sup>

'Ma bouchal' is the Gaelic for 'my boy'. The particular spellings are attempts at matching the appropriation of English by the Irish. These playful attempts on many fronts aim at perpetuating the traditional literary form of orature. They contribute, in a particular way, to the promotion of print as organ of memory in lieu and place of the new technologies, and to the promotion of performance through reading aloud, as suggested by the typography. The second part of this thesis seeks to substantiate the existence of this form of literature and the practice of reading aloud in both nineteenth-century Ireland and Burkina Faso. This literary form requires an evaluation that takes into account its hybrid nature and performance aspects.

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<sup>24</sup> Cf. M. Pierre, 'Impressions d'Afrique', in *Magazine littéraire*, 195 : *Afrique Noire, l'autre littérature d'expression française* (mai 1983), 36.

<sup>25</sup> <journaldujeudi.com/fixe/fs\_htm> (Accessed on 15 Feb. 2004). In standard French, the *spelling* can be like this : 'Aujourd'hui, quand (que) tu ouvres un journal ou bien tu regardes la télévision, c'est la publicité des écoles qui peut crever ton œil. Il y a des gens qui disent que eux c'est enfantine jusqu'à collège, les autres c'est collège plus internat, il y en a encore c'est des écoles supérieures spécialistes dans ceci ou bien ça ou bien des universités privées. Il y a des 'môgô' puissants qui coupent net pour dire : 'Comment vous 'peut' étudier chez le Blanc'. Sans blague ! Moi je félicite tous ces gens qui aident l'Etat à éduquer les enfants puisque le gouvernement ne peut pas assurer tout.' I have not translated it into English because the focus here is on phonetics rather than on the meaning of the contents.

<sup>26</sup> T. & S. 1, 'The Hedge School', p. 291. In correct English spelling: 'Well, Mat, *ma bouchal*, how do you like your situation? I believe, for all your learning, the Findramore boys have sacked you at last!' 'Ay', exclaimed another, 'he is sacked at last, in spite of his mathematics.'

Both Carleton and Pacéré showed interest in the ‘spoken’ culture and customs of their countries in their use of the native languages of their respective lands. Pacéré published a collection of poetry and books in Mooré, his mother tongue, whereas Carleton did not publish in his mother tongue, but his works are replete with words and phrases in Irish. Indeed, when they write in English or French, both Carleton and Pacéré cannot resist the temptation of inserting some words, phrases and sentences of their mother tongues into their narratives. The subject matter of both writers is drawn from the lore of their respective countries. Carleton is a *Seanachie* or storyteller and lore-bearer. Pacéré is the drum (*Bendre*) of poetical Africa as encapsulated in the title of Yepri’s book, *Titinga Frédéric Pacéré, Le tambour de l’Afrique poétique*.

Both Carleton and Pacéré are well acquainted with the culture and the lore of their countries. Carleton’s knowledge of Irish customs and folklore is explicit in the book with which he made his entrance into the world of literature. The setting of his stories is Irish and all of his stories illustrate some aspects of the life of Irish country people. For example, the fireside stories, that is, the first four stories of volume one of the ‘definitive’ 1843-1844 edition, form a unit as they are all told in the same setting, Ned M’Keown’s crossroad shebeen, and in the same manner, everybody in the group tells a story. The first story, ‘Ned M’Keown’ (1830, 1843), tells of the life of Ned, an unsuccessful entrepreneur led by his wife Nancy. The second, ‘The Three Tasks, or the Little House under the Hill; a legend’ (1830, 1843), is a legend about a boy whose greed for profit put him into the hands of the devil who imposes on him three tasks to do. The third story, ‘Shane Fadh’s Wedding’ (1830, 1843), is a personal memoir of old-fashioned Irish courtship and marriage custom told by the widower, Shane Fadh. The fourth story tells of the Irish wake customs and is called ‘Larry M’Farland’s Wake’ (1830, 1843). The fifth story, ‘The Battle of the Factions’ (1830, 1843), tells the story of a fight between Irish factions, as does ‘The Party fight and Funeral’ (1830, 1843). ‘The Station’ (1829, 1843), ‘The Lough Derg Pilgrim’ (1828, 1843) and ‘The Midnight Mass’ (1830, 1843) are stories about the devotional practices of the Irish peasantry. ‘The Donagh, or the Horse-Stealers’ (1830, 1843), the counterpart of ‘Wildgoose Lodge’ (1830, 1844) in the second volume, is a story of rural crime. ‘Phil Purcel The Pig Driver’ (1830, 1843), the story that concludes volume one, is a comic story that stages an Irish pig driver who outwits English people. As we can see, the setting, characters and plot are predominantly Irish and revolve around the Irish

peasantry. A harsh criticism of Carleton by a critic in the *Daily Telegraph*, who aimed at destroying Carleton's celebrity, actually reveals the strengths and focus of his literary career. The critic accused Carleton of holding 'the superstition that a true national literature must be written by Irishmen, on Irish topics alone, and must be printed and published in Ireland, upon Irish paper, and bound in Irish cloth of the real Irish colour'.<sup>27</sup> Behind the ridicule in these words, this criticism expresses the truth that Carleton was concerned with Irishness, with Irish people and their traditions. Pacéré too shows a similar preoccupation for the people of his village and tribe and reveals himself, by this interest in his people, as the son of the chief of Manéga whose role is to look after his people.

Pacéré's poetry is centred on Manéga, his village in Burkina Faso, and on traditions that are attached to this village and by extension to the Moaaga culture in Burkina Faso. His collections of poetry either start and end with Manéga or they start somewhere else and end in Manéga. For example, *Quand s'envolent les grues couronnées* (1967) and *La poésie des griots* (1982) start with these lines: 'Here,/ Manéga'; 'Ici/ C'est Manéga'. *Refrains sous le sahel* (1967) opens with a reference to this village where the poet was born. *Saglego ou le poème du tam-tam pour le Sahel* (1994) repeats the zabyuya of Manéga. *Des entrailles de la terre* (1990), *Poèmes pour l'Angola* (1982), 'Reflets de New York' and *Poèmes pour Koryo* (1987), though their subject matters relate to foreign countries, viz. Mauritania, Angola, New York and Korea, all bear references to Manéga.

In all these collections, Pacéré uses the pattern of the poetry of tam-tam of his country folk, taking care to respect its rhythms and cadences. His collections also develop aspects of Moaaga traditions, as Carleton's stories deal with Irish customs: *Ça tire sous le Sahel* (1967) is a satire that deals with the culture of inter-ethnic jokes in Burkina Faso; *Quand s'envolent les grues couronnées* and *La poésie des griots* develop literature that is associated with funeral customs. In *Quand s'envolent les grues couronnées*, which was written at the death of Timini, the woman who reared him, Pacéré meditatively looked back on the events of his life. *La poésie des griots* (1982) also deals with the death of a person who has been a cultural counsellor to Pacéré's father and to Pacéré himself.

This survey of the historical and cultural background of the two writers, which will be dealt with in detail in the second part of this research, aims at presenting the literary

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<sup>27</sup> *Daily Telegraph*, quoted in D. J. O'Donoghue, *The Life of William Carleton*, 2 vols., vol. 2 (London: Downey & Co., 1896), p. 341. Hereafter referred to as *Life*, vol. 2.

form of orature that was/is used in both countries. The works of Carleton and Pacéré reflect this literary form as their authors lived in this culture, and as their biographies indicate. This survey also helps to highlight the similarities and differences between the two cultural traditions and consequently the literary style of the writers which issued from them. The works of Pacéré and Carleton are modelled by and incrusted in the folklore traditions of their respective countries. The discourses in the works of both artists are weighed down with proverbs or *piseogs*, mottos or zabyuya and many other oral devices. They partake of many performance genres; they espouse and reflect the ‘spoken’ literature characteristic of both cultures. A literary criticism that does not take into account the hybrid nature of that literature is likely to either undervalue the literariness of the works of these two authors or to leave aside tremendous wealth in them, as a review on previous scholarship and criticism of the works of these two writers will reveal.

The nature and form of nineteenth-century Irish writings and of writings by Africans, in general, are an ongoing subject of study in literary criticism. Should they be considered as literary, and if so, as part of ‘spoken literature’ or of ‘written literature’? Irish literary critics speculate about which writings should be considered as having literary value. Norman Vance and Niall Ó Ciosáin, for example, raise the question in their recent publications: in Vance’s words, the problem of the ‘disabling narrow and fastidious view of “literature” as highly prized “fine” or “imaginative” writing, often mainly novels, poems and plays’.<sup>28</sup> Niall Ó Ciosáin criticises Seamus Deane and the contributors to *Field Day Anthology of Irish Writings* for excluding original Irish oral literature from their collections.<sup>29</sup> Vance’s observation shows the pertinence of the problem in the Irish context. In fact, it is within this narrow definition of ‘literature’ that one can understand the exclusion of some works belonging to Irish oral literature.<sup>30</sup> Advocating a comprehensive understanding of the notion of ‘literature’, Vance further makes the point that ‘if rarefied notions of Irishness and rarefied notions of Literature are put together there seems on this showing to be very little Irish Literature in English before the

<sup>28</sup> N. Vance, *Irish Literature Since 1800* (London: Pearson Education Ltd, 2002), p. 24.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. N. Ó Ciosáin, ‘Gaelic Culture and Language Shift’, in L. M. Geary and M. Kelleher, eds., *Nineteenth-Century Ireland: A Guide to Recent Research* (Dublin: University College Dublin Press, 2005), pp. 136-152.

<sup>30</sup> Operating with a similar restricted notion of literature, Terry Eagleton and David Lloyd say that there are no realist novels in nineteenth-century Irish literature. Cf. D. Lloyd, *Anomalous States* (Dublin: The Lilliput Press, 1993), pp. 132-137; T. Eagleton, *Heathcliff and the Great Hunger: Studies in Irish Culture* (London & New York: Verso, 1995), chapter 5.

nineteenth century, and not much then until the early Yeats'.<sup>31</sup> He finds this kind of classification absurd and unhelpful and, for the purpose of his book, he discards such strict formal definitions of literature because they constitute obstacles to comprehending the literary and intellectual formation of modern Irish writers and consign interesting figures to obscurity. The notion of literature as timelessly valuable writing following a 'canon' of conventions worthy of admiration and academic study reduces the field of works which have contributed to the literary tradition of any nation. For these reasons, Vance prefers the phrase 'Irish writing' to 'Irish literature.' Though this terminology is helpful, as it considers many writings as literature, it does not say what is the genre or form of these writings: are they novels, drama, poetry, or orature?

A similar concern arises regarding 'African literature'. Though Western critics give it the status of literature, in general, observes the critic Pacéré, they consider it as folklore, as an exotic product different from their everyday literary diet.<sup>32</sup> In the same line, J. M. Coetzee humorously writes: 'But, ladies and gentlemen, who among African writers is not exotic? The truth is, to the West we Africans are all exotic.'<sup>33</sup> He and M. Ngal (before him) explain how some African writers took advantage of this search for exoticism, departed from traditional African forms of literature (storytelling, drama, poetry), and espoused Western literary forms (e.g. novel) just in order to please Western readers and so earn a living by writing for them.<sup>34</sup>

Within these general Irish and African contexts, it is understandable that Carleton's literature and African literature in general have often been assessed in terms of exotic literature, or in terms of 'oral literature' versus 'written literature', or in terms of religion, Catholic versus Protestant, taking into consideration the tribal or religious origins of the authors, or in terms of translation or transfer of language. For example, the criticism of Kazi-Tani and Gassama on African literature focuses on translation, the search for the 'right word' or 'le mot juste'.<sup>35</sup> Other critics, such as Chevrier and Joubert,<sup>36</sup> have looked

<sup>31</sup> N. Vance, *Irish Literature Since 1800*, p. 25.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. F. T. Pacéré, *La Poésie des griots* (Paris : Editions Silex 1982), pp. 107-108. Hereafter referred to as *Poésie*.

<sup>33</sup> J. M. Coetzee, *Elizabeth Costello: Eight Lessons* (Johannesburg: Vintage, 2004), p. 47.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. M. A. M. Ngal, *Giambatista Viko ou le viol du discours africain* (Paris : Hatier, 1984), pp. 7-13; J. M. Coetzee, *Elizabeth Costello*, pp. 42-44.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. M. Gassama, *Kuma : Interrogation sur la littérature nègre*, and N. Kazi-Tani, *Roman africain de langue française au carrefour de l'écrit et de l'oral* (Paris : l'Harmattan, 1995).

<sup>36</sup> Cf. J. Chevrier, *Littérature nègre* ; and J. L. Joubert, *Littératures francophones d'Afrique de l'Ouest : Anthologie* (Paris : Nathan, 1994).

at the works of Pacéré, from a wider perspective, as one among other African writers, in an attempt to categorise them within one of the different trends of African francophone literature, as a whole, and as belonging to the second generation for example. Chevrier inserted Pacéré in the second current of African poetry, which he calls ‘militant poetry’, with these telling introductory words which show his preoccupation with fitting writers into categories: ‘Lastly, one must make room here for Frédéric Pacéré Titinga...’<sup>37</sup> The second volume of Chevrier’s anthology, which deals exclusively with poetry, contains only a brief, framed bio-bibliographical reference to Pacéré and a poem from *Refrains sous le Sahel*.<sup>38</sup> Similarly, Joubert and his team of editors gave Pacéré three pages in their anthology, with a short, border-line note on his literary career and a scanty reference to the trend of his poetry.<sup>39</sup>

Generally speaking, the majority of these works of general criticism on African literature is centred on and gives wider space to the novel genre. Robert Cornevin, for example, in the two-page long section he gives to Burkinabe literature in his book, does not mention poetry, but deals only with history and theatre; therefore, he is silent about Pacéré and all other Burkinabe poets.<sup>40</sup> Many similar critics of African literature dealt mainly with the genre of the novel, highlighting how novels written by Negro-Africans are different from novels in the Western world. Many Western critics, Wole Soyinka observes, look at African literature from the abyss of their ignorance of it and proceed with Western moulds to evaluate African literature.<sup>41</sup> As a result, African literature has not been always presented objectively as it is, but how it is in comparison to Western literature. The nature of comparison itself, aiming at finding similarities or divergences, can be an obstacle to an objective assessment of a work. In this respect, the following conclusion reached by some critics is a telling one: ‘The Negro African novelist is a lost orphan who does not benefit from any heritage. In fact, the novel is a genre that belongs par excellence to the civilisation of writing; it is a genre that is completely unknown to our

<sup>37</sup> J. Chevrier, *Littérature nègre*, p. 90: ‘Enfin il faut faire ici une place à Frédéric Pacéré Titinga...’ He calls the second current ‘militant poetry’ because the poets of this category committed themselves in their works to denounce oppression and fight for freedom and justice.

<sup>38</sup> J. Chevrier, *Anthologie Africaine II : La poésie* (Paris : Hatier International, 2002), pp. 74-75.

<sup>39</sup> J. L. Joubert, *Littératures francophones*, pp. 46-48.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. R. Cornevin, *Littérature d’Afrique noire de langue française* (Paris : Presses Universitaires de France, 1976), pp. 224-226. L. Kesteloot, *Anthologie négro-africaine. La littérature de 1918 à 1981* (Verviers : Marabout, 1981) contains no mention of or reference to Burkinabe literature and writers.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. W. Soyinka, ‘The Critic and Society: Barthes, Leftocracy and Other Mythologies’, in H. L. Gates, ed., *Black Literature and Literary Theory* (New York and London: Methuen, 1984), pp. 44-45.

traditional literature.<sup>42</sup> The other genres, however, especially poetry, drama, storytelling, or the mixture of these in orature form, benefit from a rich Negro-African literary tradition. It is no surprise that the first well-known African writers were poets and storytellers; however, these genres have not received as much assessment as the novel genre.

A similar observation can be made with regard to the assessment of nineteenth-century Irish literature. For example, Niall Ó Ciosáin deplores the fact that a scholarly publication of high standards, *Field Day Anthology of Irish Writing*, even though it used the broader term ‘writing’ instead of ‘literature’ to cover more materials, in fact, dealt less with works pertaining to Irish oral traditions. Ó Ciosáin attributes this neglect ‘to the literary scholars’ valorisation of creativity, originality and technical achievement’, which, according to him, ‘are less characteristic of the literary production in the nineteenth century’.<sup>43</sup> The critics assessed Irish literature with English language and literary conventions, as one can see in Ó Ciosáin’s further observation that Seamus Deane and his colleagues dealt mainly with Irish works that have been translated into English. The participants in the Yaoundé colloquium on criticism of African literature also disapproved of the focus of criticism merely on African literature written in European languages, as these kinds of criticism ignore the oral tradition which holds a large place in both African and nineteenth-century Irish cultures. Nineteenth-century writing in Irish has, therefore, been occluded, as is African literature in African languages, or in literary forms other than the novel.

Even in those works that have been assessed, the lack of objectivity is often pointed out. Gearóid Denvir, for example, has highlighted and rejected Terry Eagleton’s argument that ‘it is only in a negative sense—that is, in relation to the coloniser or the fact of having been conquered—that the colonized can define himself’.<sup>44</sup> Irish literature, like African literature, has been assessed with foreign literature, English or French for instance, serving as a mirror. The present thesis aims at contributing to this literary discussion, concerning the specific literary form of Carleton’s tales-of-the-peasants and

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<sup>42</sup> M. Gassama, *Kuma : Interrogation sur la littérature*, p. 237: ‘le romancier négro-africain est un orphelin désemparé qui ne jouit d’aucun héritage. Le roman est en effet un genre qui appartient, par excellence, à la civilisation de l’écriture; il s’agit donc d’un genre complètement ignoré de notre littérature traditionnelle.’ See also J. M. Coetzee, *Elizabeth Costello*, pp. 35-58.

<sup>43</sup> N. Ó Ciosáin, ‘Gaelic Culture and Language Shift’, p. 136.

Pacéré's poetry, by showing that they belong to orature. I undertook to write this thesis in order to fill in these gaps left in literary criticism of African and Irish literatures. This thesis will point out the originality of African poetry and nineteenth-century Irish literature by assessing them on their own merits. Far from repeating the same mistake as the critics mentioned above, the comparative dimension in this thesis aims at responding to the over-emphasis on orality as an essential African difference, or on orature as a metonymy for 'African', by pointing out the existence of different models of orature in operation in different lands and by highlighting the similarities and differences between these forms of orature. The cult of the word, so dear to African poets, is also found in other epochs in the Western world: the early writings of Carleton and Mérimée are notable examples of nineteenth-century works using the form of orature.<sup>45</sup> To move from Pacéré to Carleton, or from nineteenth century to twentieth century, is to experience a strange sense of similarity even as one becomes aware of the existence of important differences in the techniques used to produce works of orature and, therefore, divergences in the performance and performativity of these works. The comparative approach in this research will show the existence of various models of orature in different nations and at different historical contexts. As every work of art is historically and culturally conditioned and as nineteenth-century Ireland and twentieth-century Burkina Faso are historically and geographically apart, the comparative dimension in this thesis will highlight how different social, cultural and historical circumstances conditioned the production and also the reception of the works of Carleton and Pacéré.

On the other hand, the criticism of the literary works of African writers by their peers tends to be similar to that of their European mentors, as they have been trained this way, or it takes the counter approach in attempting to look at African literature with the African mind and cultural mould. The 1973 colloquium on African literary criticism<sup>46</sup> boosted this second type of criticism against the first model of European criticism of African works. In the same line of thought, the Nigerian critic, Wole Soyinka, abhors the

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<sup>44</sup> G. Denvir, 'Decolonizing the Mind : Language and Literature in Ireland', in *New Hibernia Review*, vol. 1, 1 (Spring 1997), 61.

<sup>45</sup> In my article, 'Hybridity and Orature: The Cases of Mérimée and Carleton', in M. Murphy and O. Clarke, eds., *NUI Maynooth Postgraduate Research Record: Proceedings of the Colloquium 2005*, pp. 125-132, I showed the presence of the orature genre in their early writings of Prosper Mérimée and Carleton.

<sup>46</sup> Society of African Culture, ed., *The African Critic and his People as Producers of Civilisation*, Yaoundé Colloquium, April 16-20, 1973 (Paris : Présence africaine, 1977).

fact that indiscriminating African critics have been trapped into transposing the petit-bourgeois signs and iconography of their European tutors into a universal culture:

It is a serious academic lapse to transfer the entirety of that language of criticism to any literature which, while undeniably cognizant of other world literatures, nevertheless consciously explores the world-view of its own societies. It is an irony that it is those very critics who decry the ‘undialectical’ nature of much of today’s African writing who resolutely refuse to accept the conceptual heritage or even material artefacts and their authentic significations (in history, origin and social intercourse, orature) as valid dialectical quantities for any received theory.<sup>47</sup>

Soyinka invites critics to take into account the social and historical dimension of African culture or orature in their criticism of works by African writers. However, this kind of criticism, which Soyinka and other critics propose, often lacks objectivity when the critics put no distance between themselves, their culture and the object they study. The result is an identification of the subject (the critic) with the object (the work), which is unfortunate, as the hybridity of the African writer is lost in this mode of interpretation.<sup>48</sup>

Aware of the deficiencies of the two groups, a third category of critics emerged which tried to consider African culture and traditions as the source of written African literature. Sissao, for example, looks at novels by Burkinabe Moosé writers in order to unveil the traces of Moaaga oral traditions they may contain.<sup>49</sup> The scope of his research is restricted again to novels. He does not deal with poetry written by Moosé. The present study is similar to Sissao’s research as it deals with works by a Moaaga writer but is different from his because mine goes beyond a mere tracing of orality in a written work to construct an assessment of the work as mixture of traditions and genres. Moreover, I deal with poetry; Sissao, like many other critics, dealt with novels.

However, I am not the first critic on Pacéré’s poetry. In 2001, Hortense Louguet Kaboré<sup>50</sup> published a biography of Pacéré: a compilation of valuable information but poor in criticism. The proceedings of the first international colloquium on Burkinabe

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<sup>47</sup> W. Soyinka, ‘The Critic and Society’, p. 44.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. M. Kane, ‘On the Criticism of Modern African Literature’, in Society of African Culture, ed., *The African Critic and his People*, pp. 257-275.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. A. Sissao, ‘La littérature moaaga comme source d’inspiration de quelques romanciers burkinabè’, Thèse de doctorat (Université Paris XII, Val-de-Marne, 1995).

<sup>50</sup> H. Louguet Kaboré, *Maître Titenga Frédéric Pacéré, origine d’une vie* (Paris : L’Harmattan, 2001).

literature<sup>51</sup> contain some interesting articles on Pacéré's poetry, but they are limited in scope, restricted to some poems. The *Mélanges offerts*<sup>52</sup> aims more at congratulating the artist than at looking very closely at his writings. The major researches on Pacéré's works have been done by Urbain Amoa<sup>53</sup> and Léon Yépri,<sup>54</sup> both from the Ivory Coast. They do not speak Mooré, Pacéré's mother tongue and mine. They look at his works from the outsider's viewpoint to a certain extent. Most often, they tend to compare him with some writers of the Ivory Coast with whom they are familiar. They have adopted biographical and textual approaches and resorted to interviews in order to solve their linguistic handicap by asking Pacéré to explain some of his poems or to give them some clues. Pacéré becomes for them a guide to his own poetry and the distance between the critic and the work is almost nonexistent. The fact that a work once produced no longer belongs to its author alone for interpretation is not taken into consideration. I approach Pacéré's poetry with the advantage of both the knowledge of the mother tongue of Pacéré and the studies already done on his poetry and with a trans-continental comparative approach never done before on the literary form of orature. This methodology has the advantage of revealing the mingling of 'spoken' and written tradition, the mixture of performing genres in a single work, and the 'recycling' of works of orature through performance, which are important elements many critics have so far ignored in their criticism of literature, particularly of Pacéré's works.

Concerning critical works on Carleton, it can be said that so far studies on Carleton have followed six main approaches: biographical, historical, nationalist, religious, comparative and linguistic. Some scholars focus on one approach, others combine two or three approaches together in a bid to come to terms with Carleton's complexity. If needs be, some critics will be mentioned in more than one approach in the following review of scholarship.

The first approach to Carleton is biographical. D. J. O'Donoghue<sup>55</sup> undertook the first major biographical study on Carleton by completing in 1896 Carleton's unfinished

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<sup>51</sup> Premier colloque international sur la littérature Burkinabè, Ouagadougou 5-10 décembre 1988, in *Annales de l'Université de Ouagadougou*, numéro spécial (1988).

<sup>52</sup> Université de Ouagadougou, *Mélanges offerts à Maître Titinga Frédéric Pacéré* (Paris : L'Harmattan, 1996). Hereafter referred to as *Mélanges offerts*.

<sup>53</sup> U. Amoa, *Poétique de la poésie des tambours* (Paris : L'Harmattan, 2002).

<sup>54</sup> L. Yépri, *Titinga Frédéric Pacéré le tambour de l'Afrique poétique* (Paris : L'Harmattan, 1999).

<sup>55</sup> D. J. O'Donoghue, *The Life of William Carleton*, 2 vols. (London: Downey, 1896). Hereafter referred to as *Life*, vol. 1 and *Life*, vol. 2.

autobiography. His work covers Carleton's life from 1828 onwards, mentioning the books he read without a deeper examination of their influence on his development. Closer to our time, Benedict Kiely<sup>56</sup> embarked on a similar bio-bibliographical study on Carleton. His literary biography traces Carleton's life from his birth in Prillisk to his death in Dublin. André Boué adopts the same methodology in the first section of his dissertation on Carleton. He rectifies some of the biographical data given by O'Donoghue and others and gives a valuable bibliography.<sup>57</sup> Barbara Hayley, taking advantage of her predecessors, went into minute details. Her approach is much more bibliographical and editorial than biographical. Her aim is 'to follow the stories with their different provenance and revisions and to discuss the alterations made'.<sup>58</sup> Similarly, in his study of Carleton as a man and an author, James Cahalan sees in Carleton 'one of the most extreme and irregular personalities of his or any other period'.<sup>59</sup> He underlines the complexity of Carleton and his works, the assessment of which demands a complex approach. Julian Moynahan also underlines this complexity when he assesses Carleton as a writer and a historian belonging to a hyphenated culture.<sup>60</sup>

The second approach considers Carleton as a historian. William Butler Yeats and, following him, Horatio Sheafe Krans, regard Carleton as a historian of the Irish peasantry, as its living incarnation. Margaret Chesnutt also adopts a similar 'socio-historical standpoint in dealing with Carleton,' especially his short stories, reading Carleton's stories against the background of nineteenth-century Irish society.<sup>61</sup>

The third category of criticism evaluates Carleton from the point of view of patriotism and tends either to praise Carleton or to criticise him. A work is seen to be patriotic when it aims at a national audience and less so when it is destined for a foreign readership. This category of critics tends to examine Carleton in terms of assimilation or authenticity. Assimilation is understood in the sense of globalisation, the move from a

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<sup>56</sup> B. Kiely, *Poor Scholar: A Study of the Works and Days of William Carleton* (Dublin: Wolfhound Press, 1997).

<sup>57</sup> A. Boué, *William Carleton, romancier Irlandais* (Paris : Publications de la Sorbonne, 1978).

<sup>58</sup> B. Hayley, *Carleton's Traits and Stories and the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Anglo-Irish Tradition* (Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe, 1983; New Jersey: Barnes and Noble books, 1983), p. ix. Hereafter referred to as Hayley, *Carleton's Traits and Stories*.

<sup>59</sup> J. Cahalan, *The Irish Novel: A Critical History* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1988), p. 50.

<sup>60</sup> Cf. J. Moynahan, *Anglo-Irish: The Literary Imagination in a Hyphenated Culture* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995).

<sup>61</sup> M. Chesnutt, *Studies in the Short Stories of William Carleton* (Göterbog: Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis, 1976), p. 13.

specific literature to a global one. The world's literature can be seen as a contribution from essential authentic literatures of each nation in the course of its own self-expression and self-realisation. The essential contribution of Ireland is her Irishness, her traits, stories and other cultural entertainments that make her unique. To abandon this uniqueness (because foreign observers see it as 'backward', as anything except literature) in order to integrate the cultural mainstream which exalts the uniqueness of a particular nation is what is often meant by assimilation. Authenticity, on the other hand, is understood as any effort aiming at promoting and perpetuating the essential 'national character' of a particular nation by trying to prevent it from being dissolved in the global melting pot. Applying such a nationalist or assimilative approach to Carleton, Thomas MacDonagh, one of the executed 1916 leaders, bemoaned Carleton's lack of strong patriotism, saying: 'Carleton made the mistake, during one part of his career at least, of writing for a foreign audience... Carleton knew Irish, and might possibly, some think, have been the Gaelic Mistral—if he had been a patriot. As it was he fell between two stools.'<sup>62</sup> By contrast to MacDonagh's criticism, Seamus Deane praised Carleton, seeing him and his contemporaries as appealing to a national audience despite the influences from America and England.<sup>63</sup> It is the intention of this research to move away from this self-exclusive and potentially reductive binary opposition of assimilation or authenticity concerning both Carleton and Pacéré because Pacéré's change of style and Carleton's move from writing Irish traits and stories to compose novels in the manner of the English should not be construed as a mere march from authenticity towards assimilation or globalization, as this approach fails to consider the possible influences of social and historical events on both writers and their careers.

The fourth type of criticism evaluates Carleton on religious grounds. Most early twentieth-century critical approaches to Carleton in Ireland, Margaret Chesnutt remarks, focused on his change of religion.<sup>64</sup> Benedict Kiely for one, in his major study on Carleton, lays emphasis on Carleton's change of religion, his lack of religious stability. Some critics have tried to explain the changes in Carleton's language on the basis of religious agendas, saying that he changed his language to be critical or favourable to Catholic religion. These

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<sup>62</sup> T. MacDonagh, *Literature in Ireland: Studies Irish and Anglo-Irish* (Dublin: The Talbot Press, 1916), p. 33.

<sup>63</sup> S. Deane, 'National Character and National Audience: Races, Crowds and Readers', in M. Allan and A. Wilcox, eds., *Critical Approaches to Anglo-Irish Literature* (Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe, 1989), pp. 39-44.

<sup>64</sup> Cf. M. Chesnutt, *Studies in the Short Stories of William Carleton*, p. 8, pp. 24-27.

justifications are not quite successful as the textual changes are not unidirectional. The contribution of my research to this debate on Carleton's changes is to look at it from the standpoint of orality: oral stories are not told with the very same words twice; though the contents of a story remain generally unchanged, its wording changes from one setting of storytelling to another. This is my way of explaining the changes in Carleton's stories, at the point where the explanations of previous critics show their limits.

The fifth approach to Carleton's works attempts to compare Carleton with other writers, most notably with Walter Scott. D. J. O'Donoghue reported critics' eulogising Carleton by calling him ' "The Walter Scott of Ireland," achieving in some measure for his native land what that great author did for his'.<sup>65</sup> But the comparison with Scott has not always been laudatory; it was critical at times. For example, Baker wrote that, 'like the Banims and Griffin, [Carleton] owed more than he knew to Scott',<sup>66</sup> while Walter Allen<sup>67</sup> and later on Donald Davie, seeing in Scott Carleton's model, presented Carleton as the Irish Scott and pointed out Carleton's failure 'to be an Irish Scott because he is himself a character out of Scott, he is part of Scott's subject-matter'.<sup>68</sup> I agree with Margaret Chesnutt that this way of dealing with Carleton in terms of the Scott tradition is a hindrance to a real appreciation of Carleton's originality. Carleton may have had Scott in admiration, but to say that he took him as his model and failed to live up to him is hardly justifiable, especially when one is aware of Carleton's reproaching John Banim for imitating Scott.<sup>69</sup>

Finally, the sixth model of criticism is relative to the language and genres Carleton uses in his narratives. Vivian Mercier approaches Carleton from the standpoint of linguistic mixture in the 'Irish comic tradition'.<sup>70</sup> John Wilson Foster, who treats Carleton thematically, recommends that Carleton should 'be studied first and foremost as a comic writer'.<sup>71</sup> Before Foster, Frank O'Connor evaluated Carleton's language and disapproved of it on aesthetic considerations.<sup>72</sup> His verdict that Carleton's English is dull is acceptable

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<sup>65</sup> *Life*, vol. 2, p. 338.

<sup>66</sup> E. A. Baker, *The History of the English Novel*, vol. vii (London: Witerby, 1936), p. 34.

<sup>67</sup> W. Allen, *The English Novel: A Short Critical History* (London: Penguin Books, [1954], 1991).

<sup>68</sup> D. Davie, *The Heyday of Sir Walter Scott* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1961), pp. 80-99; cf. W. Allen, *The English Novel*, p. 131.

<sup>69</sup> Cf. *Life*, vol. 1, p. 60.

<sup>70</sup> V. Mercier, *The Irish Comic Tradition* (London: Souvenir Press, 1962), p. 67.

<sup>71</sup> J. W. Foster, *Forces and Themes in Ulster Fiction* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1974), p. 17.

<sup>72</sup> F. O'Connor, *The Backward Look: A Survey of Irish Literature* (London: Macmillan Press Ltd, 1967), p. 148.

to a certain extent; however, it does not consider Carleton's innovation in trying to deal with the disparity of the language in his period. The study Barry Sloan conducts on Carleton's language shows more balance in the assessment of Carleton's language:

To blame Carleton for his carelessness, his frequently ill-constructed plots, his unabashed self-contradictions of attitude and sympathy, his painful moralizing, or his prejudices is understandable. They are all defects and set limits to his greatness; but they are also the inevitable self-damage incurred in writing in the very way that gives him his status. Above all Carleton's skill as a communicator of oral traditions is the key to understanding his genius. He is the seanachie who has turned to written records, the story-teller who has become a novelist; but his real talents remained rooted in the old oral culture rather than absorbing the newer and less familiar literary modes.<sup>73</sup>

Carleton is a gifted but uneven writer, especially when judged in the English literary tradition. But, as Margaret Chesnutt observes, it is a mistake to evaluate Carleton 'merely by the standards of a tradition with which he had but scant acquaintance'.<sup>74</sup> Unfortunately, many of the aforementioned critics tried to assess Carleton with criteria taken from a tradition with which he was not familiar. Regardless of the approach they used, some of these critics attempt to consider his works as a modern novel/short story form. Others are either American or English-speaking urban elite people far removed in time and space from the living Irish-speaking/bilingual society of the *Gaeltacht* and its cultural expression and lacking a first-hand knowledge of Gaelic-speaking society. As to the Irish bred critics, some of them looked at Carleton's works with moulds inherited from foreign cultures. On the whole, there is a refusal on the part of both groups of critics to take Carleton on his own terms or to see Carleton's work as a multifaceted work of orature. The result is a misleading stock interpretation popularised by western media. For example, almost every critic of Carleton cites the following criticism by Yeats that Carleton's work 'shows not seldom the clumsy chiselling of the quarryman'.<sup>75</sup> The repetition by subsequent critics of this assessment by Yeats, which many understood alongside O'Donoghue's negative view that Carleton's stories were 'badly put together',<sup>76</sup> gives the impression of stagnation in the critical evaluation of Carleton's works.

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<sup>73</sup> B. Sloan, *The Pioneers of Anglo-Irish Fiction 1800-1850* (Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe, 1986), p. 173.

<sup>74</sup> M. Chesnutt, *Studies in the Short Stories of William Carleton*, p. 13.

<sup>75</sup> W. B. Yeats, 'Irish National Literature', in *The Bookman* (July, 1895).

<sup>76</sup> Cf. *Life*, vol. 1, preface.

This present research, which aims at assessing Carleton in his own terms and with consideration of the tradition he was well acquainted with, takes advantage of the results of all the researches carried so far and evaluates Carleton's work from the standards of orature. This study deals with Carleton as a storyteller and concentrates mainly on Carleton's first work, *Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry*.

The first reason for limiting the scope of this study to this work is that it is the most suitable work for the tradition we are dealing with and shows Carleton in his 'natural' element, that is, without much influence from other traditions outside Ireland. Like many authors, Carleton was likely to draw the material for his first work from his experience, in particular from recollections of his youth, the period of life richer in emotion than mature age. The historical and cultural context of *Traits and Stories* reveals it as existing on the cusp of an oral and printed tradition, whereby Carleton drew from personal experiences and folk tradition, but was communicating this material in a printed medium and seeking ways to adapt the medium to his material. The second reason is that it is through this work that Carleton was well known. His shorter pieces published in 1845 as *Tales and Sketches* and his subsequent novels did not increase his fame in the literary world. For example, comparing Carleton's stories to his novels, Boué said that Carleton's 'lack of discipline, his bent for polemics, the limited scope of his observation, are less apparent or less prejudicial in his stories than in his novels'.<sup>77</sup>

Critics who dealt exclusively with Carleton's *Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry* include Margaret Chesnutt and Barbara Hayley. Apart from them, Carleton's short stories are mentioned in the context of wider studies on the short story genre, such as *The Irish Short Story* edited by Rafroidi and Brown, Thomas Flanagan's *The Irish Novelists*, Barry Sloan's *The Pioneers of Anglo-Irish Fiction 1800-1850*, or have been the subjects of articles for periodicals and journals, such as Roger McHugh's 'William Carleton: A Portrait of the artist as Propagandist', Cathal G. Ó Háinle's 'The Gaelic Background of Carleton's *Traits and Stories*', Maurice Harmon's 'Aspects of the Peasantry in Anglo-Irish Literature from 1800 to 1916', Brian Earls' 'Supernatural Legends'.<sup>78</sup> None of these critics who looked closely at Carleton's *Traits and Stories*

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<sup>77</sup> A. Boué, 'The Irish Short Story', in P. Rafroidi and T. Brown, eds., *The Irish Short Story* (Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe, 1979), p. 88.

<sup>78</sup> P. Rafroidi and T. Brown, eds., *The Irish Short Story*; T. Flanagan, *The Irish Novelists 1800-1850* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1958); B. Sloan, *The Pioneers of Anglo-Irish Fiction 1800-1850*; M.

assessed it from the perspective of a mixture of traditions and performing genres. It is hoped that the new approach this research embarks on, namely, the theory of orature, will present Carleton's work and Pacéré's poetry in a new light. It will be necessary, at the outset, to set out and weigh up some of the lexical and conceptual tools of orature. That is why this thesis starts with the definition of orature in the broad context of 'spoken' and 'written' literatures before using it to analyse the works of our two writers. The analysis itself will take us through three methods centred on the writers and their social milieus, the audience they were targeting, and the works themselves, a methodological approach which can be represented by the following figure that is adapted from Ngal's.<sup>79</sup>

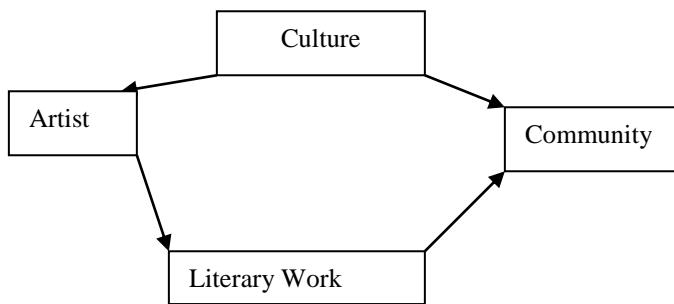


Fig. 3: Methodological approach

This figure shows that artists, their works of art and community or audiences, belong to and are dependent on a culture. The relationship between the artist and the culture is not vertical because artists draw from their cultures but work with personal skills; they use some aspects of culture and through personal endeavour enrich the lore of the culture with an augmented version of what they have taken from the culture. In other words, in the perspective of orature, artists are transcribers in their exploitation of cultural elements, and composers in their use of personal techniques in their tasks of transcription, and so their works can be described as falling between 'transcription' and 'composition';<sup>80</sup> hence, there is no contradiction in describing these artists, Carleton and Pacéré for instance, as transcribers and composers. The work that emerges from this process is offered to the appreciation of the community, as the horizontal disposition of

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Roger, 'William Carleton: A Portrait', in *Studies* (March, 1938), 47-62; C. G. Ó Háinle 'The Gaelic Background of Carleton's *Traits and Stories*', in *Éire-Ireland*, vol.18, 1 (1983), 6-19; M. Harmon, 'Aspects of the Peasantry in Anglo-Irish Literature from 1800 to 1916', in *Studia Hibernica*, 15 (1975), 105-127; B. Earls, 'Legends of the Supernatural in Anglo-Irish Literature', in *Béaloidéas* (1992-3), 93-144.

<sup>79</sup> M. A. M. Ngal, 'The African Artist: Tradition, Criticism and Creative Freedom', in Society of African Culture, ed., *The African Critic and his People*, pp. 57-58.

artist and community, on the same level on either side, presents artists as members of a community before whom they perform. The community stimulates and encourages artists by acknowledging their inputs and artists recognise the need for the support of the community by not insisting on their own importance over the community; this relationship culminates in collective authorship subsuming implicit individual authorships. All these explanations show that the evaluation of works of art that proceed from these cultures requires three approaches centred on the writers, their cultural environment and their audiences. Therefore, a brief biographical approach will be necessary, as the works are not *ex nihilo* creations. The orature form developed in the works was to be found first in the traditions and cultures in which Pacéré and Carleton grew up, so a review of their cultures is also necessary. Finally, these works were conditioned by the taste of the targeted audience for orature, a taste which the works were meant to address, hence the importance of an audience-orientated approach. The ultimate proof that these works belong to the literary form of orature has to emerge from an in-depth analysis of the works with the identifying elements of the theory of orature. In other words, we must attune ourselves to the traditional literary conventions of nineteenth-century Ireland and of Burkinabe tam-tam literature and become familiar with their form of orature. Only then will we appreciate and assess works modelled from these traditions as they really are. This research is at least an attempt in this direction.

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<sup>80</sup> Cf. B. Earls, 'Legends of the Supernatural', p. 95, where Earls described Irish literary legends as lying 'between transcription and composition'.

## Part One: Orality, Literacy, and Orature

In his dialogue with Phaedrus, Plato shows the inferiority of the written word to the spoken word through the following illustrative story. Troth, the Egyptian god to whom is attributed the invention of writing, comes to the god Thamus to present his most marvellous finding, hoping that it will improve both the wisdom and the memory of the Egyptians. Thamus, however, finds that writing will lead people to stop exercising their memory and become forgetful, relying on writing to bring things to their remembrance. Writing is a ‘receipt for recollection, not for memory’.<sup>81</sup> Drawing from this myth, Plato explains to Phaedrus other limitations of writing. As paintings that look like living beings but maintain silence when we ask them a question, so are written words: one supposes that written words understand what they (written words as personified) are saying but when one asks them a question, they repeat the same answer over and over again. Plato goes on to develop the idea that writing, ‘if it is ill-treated or unfairly abused, always needs its parent to come to its rescue; it is quite incapable of defending or helping itself’.<sup>82</sup> By ‘its parent’, Plato means the living and animate speech, which is the legitimate parent of written speech, ‘the kind that is written on the soul of the hearer together with understanding; that knows how to defend itself, and can distinguish between those it should address and those in whose presence it should be silent’.<sup>83</sup> Thus, comparing the merits of speech and writing as vehicles for the communication of truth, Plato rates ‘written literature’ as inferior to ‘spoken literature’. George Russell expresses a similar idea when he says that ‘literature is, after all, only an ineffectual record of speech’.<sup>84</sup> However, there is no unanimity around Plato and Russell’s opinions, as more value is usually given to ‘written literature’, in certain cultures, to the extent that ‘spoken literature’<sup>85</sup> appears to be a paradox or contradiction in these traditions. The autonomy often given to ‘written literature’ overlooks the fact that it derives from spoken language

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<sup>81</sup> Cf. Plato, *Phaedrus and the Seventh and Eighth Letters*, Walter Hamilton, trans. (Middlesex: Penguin Books Ltd, 1973), pp. 95-99.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., p. 97.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., p. 98.

<sup>84</sup> A E (George Russell), ‘Nationality and Cosmopolitanism in Art’, quoted by T. Eagleton, *Heathcliff and the Great Hunger: Studies in Irish Culture* (London & New York: Verso, 1995), p. 148.

<sup>85</sup> Throughout this thesis the phrase ‘spoken literature’ or ‘aural literature’ is taken as a generic term for ‘oral literature’, ‘drum literature’ and all instrumental and symbolic non-phonetic ways of linguistic expressions. We will use ‘aural literature’ when the emphasis is on reception and ‘spoken literature’ when the emphasis is on emission or on both emission and reception.

and needs the latter to exist fully. Orature, which designates a type of ‘written literature’ that is intended to be spoken, is a constant reminder that ‘written literature’ and ‘oral literature’ are inseparable, complementary parents. It is the object of this preliminary section to define these different terminologies, their proper characteristics and their interaction with each other.

## **Chapter One: Interface between ‘Spoken’ and ‘Written’ Literatures**

### **I.1.A) Primacy of ‘Spoken Literature’ over ‘Written Literature’**

Throughout centuries, ‘spoken literature’, in which I include non-phonetic sign, oral, drum and all instrumental literatures, and ‘written literature’ have been held apart as two separate, rival traditions. A debate about which one is primary continued following the invention of print which boosted the status of ‘written literature’. Some defended the primacy of writing. For example, Blaise de Vigenère and Claude Duret,<sup>86</sup> to justify their opinion that writing preceded, rather than derived from, the spoken language, dated the existence of natural writing to before the Great Flood in the Bible. According to them, written language is the natural writing Adam deciphers on the beasts God brought before him in order that he give them names. The same thesis was still defended in the first half of the last century by P. J. Van Ginneken<sup>87</sup> who saw in the signs in the palms of human hands at birth the first pictographs that would have been the source of spoken language. All these writers assign to writing a primacy over the spoken language which for many other people is unacceptable, nay a nonsense. Written letters do not provide meanings by themselves; otherwise, schooling would have been useless. Oral teaching preceded written teaching for long periods of time. For example, the sacred texts of many religions, namely *Shema Israel* in the Torah (ca 1500 B C), the Gospels, the Koran (7<sup>th</sup> century A. D.), etc. were first spoken before being written. ‘*Shema*’ in Hebrew means ‘listen’, ‘Gospel’ or ‘Evangel’ in Greek means good news that is spread out orally, and ‘*qur'an*’ in Arabic

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<sup>86</sup> B. de Vigenère, *Traité des chiffres ou secrètes manières d'écrire* (Paris : 1586), pp. 1-2 ; C. Duret, *Trésor de l'histoire des langues* (Cologne, 1613), pp. 19-20, cited by C. Hagège, *L'homme de paroles*, p. 70.

<sup>87</sup> *La reconstruction typologique des langues archaïques de l'humanité* (Amsterdam, Uitgave van de N. V. Noord-Hollandsche Uitgevers-Maatschappij, 1939), cited by C. Hagège, *L'homme de paroles*, p. 70.

means reading-aloud, recitation.<sup>88</sup> These titles, which put emphasis on aurality, show that the written texts are *aide-mémoires* for the purpose of recitation.

Writers of antiquity such as Plato (ca. 427- ca. 347 BC), mentioned above, and the French Enlightenment writer Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), in his *Discourse on the Origins of Languages*, rated the spoken language over the written one: ‘Languages are made to be spoken, writing serves only as supplement to the spoken word’, a surplus.<sup>89</sup> The linguist Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913) expressed a similar idea when he taught that languages are independent of writing, that writing ‘exists for the sole purpose of representing the [language]’, serving as a veil or support.<sup>90</sup> Criticising Saussure’s logocentrism and Rousseau’s theory on the origin of language, Derrida (1930-2004) did not totally deny the use of writing as substitute for speech, but showed, with his concept of ‘arche-writing’, that writing is *not merely* a supplement to oral speech. Derrida expanded the definition of writing to include ‘arche-writing’, which is an original form of language (pictorial, ideographic or symbolic writing) which is not phonetic.<sup>91</sup> ‘Arche-writing’ corresponds, to a certain extent and degree, to our wider definition of spoken language in order to include body and sign languages which are not phonetic.

All these writers express in different ways the vicariousness of the function of writing as an auxiliary form of language. Plato associates writing with death: the written text is a dead thing as opposed to active memory. Likewise, Rousseau condemns writing as destruction of presence and as a disease of speech and rehabilitates it only when it promises the re-appropriation of that of which speech allowed itself to be dispossessed. He shows that one of the disadvantages of writing is the fact that writing, instead of preserving the language, alters it by substituting exactitude to the expression, by conveying the ideas without the feelings.<sup>92</sup> In writing, all words are given the same value whereas in the spoken language, intonation gives different value to different words.

Despite these strong views on the primacy of ‘spoken literature’ (deriving from the primacy of spoken language), this literature is still sometimes defined only by contrast to ‘written literature’. Emevwo Biakolo, in his article on orality and literacy, writes: ‘Several

<sup>88</sup> Cf. *Collins English Dictionary* (Glasgow: HarperCollins Publishers, 5<sup>th</sup> ed., 2000).

<sup>89</sup> J.-J. Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origins of Languages*, cited by J. Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, corrected edition, G.C. Spivak, trans. (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), p. 303.

<sup>90</sup> F. de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics* (Glasgow: Fontana/Collins, 1974), pp. 23-24.

<sup>91</sup> Cf. J. Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, p. 60.

<sup>92</sup> Cf. J.-J. Rousseau, *Essai sur l'origine des langues*, p. 58.

scholars seem unable to make any serious theoretical sense of orality except in contrast to literacy.<sup>93</sup> It is regrettable that orality be considered only in reference to literacy because, as already said, from an evolutionary point of view, ‘written literature’ is a supplement to ‘spoken literature’. Even in our modern civilization one must notice that writing is an addition, not an alternative to orality. Writing about the two traditions, David Buchan says that generally ‘early written literature takes over narrative material, characteristics of style, and attitudes from its predecessor and coeval, [spoken] literature’.<sup>94</sup> ‘Spoken literature’ preceded ‘written literature’ in all cultures, a fact that is substantiated by some Western critics who attest that one cannot speak of ‘written literature’ in Western Europe (except Italy) before the invention of print.<sup>95</sup>

Therefore, instead of speaking of ‘written literature’ and its marked subset ‘spoken literature’, one might, as Niles puts it, ‘better speak of literature and its marked subset written literature’.<sup>96</sup> ‘Written literature’ falls under the larger scope of ‘spoken literature’ because writing is support to orality. Writing about orality and literacy in the context of African literature, Wole Ogundele also expresses a similar opinion when he says that ‘oral literature is superior to written literature in all its ramifications and the earlier the African artist returns to it, the better’.<sup>97</sup> Many other scholars express similar views. Lilyan Kesteloot, writing about the history of African literature, says that ‘spoken literature’ is the antecedent of ‘written literature’.<sup>98</sup> Following many linguists, Walter J. Ong clearly expresses the dependency of written texts on the spoken language when he writes:

In all the wonderful worlds that writing opens, the spoken word still resides and lives.

Written texts all have to be related somehow, directly or indirectly, to the world of sound, the natural habitat of language, to yield their meanings. ‘Reading’ a text means converting it to sound, aloud or in the imagination, syllable-by-syllable in slow reading or sketchily in the rapid reading common to high-technology cultures. Writing can never dispense with orality. (...) We can style writing a ‘secondary modelling

<sup>93</sup> E. Biakolo, ‘On the Theoretical Foundations of Orality and Literacy’, in *Research in African Literatures*, vol. 30, 2 (1999), 62.

<sup>94</sup> D. Buchan, ‘Oral Tradition and Literary Tradition: The Scottish ballads’, in H. Becker-Nielsen et al., eds., *Oral Tradition, Literary Tradition: A Symposium* (Odense: Odense University Press, 1977), p. 57.

<sup>95</sup> R. Fayolle, *La Critique*, cited by P. Ngoyi, ‘African Literary Criticism in Oral Traditional Literature’, in Society of African Culture, ed., *The African Critic and his People*, p. 97.

<sup>96</sup> J. D. Niles, *Homo Narrans: The Poetics and Anthropology of Oral Literature* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), p. 29.

<sup>97</sup> W. Ogundele, ‘Orality versus Literacy in Mazisi Kunene’s *Emperor Shaka the Great*’, in E. D. Jones, ed., *African Literature Today*, 18: *Orature* (1992), p. 9.

<sup>98</sup> L. Kesteloot, *Histoire de la Littérature négro-Africaine* (Paris : Karthala, 2001), p. 13.

system', dependent on a prior primary system, spoken language. Oral expression can exist and mostly has existed without any writing at all, writing never without orality.<sup>99</sup>

Ong equates all types of 'reading'—reading aloud or eye-reading—to performance without which the text remains dead. Ong's assertion above that writing cannot dispense with orality is supported by Alberto Manguel who shows in the second chapter of his *History of Reading* that 'reading out loud was the norm from the beginning of the written word'.<sup>100</sup> In other words, writing has been used as surrogate of the spoken word. Ong's viewpoint is substantiated by the figures he quotes: of the some three thousand languages spoken in the world today only some seventy-eight have a writing system. These figures show that the spoken word is the mother of all elaborated sign languages. Yet, one is taken aback to read Goody when he reproaches twentieth-century linguists for treating (in reaction against their nineteenth-century predecessors) 'the written [language] as a purely derivative phenomenon', allowing 'little or no autonomy to the written channel'.<sup>101</sup> The debate seems endless, especially when 'spoken' and 'written' literatures are presented as autonomous traditions in competition.

A restricted definition of the concept of 'literature' is at the origin of this debate, especially in the domain of literature as genre. Ong refers to 'oral literature' as 'monstrous concepts' generated by scholarship in the past and suggests the concept of 'voicings' to mean the oral art that developed thousands of years before writing.<sup>102</sup> Yet, not everything that is 'voiced' can be considered 'oral literature' in the same way that not everything written has a literary value. And 'letters' from which 'literature' draws its etymology are used in both 'spoken' and 'written' literatures. The letters of 'spoken literature' are words or phrases (*zabyuya* or mottos) that have been linguistically worked out to last longer (as mnemonics) than the other spoken words or voicings.<sup>103</sup> Researches have revealed that only a tiny portion of the words in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were not parts of formulas or mnemonics as these works were composed and performed orally before being written.<sup>104</sup> 'Written letters' are calques or transpositions from the letters or mnemonics of 'spoken

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<sup>99</sup> W. J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (London and New York: Methuen, 1982), p. 8.

<sup>100</sup> A. Manguel, *A History of Reading* (New York: Viking, 1996).

<sup>101</sup> J. Goody, *The Interface Between the Written and the Oral* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 261.

<sup>102</sup> Cf. W. J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, pp. 10-14.

<sup>103</sup> Cf. A. Sissao, *La littérature orale moaaga*, p. 6.

<sup>104</sup> Cf. W. J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, p. 23.

literature'. The 'letter' of the spoken word preceded the written letter, and Roger Caillois of the French Academy confirms this view when he writes of the etymology of literature:

"Literature comes from letter". The opposite would historically be more likely, for it is certain that almost everywhere literature, I mean a word that is tried so that it may last a little more than those that slip out of the lips, preceded the alphabet.<sup>105</sup>

'Letter' is etymologically a 'tried word', and rhyming played an important part in the process of 'shaping' or 'trying' these literary words to make them both different from ordinary words and easy to remember. The literary critic Mario Klarer reports that in cultures of orality, oral utterances were "stored" through rhyme and meter in a quasi-textual way, making it possible to later retrieve the data in unchanged form' and that 'the wording of an utterance was seen as a fixed text that could consequently be interpreted'.<sup>106</sup> Important messages and even proverbs and sayings were thus put into rhymed verse, which could preserve the exact words more easily than an oral prose text. The 'tried word' in rhymed verse preceded the alphabetic letter. Derrida's famous book, *Of Grammatology*, opens with a part titled 'Writing before the Letter', showing that a spoken system of writing preceded and served as source to written letters. Unless the etymology of literature is traced in this way to the 'tried word', 'literature' will remain wrongly associated with 'writing' to the detriment of 'spoken literature', thus posing problems to the terms 'spoken literature' and 'written literature'.

Exploring orality and literacy, William Bright broadens the concept of literature when he takes 'the term "literature" or "literary" to refer, roughly, to that body of discourses or texts which, within any society, are considered worthy of dissemination, transmission, and preservation in essentially constant form. The established term "oral literature" reminds us that literature may also be composed orally and regularly performed in that same medium.'<sup>107</sup> This broadening of the term 'literature' allows one to understand the notion of 'spoken literature'. Likewise, the term 'text', which for a long time has been associated with writing, has recently been brought back to its root meaning of 'something

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<sup>105</sup> R. Caillois, *Diogène 80*, cited by P. Ngiyol, 'African Literary Criticism in Oral Traditional Literature', in Society of African Culture, *The African Critic*, p. 97: 'Littérature vient de "lettre". Le contraire serait plus conforme à l'histoire. Car il est certain que presque partout la littérature, je veux dire une parole essayée pour durer un peu plus que celles qui échappent des lèvres, a précédé l'alphabet.'

<sup>106</sup> M. Klarer, *An Introduction to Literary Studies* (London: Routledge, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 2004), pp. 71-72.

<sup>107</sup> W. Bright, 'Poetic Structure in Oral Narrative', in D. Tannen, ed., *Spoken and Written Language: Exploring Orality and Literacy: vol. ix: Advances in Discourse Processes* (Norwood: Able Publishing Corporation, 1982), p. 171.

woven; a tissue'.<sup>108</sup> Spoken discourse is a weaving or stitching (rhapsody) of words and phrases, as the written text is a composition or weaving of letters. Painting being a form of writing, we can now speak of the text of a painting, music, film, and spoken language.

Seeing the text as 'a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture', and the book as 'only a tissue of signs', Roland Barthes says that 'to write is, through a prerequisite impersonality, (...) to reach that point where only language acts, 'performs', and not 'me' [the compositor]';<sup>109</sup> this is what artists of orature, Carleton and Pacéré for instance, try to do in their works of transcription and composition in order to offer an intact, 'impersonal' 'spoken literature' as they experienced it. Writing of this kind involves a certain dimension of impersonalisation, letting the linguistic signs speak for themselves; this results in the authorship of the written work being partially ascribed to the collectivity whose signs one uses. The situation is similar to 'spoken literature'. Karin Barber argues that, in Yoruba verbal literature, performance has no independence, it is not the object of the verbal art; instead 'it is the texts themselves, in the sense of configurations of words constituted *as* texts—and that this in part accounts for the texts' power and effectivity'.<sup>110</sup> Performance is commanded by the literary 'tried words'. Pacéré makes the same point when, speaking of the 'spoken literature' of the *bendre*, he says that this literature is 'forged by the instrument and not confectioned, elaborated by man; [that] the latter then must accept it or submit himself to it'.<sup>111</sup> The artist enjoys a limited freedom; for example, the nature of the tam-tams demands of the artist the use of many refrains. The drummer cannot make up his own stereotyped phrases or *zabyuya* at will; in the same way, a writer cannot capriciously make up a narrative based on his own coined words. Even readers are conditioned by the written texts they read, as they cannot change the written words.

In this perspective, one can understand Jan Mukarovsky's consideration of the work of art as having an independent power over its author and its audience.<sup>112</sup> The

<sup>108</sup> Cf. *Collins English Dictionary*, art. 'text'.

<sup>109</sup> R. Barthes, 'The Death of the Author', p. 170, p. 171, p. 168.

<sup>110</sup> Karin Barber, 'Quotation in the Constitution of Yoruba Oral Texts', in *Research in African Literatures*, vol. 30, 2 (1999), 18.

<sup>111</sup> *Le language*, p. 84. Original version : La littérature 'est forgée par l'instrument, et non confectionnée, élaborée par l'homme ; et celui-ci doit dès lors l'accepter ou la subir.' See also 'La Bendrologie en question: Réponse de Maître Pacéré', in *Annales de l'Université de Ouagadougou* (décembre 1988), p. 181. Pacéré uses the term 'confectionner' in the meaning of weaving, making cloth, and this refers to the etymology of 'text'.

<sup>112</sup> Cf. J. Mukarovsky, 'Littérature et sémiologie', in *Poétique*, 3 (1970), 386-398.

audience does not read the poem but recognises it through the skilful combination of phrases. For example, to convey to the audience the effects of snakes making noise, the French writer Jean Racine wrote this verse: *'Pour qui sont ces serpents qui sifflent sur vos têtes?'*<sup>113</sup> This line is both aural and visual: the two 's' in the last two words are silent but visual. Literature here serves as an independent medium between the author and the audience. The audience decodes the message by considering the text on its own as performance. In the same line of thought, Michel Riffaterre, writing about poetry as representation, expresses his view that one does not get the message of a poem by reading it, but one recognises the message of the poem through its performance.<sup>114</sup> In the case of the example above, one could easily miss the sound of snakes making noise by reading the poem with one's eyes alone, without performing it aloud. Only when one reads it aloud does one get its full meaning as well as the associated connotations unknown to the author himself. So, texts in 'spoken' and 'written' literatures are to a certain extent independent from the author and the audience and, as such, constrain the reader or performer. The writer and oral performer cannot do away with conventions imposed by literature itself — both spoken and written—and the critic cannot understand the work of art without a prior key to the conventions being used.

Therefore, instead of establishing a rivalry between 'oral literature' and 'written literature', separating them in order to oppose them to one another, it is better to consider them as interdependent, as shown in the broader definition of 'literature'. It is the nature and object of orature to underline and sustain the dialectic between the two, a dialectic that underlies J. Peytard's linguistic definition of writing as a 'linguistic message constructed by act of writing and by a complementary act of reading'.<sup>115</sup> Their complementarity appears more clearly in their definitions.

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<sup>113</sup> J. Racine, *Andromaque* (Paris : Ed. de la Pensée moderne, 1966), Act v, 5.

<sup>114</sup> 'Le poème comme représentation', in *Poétique*, 3 (Paris : Seuil, 1970), 401-418.

<sup>115</sup> J. Peytard, 'Problèmes de l'écriture du verbal dans le roman contemporain', in *La nouvelle critique*, numéro spécial *Linguistique et littérature*, Colloque de Cluny (Avril, 1968), p. 29: 'Tout message linguistique construit par acte de graphie et acte complémentaire de lecture entre dans l'ordre du scriptural'.

## I.1.B.) Definitions of ‘Spoken Literature’ and ‘Written Literature’

### I.1.B.i) Spoken Language/Literature

It is appropriate to distinguish different kinds of orality: primary and secondary orality, innate orality and orality of circumstance. Primary orality is characteristic of cultures untouched by writing or print. It is, for example, the orality of long ancient epics told and retold by bards in preliterate Ireland and Burkina Faso, as opposed to secondary orality, the orality of the media (radio, telephone, television and other instruments); these are secondary because they transmit a preexisting activity of orality. For example, listening to the news in radio or watching it on television is not becoming literate in oral literature: it is staying in an environment of oral communication.

Writing about literary genres, Jean-Marie Schaeffer further distinguishes innate orality (*oralité de principe*) from orality of circumstances.<sup>116</sup> By ‘orality of circumstances’, he means the orality that is due to the inexistence of a system of writing. ‘Innate orality’ means that the nature of a work is linked to its oral performance. Popular tales, proverbs, heroic poetry, etc. belong to the orality of circumstances (they could have been written if there was a system of writing in the culture); whereas the choral chant, incantation, poetry, a piece of drum poetry, and drama belong to innate orality or *oralité de principe*, as they owe their nature to performance. ‘Spoken literature’ refers to works coming mainly from cultures of primary orality and works belonging to innate and circumstantial orality. In this sense, listening to the poetry played by the *bendre* (a type of drum) or declaimed by a performer, is becoming literate, as initiation or education is necessary for access.

‘Spoken language’ is the carrier of both ‘spoken literature’ and other messages that are devoid of literary value to the extent that the term ‘spoken language’ has a wider scope than the term ‘spoken literature’; similarly, writing is a system by which ‘written literature’ is expressed, but all writings are not ‘written literature’. In other words, if everything written cannot be considered as literature, likewise, not everything spoken has the value of ‘spoken literature’. The term ‘spoken literature’ will be used throughout this thesis to refer to both medium (spoken language) and contents of ‘spoken literature’; the

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<sup>116</sup> Cf. *Qu'est-ce qu'un genre littéraire ?* (Paris : Editions du Seuil, 1989), p. 87.

term ‘spoken language’ will only be used in the broader sense to mean all messages, literary or not, that are expressed orally, with drums or gestures.

By ‘spoken literature’ is meant a message that cannot be recorded in space, in cultures of primary orality. It would be wrong to equate ‘spoken literature’ with oral literature, as the former is much wider than the latter. Oral literature is expressed through the mouth: ‘oral’ comes from the Latin *oris*, mouth. But it is possible to speak, to chat, by using other means than the mouth; with drums and whistles for example. The existence of a ‘spoken literature’, which is not oral, explains Pacéré’s rejection of the identification of all non-written African literature as oral literature:

Literature of tam-tam, and Mr. De Lapalisson could not say better, is not a written literature; the absence of materially fixed letters in the context of an analfabet environment testifies to it and imposes it.

However, it is not oral literature either and it is wrong to classify the literature of tam-tams and the unwritten literature of Africa in the oral tradition.<sup>117</sup>

Oral literature is a component of ‘spoken’ literature and as such is insufficient to express all the other speech surrogates such as drum and whistle languages. The phrase ‘spoken literature’ expresses the fact that literature may be and is composed and performed in the spoken language.

In his broadening of the term ‘literature’ to include ‘spoken literature’, William Bright gives three examples to substantiate the literariness of ‘spoken literature’: (1) the whole host of poetic and learned works from Ancient India or the oral composition and performance of epics such as the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey* in Ancient Greece; (2) the whole body of myths and legends existing in preliterate societies; (3) the large number of riddles, song texts, jokes, etc. which exist in the oral traditions as well as in our literate world.<sup>118</sup>

For example, in the African context, in J. M. Adiaffi’s *La carte d’identité*, in S. Badian’s *Noces sacrées* and in O. Bhelly-Quenum’s *L’initié*, the audience reads and interprets messages conveyed by the tam-tam. Even dance can convey messages full of proverbs, symbols and rhythms.<sup>119</sup> Marie-José Hourantier gives a good example of one

<sup>117</sup> *Le langage*, pp. 82-83: ‘La littérature du tam-tam, et Monsieur De Lapalisson ne dirait pas mieux, n’est pas une littérature écrite ; l’absence de caractères figés, matériels, dans un contexte de milieu analphabète, l’atteste, l’impose.

Cependant aussi, il ne s’agit pas d’une littérature orale et c’est à tort qu’on fait relever la littérature des tam-tams, et de l’Afrique non entrée dans l’écriture, de la tradition orale.’

<sup>118</sup> Cf. W. Bright, ‘Poetic Structure in Oral Narrative’, in D. Tannen, ed., *Spoken and Written Language*.

<sup>119</sup> Cf. N. A. Kazi-Tani, *Roman africain de langue française*, p. 10.

such dance in her analysis of the poetry of Didiga. The dynastic dance of the Akan chiefs is an example of a ‘speaking dance’ in which every step, every gesture appears as signs accessible at a second level.<sup>120</sup> Ruth Finnegan, in her study of oral literature in Africa, also calls for the consideration of the literature played on drums in West and Central Africa as a form of literature rather than music. In West Africa, some instruments are used either for harmony or for communication purposes. Finnegan explains how drums communicate through direct representation of the spoken language or in using a conventional code. For example, the chief drummer ‘speaks’ of the history of a community on the public occasion of a festival; at a dance, he maintains a running commentary on the dance, calling people by name to dance solo, telling them how to dance, sending them back into line with congratulations on the performance, and keeping the line dancers around him under control. An orchestra of two or three other drums accompanies the discourse or literature of the main drummer. He talks by making his drum sound above the others. It is still like this today in many Moaaga villages in Burkina Faso.

This kind of drumming is a highly specialized esoteric activity, with a period of training and exclusive membership. I, for example, have not been initiated into this literature. At my ordination, three years ago, the drummer was talking to me but I could not understand because I have not been initiated into this language. Fortunately for me, somebody stepped in and interpreted for me: ‘He is calling you. He is beating: Father! Father!’ With this information I could tune my ear and enter into the conversation. Without initiation one hears sound, like an illiterate person looking at a book as at a scribble. Ruth Finnegan gives her appreciation of this drum literature in a way that will startle some Western critics when she writes:

In a sense drum language fulfils many of the functions of writing, in a form, furthermore, better suited to tonal languages than an alphabetical script. Its usefulness too is undeniable in regions of dense forest where the only possible way of communicating, apart from actually sending messengers, was by sound.<sup>121</sup>

For example, Dr Carrington, who has an in-depth knowledge of drum language from having lived for over the quarter of a century in intimate association with the Lokele

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<sup>120</sup> Cf. M. J. Hourantier, ‘La parole poétique du Didiga de Zadi Zaourou’, in *Notre librairie*, 86 (1987), 85.

<sup>121</sup> R. Finnegan, *Oral Literature in Africa* (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 484.

people in Congo, says that he himself often drums for practical purposes: for example, to have a boat come from the opposite side of a river to ferry him across.<sup>122</sup>

But though Finnegan argues for the existence and usefulness of drum language, she makes the mistake of putting drum literature into ‘the category of highly developed oral literature’ or a part of *oral* literature.<sup>123</sup> Drum literature and oral literature have in common the basis of spoken language but differ in the means used to communicate. It is precisely because the concept of ‘oral literature’ fails to take into account all forms of unwritten African literature that Pacéré, from Burkina Faso, and Georges Niangorah-Bouah and Niangoran Porquet, both from the Ivory Coast, coined new concepts, respectively: ‘bendrologie’, ‘drummology’ and ‘griotique,’ to designate this kind of spoken language that is not oral. We will return to these terminologies in more analytical detail later in the definition of ‘orature’. At this stage we will simply look at their definitions.

‘Griotique’ means the art or science relative to the practical art of the griot or drum-beater, a study of his practical art.<sup>124</sup> Niangoran Porquet coined this concept in the wake of the Négritude movement, and intended it to be a synthesis of the practical works he undertook on the performance art of the griot. He defines ‘griotique’ as

A theatrical activity comprising dramatic art, poetic art, narrative art and epic art. It has two forms: a scriptural one, which is the ‘grioture’ and a spectacular one, which is the ‘griphony’. The stage director, the ‘griotiseur’, of the ‘griotician’ movement can stage ‘grioturgic’ works written by ‘grioticians’ or can draw from the Negro-African repertory in order to borrow some elements for the stage.<sup>125</sup>

As to the concept ‘drummologie’—from ‘drum’ in English, and *logos*, science—Georges Niangoran Bouah coined it in 1976 and defined it as a science whose object is the study and use of the language of African tam-tams as a source of documentation and knowledge of oral expression in use in the pre-colonial period.<sup>126</sup> He said he chose the

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<sup>122</sup> Cf. W. J. Ong, ‘African Talking Drums and Oral Noetics’, in *New Literary History*, vol. 8, 3 (1977), 412.

<sup>123</sup> R. Finnegan, *Oral Literature in Africa*, p. 499.

<sup>124</sup> Cf. U. Amoa, *Poétique de la poésie des tambours*, p. 42.

<sup>125</sup> ‘La griotique de Niangoran Porquet, propos recueillis par Amadou Koné’, in *Notre librairie*, 86 (1987), 91: ‘La griotique est une activité théâtrale qui englobe l’art dramatique, l’art poétique, l’art narratif, l’art épique. Elle se présente sous deux formes : l’aspect scriptural qui est la grioture et l’aspect spectaculaire qui est la griphony. Le griotiseur, qui est le metteur en scène du mouvement griotien, peut présenter des œuvres grioturgiques qui sont des œuvres littéraires écrites par des grioticiens ou alors puiser dans le répertoire négro-africain pour y puiser des éléments qu’il met en mouvement.’

<sup>126</sup> Cf. N. Bouah, ‘La drummologie, c’est quoi même ?’, in *Notre librairie*, 86 (1987), 80.

concept ‘drummologie’ instead of ‘tambourinologie’, ‘tamtamologie’ and ‘tambologie’ because these latter terms call to mind the art of playing or beating the drum. For him, it is not compulsory to know how to beat the drum in order to study this science. The objective of this science is to collect messages played from the drums. The concept ‘drummologie’ is also broadened by Bouah to apply to the fixed texts produced by other sound instruments, namely *balafon* and koras.

For Bouah, as for Pacéré, the tam-tam is for Akan and Moaaga people what writing is for other civilizations. The tam-tam was the memory of all official texts, the book of literature, religion, philosophy and a dictionary of biographies. The fixity of the drum language guarantees the authenticity of the texts. The drummers do not create the words or phrases they play, a point already made by Pacéré earlier. The following quote from Ong, who comments on Carrington’s experience with the Lokele people, makes the point more explicit with examples:

The ‘words’ on the drums are set into stereotyped contexts or patterns. To say ‘moon’ the drummer does not simply strike the tones for the Lokele word for moon, *songe* (‥), for two high tones could mean many things besides moon (...). Rather he strikes the tones for the stereotyped phrase meaning ‘moon look toward the earth (‥‥‥). The tones of ‘look toward the earth’, also themselves ambiguous, limit and are limited by the tones of the ‘moon’. ‘Moon look toward the earth’ is beat out on the drum every time the drummer wants to say ‘moon’. And so with the rest of the drum lexicon. For each simple word of ordinary speech, the drum language substitutes a much longer expression. These expressions, moreover are stereotyped, fixed in the drumming tradition, and must be learned by each novice drummer: a drummer cannot make up his own stereotyped expression at whim.<sup>127</sup>

Likewise, the Moaaga drummers of Burkina Faso use stereotyped phrases or sentences (*zabyuya*) conceived by the kings in consultation with the Elders and given to the caste of drum-beaters for conservation. To preserve the intelligibility, fixity, and authenticity of messages, any beater who deliberately modifies a text could (and can still) incur a death penalty.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> W. J. Ong, ‘African Talking Drums and Oral Poetics’, in *New Literary History*, vol. 8, 3 (1977), 415-416. See also T. Stern, ‘Drum and whistle “Languages”: An Analysis of Speech Surrogates’, in *American Anthropologist*, vol. 59, 3 (June 1957) 488-9.

<sup>128</sup> Cf. *Le langage*, pp. 24, 80-84.

The ‘speaking’ tam-tams are different from the others. For example, in Abron, the ordinary tam-tam is called *tchuni* and the ‘speaking’ tam-tam *tchrèman*, from *tchrè* (to show, teach and rear) and *man* (assembly, people, nation, group, country).<sup>129</sup> This etymology of *tchrèman* shows its literary function.

There is a connection between drum language/literature and oral language/literature, in the sense that the tones of every word within the lexical unit of the drummed language respect the fluctuations of the tonal oral language.<sup>130</sup> It is certainly in this sense that Eboué said that in the drummed language of Moosé, Gurunsi, Bobo (all are tribes in Burkina Faso), there is ‘an absolute identity of drum and whistle languages on one hand, and the spoken language on the other.’<sup>131</sup> However, the individual words, whose tonality is respected, lose the meaning they had in the oral language to constitute one ‘word’ or unit in the drummed language, in which case there is no simple identity between drum language and spoken language. Drum language is not an oral language, but a language in its own right, though both are aural. Of course, there is no residual content kept in the mouth of the speaker or in the tam-tam of the drummer. The literature, which is conveyed through spoken language, is memorized in the mind of the performer or drummer. Drumming, as rhythm and rhyme in mnemonics, is a great help in the process of the re-membering or retelling of this ‘spoken literature’ by using either oral or drummed languages as carriers.

The concept ‘bendrologie’ was codified by Pacéré in 1988 to signify ‘the science, the methodic studies, the methods of thinking, speaking, the rhetorical figures relative to the tam-tam called *Bendre* and indeed to the culture of this tam-tam, if not to the culture of all African drum-messages’.<sup>132</sup> The term ‘bendrologie’ extends to the study of the messages conveyed by other Moaaga instruments such as *lounga* and *gangaogo* (types of drums). For Pacéré, the *bendre* fulfills the same function as pen and paper, that is, as means of communicating the texts they create.

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<sup>129</sup> Cf. N. Bouah, ‘La drummologie, c’est quoi même ?’, 80-81.

<sup>130</sup> For an illustrative example, see T. F. Pacéré, *Causeries en langue Mooré du Burkina Faso* in 2 cassettes (Ouagadougou : Burida, 1992).

<sup>131</sup> F. Eboué, ‘La clef musicale des langages tambourinés et sifflés’, in *Bulletin du comité de l’Afrique occidentale française*, 18 (1935), 353-360, quoted by T. Stern, ‘Drum and whistle ‘Languages’: An Analysis of Speech Surrogates’, in *American Anthropologist*, vol. 59, 3 (June 1957), 495.

<sup>132</sup> *Le langage*, p. 12: ‘la Béndrologie désigne la science, les études méthodiques, les méthodes de penser, de parler, des figures de rhétorique relatives au tam-tam bénédre et donc en fait à la culture de ce tam-tam, voire à la culture des messages tambourinés, notamment d’Afrique.’

This development shows that it is necessary to consider both oral literature and drum literature, which are expressed in oral and drum languages respectively, as two independent categories, both belonging to ‘spoken literature’ and, therefore, to spoken language in the broader sense. Written language also needs an inclusive, broad, definition that encloses all aspects of signs of communication.

### I.1.B.ii) Written Language/Literature

Writing or logography is a graphic system of language notation, a representation of the spoken language by graphic signs. Several logographic principles (morphemography, ideography, phonography) govern the different systems of writing. Research has evidenced that Black Africa knew of and used written language, but later abandoned it in favour of spoken language; as the Senegalese national and French academic, Leopold Sédar Senghor, observed: ‘It is the luck of Black Africa to have disdained writing, even when she did not ignore it. And in fact, numerous alphabets invented by Negroes can be counted.’<sup>133</sup> Mveng enunciated the writing or written systems Africans used and then disdained when he wrote:

Negro-African civilisation is not only oral, it is also written, and its writing is our traditional art. Drawings of desert Touareg weavings, of Mali Dogon weavings, of Ghana adinkra motifs, of Ashanti and Baoulé weights in the Ivory Coast, of Abomey, Benin or Foumban paintings, the Abbddia motifs of South-Cameroon, the sculpted Tchokwé dramas of Angola, Kassai Bakuba symbols, and the graffiti of popular parchments of Ethiopia, all this constitutes a written language that tells the history and everyday life of our peoples. And this language dates far back, very far back in the past: before the beginning of writing in Egypt.<sup>134</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> L. S. Senghor, *Liberté I: Négritude et humanisme* (Paris : Seuil, 1964), p. 238. ‘C’est la chance de l’Afrique noire d’avoir dédaigné l’écriture, même quand elle ne l’ignorait pas. Et de fait, on peut compter de nombreux alphabets inventés par des Nègres.’ A. Ricard, ‘Africa and Writing’, in A. F. Irele and S. Gikandi, eds., *The Cambridge History of African and Caribbean Literature*. 2 vols. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004, pp. 153-163, also makes a similar argument.

<sup>134</sup> E. Mveng, ‘Négritude et civilisation gréco-romaine’, in *Colloque sur la négritude* (Paris : Présence Africaine, 1972), p. 50 : ‘la civilisation négro-africaine n’est pas seulement orale; elle est aussi écrite, et son écriture, c’est notre art traditionnel. Les dessins des tissages touareg du désert, des tissages dogon du Mali, des motifs adinkra du Ghana, des poids ashanti et baoulé de Côte-d’Ivoire, des bas-reliefs d’Abomey, du Bénin ou de Foumban, les motifs Abbddia du sud-Cameroun, les scènes sculptées des Tchokwé de l’Angola, les symboles des Bakuba du Kassai, et les graffiti des parchemins populaires d’Ethiopie, tout cela constitue un langage écrit qui raconte l’histoire et la vie quotidienne de nos peuples. Or, ce langage écrit remonte loin, très loin dans le passé: avant la naissance d’écriture en Egypte!'

Akan people used figurines as ideograms to weigh gold, to represent proverbs, to count or do mathematics and geometry. At a meeting with his council of elders, Nana Boaffo Nta, king of the Agni Ebrossa of Enchi in Ghana, near Burkina Faso, said, speaking of the figurines: ‘the weights [in figurine] are the book of the Elders. In time past, that is, before colonization, the reading of this book was taught and its content explained to all the children.’<sup>135</sup> He further explained that the *dja*, the sacred leather case containing all the figurines, was treated as the Bible, as was the sacred *donagh* in Ireland.<sup>136</sup>

Why have Black Africans disdained the use of writing? One possible answer is that after weighing the pros and cons of spoken language against written language, preference for the live human voice against the semi-dead voice (writing) was a determinant in the option for spoken language. Speech is indeed the major art in Black African civilization. Other civilizations are timidly and gradually giving up the written medium in favour of digital media which can record the voice and/or image, as illustrated in the general introduction. However, in Black Africa, these new media, as carriers of literature, would be treated with disdain, because Black Africans prefer live performance to ‘speaking machines’. In fact, discussing the probability of the future of African novels if ever these were recorded on tapes, Coetzee has said that taped novels would not find success in Africa because people want ‘more than just to sit in silence listening to a disc spinning in a little machine’; living voice and living presence combined in performance is what they need.<sup>137</sup> Print, tape and other media can only be used as support to performance in the perspective of orature. Seen against the background of this broader definition of ‘writing’ within the general picture of many forms of media, written language is compatible with spoken language, ‘written literature’ with ‘spoken literature’.

Some critics have already started using this broadened definition. Norman Vance and the critics of *The Field Day Anthology of Irish Writing* (cf. general introduction) used the wider term ‘writing’, or its meaning, in place of the restrictive term ‘literature’. Hillis Miller too, noticing the death of a restricted Western notion of literature, felt the need, in his recent book on literature, to enlarge the term to ‘a certain use of words or other signs that exists in some form or other in any human culture at any time’.<sup>138</sup> Reflecting on the

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<sup>135</sup> N. Bouah, ‘Les mots des poids: les poids akan à peser l’or’, in *Notre librairie*, 86 (1987), 71.

<sup>136</sup> Cf. W. Carleton, ‘The Donagh; or the Horse-stealers’, in *T. & S. I*, pp. 405-406.

<sup>137</sup> J. M. Coetzee, *Elizabeth Costello*, p. 50.

<sup>138</sup> J. Hillis Miller, *On Literature* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), p. 13.

etymologies of ‘literature’ and ‘text’, and realising that the origins of these two central terms are ‘not of great help in defining literature or text’, Mario Klarer also suggests that ‘it is more enlightening to look at literature or text as cultural and historical phenomena’,<sup>139</sup> (which is one of our three adopted approaches for this research). Klarer uses ‘literature’ and ‘text’ as equivalent synonyms, text being reduced here to the written text, in which context the etymology of ‘text’ is not of great help; otherwise, the etymology of text as weaving or confection is useful (see footnote 111). He defines literature broadly as that which a given culture produces to leave behind as a trace of itself, or what a given society calls literature. He further observes that ‘not only the visual—writing is always pictorial—but also the acoustic element, the spoken word, is an integral part of literature, for the alphabet translates spoken words into signs.’<sup>140</sup>

These critics, especially Miller and Klarer, draw attention to the acoustic element in writing, which has been neglected in literary criticism. That writing is both visual and acoustic means that reading, whether solitary or public, involves seeing and listening to a re-translation of the signs into their equivalent spoken words, aloud or in the imagination. In solitary reading, the eye functions as an organ of hearing in such a way that the Saussurian linguistic structure ‘from ear to brain’ can be applied to a linguistic structure ‘from eye to brain’ and, in this sense, one can paraphrase de Saussure by saying that, in silent reading, the sight of a given letter ‘triggers in the brain a corresponding sound pattern’.<sup>141</sup> Blaise Pascal, Hegel and Merleau-Ponty have argued that silence is itself eloquent. Merleau-Ponty, in *Phenomenology of Perception*, argued along with Hegel that words are not the expression of silent interior thought and that silence is ‘not an auditory nothingness’, but that ‘in fact this so-called interior silence is noisy with words’ and, therefore, ‘all silence [is] a modality of the being of sound’.<sup>142</sup> In the same manner, the French philosopher Blaise Pascal wrote in his *Discours sur les passions de l'amour* that ‘there is an eloquence of silence that penetrates more than language can do’,<sup>143</sup> a statement which suggests that ‘silent reading’ is not devoid of eloquence. Silence, which is

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<sup>139</sup> M. Klarer, *An Introduction to Literary Studies*, p. 1.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

<sup>141</sup> F. De Saussure, ‘The Object of Study’, in D. Lodge, ed., *Modern Criticism and Theory: A Reader* (London and New York: Longman, 1988), p. 5.

<sup>142</sup> M. Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, C. Smyth, trans. (London and New York: Routledge, 1958), p. 382 and p. 424.

<sup>143</sup> B. Pascal, *Oeuvres complètes* (Paris : Gallimard, 2000), p. 205 : ‘Il y a une éloquence du silence qui pénètre plus que la langue ne saurait faire.’

sometimes used as a poetical form of expressing deeper emotions more effectively than written words, and which is represented in the spoken language by pauses between syllables, in musical scripts by notes or tones as the other sounds, and in writing by spaces between words, makes language possible by constituting itself as the measure of loudness: solo-reading is reading aloud interiorly, it is the minimum level of reading aloud. Without spacing, our written system would hardly be intelligible, and spoken language also owes its significance to silences or pauses, as Merleau-Ponty observed: ‘the spoken word is significant not only through the medium of individual words, but also through that of accents, intonation, gesture and facial expression’, whose loudness is relative to silence.<sup>144</sup> The acoustic element is therefore present in any kind of reading; the eye does not read a phrase in italic or in capital letters with the same loudness as the other words in ordinary characters; eye-reading respects aurality and wordpower.

Hildegard Tristam defines aurality (from Latin *auris*, ear) as a written tradition where literature is both conceptually and medially written, but is meant to be heard.<sup>145</sup> This definition is supported by Joyce Coleman who, in her study of medieval English literature, found that ‘aurality’ was used by critics of the time to describe the late medieval penchant for reading written texts aloud to small audiences.<sup>146</sup> She illustrates her study with Chaucer’s particular modes of communicating with his audience. Chaucer, in typically using phrases such as ‘as ye shall hear’ or ‘as ye have heard before,’ expected his texts to be read aloud. Acknowledging the stable interaction between orality and literacy as modes of culture or of literary reception, Coleman wonders how can we talk about the communalising and synthesising often associated with orality and the individualising and analytical features associated with literacy.<sup>147</sup> In her study of medieval English literature, she proposed one new term to help clarify the compacted meanings of oral and literate: wordpower, which is defined as the capacity to put emphasis on words.

Wordpower is a term used by specialists in the analysis of the verbal art of singers and storytellers to refer to ‘sententious, rhythmically charged language that is uttered in a

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<sup>144</sup> Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, C. Smyth, trans. (London and New York: Routledge, 1958), p. 174.

<sup>145</sup> H. L. C. Tristam, ed., *Medieval Insular Literature Between the Oral and the Written II: Continuity of Transmission* (Tübingen: Gunter Nar Verlage, 1997), p. 5.

<sup>146</sup> Cf. ‘On Beyond Ong: Taking the Paradox out of “Oral Literacy” (and “Literate Orality”)’, in H. L. C. Tristam, ed., *Medieval Insular Literature*.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid., pp. 155-156.

heightened register'.<sup>148</sup> The concept 'wordpower' expresses the capacity of the human voice (and eye), through its modulations, to give emphasis to socially important forms of discourse. According to John Niles, the term 'wordpower', has many advantages. One of the advantages of the term 'wordpower' lies in its potency to bypass the artificial boundaries cutting off poetry from prose, 'written literature' from 'oral literature'.<sup>149</sup> Another advantage of this term is that it presents no danger of anachronism as in the phrase 'oral literature' understood as a by-product of 'written literature', but directs attention to the dynamism of imaginative literature, its grounding in speech, its pragmatic uses, and its links to larger systems of power in society.

Going back to comment on Miller's explanation above, with the richness of the definitions of wordpower and aurality, one can say that the 'visual signs' in Miller's expression exist in many forms (alphabetic letter or 'tried word') depending on the culture. Both Miller and Klarer see the definition of 'writing' as historically and culturally dependent. The advent of new media of literature strengthens this viewpoint, if it has not caused it to emerge. Every culture has its own form of literature in which the acoustic element or performance is an integral part. This new approach to literature requires a new criticism of literary works which have been examined without taking into consideration sound elements or aspects of performance. It is the object of orature, as we shall see in the following chapter, to fill in this gap by putting emphasis on performance and by broadening the horizons of 'literature' and 'writing'.

In its broadest sense, writing is every spatial and visual semiotic system including mythography and logography.<sup>150</sup> Mythography is a graphic system of language notation that does not refer to verbal language but constitutes sign systems that address themselves to sight or to touch. Jean-Jacques Rousseau calls it the first way of writing that consists in picture-writing, in painting the objects themselves instead of the sounds.<sup>151</sup> An example of mythography<sup>152</sup> in its representation through objects is the famous message addressed to the Persians by the Scythians. The story is told by the Historian Herodotus of Halicarnassus. He relates how Darius, upon invasion of Scythia, was led on continually by

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<sup>148</sup> J. D. Niles, *Homo Narrans*, p. 29.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 29.

<sup>150</sup> Cf. O. Ducrot and T. Todorov, *Encyclopedic Dictionary of the Sciences of Language*, C. Porter, trans. (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979), article 'writing', p. 193.

<sup>151</sup> Cf. J. J. Rousseau, *Essai sur l'origine des langues*, pp. 47-8.

the retreating enemy, until he and his combatants were outworned by guerilla warfare without being able to bring the Scythians to a pitched battle. The Scythian princes dispatched a herald to the Persian camp with presents of a mouse, a frog, a bird, and five arrows for Darius. A message is contained in these symbolic presents. The mouse symbolizes land because it inhabits earth; the bird stands for flight, the frog for water and arrows for fight. But one thing is to understand the symbols, another to read the message of these symbols put together. Darius self-confidently interpreted the gifts to signify that the Scythians gave up land and water, the bird for swift flight and the arrows as surrender of their power and arms. To this reading, Gobryas, wiser than Darius, opposed another more likely interpretation: ‘Unless, O Persians, you can turn yourselves into birds and fly through the air, or become mice and burrow under the ground, or be as frogs and take refuge in the fens, you shall never escape from this land, but die pierced by our arrows.’<sup>153</sup> A similar problem of interpretation happens in ‘written literature’, as writing about the poetics of the great rhetoricians, Paul Zumthor epitomises the weaknesses of the written text and calls for spoken language to help it:

Text: a depository of a discourse on the ‘mone’ but an unfaithful depository; a dissimulator of the same discourse, but a clumsy dissimulator, a contrived lie. Hence, the simultaneous necessity of a decoding, inevitably reductive, and of a recourse to some notion resetting the content into the ‘model’ which was drawn from it.<sup>154</sup>

For example, ‘a mad doctor’ can mean both a doctor who is mad and a doctor nursing the ‘mad’ people. But the isolated phrase ‘a mad doctor’ does not give one much information about its meaning. Writing in these cases cannot defend itself without the spoken language or a context which creates meaning.

The most important part of mythography is pictography, according to which figurative designs can convey messages. Pictograms, as defined in the dictionary of linguistics, are complex drawings that keep the contents of the message without referring to its linguistic form, to the spoken account, and were used by hunters and fishermen

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<sup>152</sup> For further examples of mythography, see O. Ducrot and T. Todorov, *Encyclopedic Dictionary of the Sciences of Language*, p. 193.

<sup>153</sup> <[www.mainlesson.com/display.php?author=macgregor&book=greece&story=bridge](http://www.mainlesson.com/display.php?author=macgregor&book=greece&story=bridge)> (Accessed on 8 March 2006).

<sup>154</sup> P. Zumthor, *Le masque et la lumière : La poétique des grands rhétoriqueurs* (Paris : Ed. du Seuil, 1978), p. 145: ‘Texte : dépositaire d’un discours sur le mone, mais dépositaire infidèle ; dissimulateur de ce même discours, mais dissimulateur malhabile, mensonge truqué. D’où la nécessité simultanée d’un décodage, inévitablement réducteur, et du recours à quelque notion réintègrant le contenu dans le ‘modèle’ qui en fut extrait.’

(Indians of America, the Eskimos, Siberians, African Bochimans and Oceanians.)<sup>155</sup> Eskimos, for example, when they leave home, are said to leave on their doors a message-drawing indicating the direction they have taken and the nature of their activity.

Paintings and drawings are pictograms insofar as they tell history. The national myth of Ethiopia, celebrating the visit of the Queen of Sheba to King Solomon, was recorded in the following series of 'strip' paintings.<sup>156</sup>



Fig. 4: Myth of Ethiopia, Queen of Sheba meeting Solomon in Jerusalem

This painting preserved the myth in a way that is similar to writing, as both function as help to memory. This is also the case with some decorated paintings and plastic art in some African countries.<sup>157</sup> Tattoos, masks, statues, pottery, jewels, sculptures, used as objects of or aids to knowledge of historical truth, are pictograms. Tam-tam or *bendre*, one of Pacéré's concerns in his writings, is a pictogram in Moaaga culture in two ways. Firstly, even the meaningless sound of the *bendre* functions as a pictogram-signal, which is a kind of aid to memory serving to stir up a recitation of poetry. Secondly, the *bendre* itself in its external form and decoration is a pictogram-sign that 'speaks to the sight'

<sup>155</sup> J. Dubois, et al., *Dictionnaire de linguistique* (Paris : Librairie Larousse, 1973), p. 177.

<sup>156</sup> J. Goody, *The Interface Between the Written and the Oral*, p. 9.

<sup>157</sup> Cf. N.-A. Kazi-Tani, *Roman africain de langue française*, p. 10.

because it contains history.<sup>158</sup> Because of its highly historical significance it cannot be sold and in times of danger the drummer should protect the *bendre* rather than saving his own life.<sup>159</sup>

In the Irish context, the *donagh*, as described by Carleton in one of his stories that bears that very name, is a pictogram-sign. Carleton, in endnotes, gives a fairly detailed history of the *donagh* in a way that enables us to consider it as an example of mythography. He writes that the *cumdach*, or reliquary, has been from time immemorial popularly known by the name of *Domnach*, or, as it is pronounced, *donagh*, a word derived from the Latin *Dominicus [Lord]*. In traditional belief, the *donagh* is an ornamented case that contained the manuscript copy of the Gospels brought by St Patrick on his mission to Ireland. It was also called *Domnach Airgid* because of its ancient or silver plated case. Relics are attached to the outer and least ancient cover of it, featuring a picture of St Patrick presenting it to St Mac-Carthen. The *donagh* was venerated: no superstition was more common in connection with the *donagh* than the dread of its being opened.<sup>160</sup> The venerated *donagh* was then a symbolic non-phonetic sign, a pictograph full of history for the Irish people. Below is a picture of the *donagh*.<sup>161</sup>



Fig. 5: The Donagh

One can then observe that this broad definition of writing as a surrogate of the spoken language shows that writing and spoken language are bound together as means of communication. Unrecorded, the spoken word is temporal, vanishes from space whereas

<sup>158</sup> The reference to pictogram-signal and pictogram-sign are drawn from J. Dubois et al., *Dictionnaire de linguistique*, p. 177.

<sup>159</sup> Cf. *Le language*, p. 33.

<sup>160</sup> W. Carleton, 'The Donagh; or the Horse-stealers', in *T.&S. I*, pp. 405-406.

the written word is kept in space. This is captured in Latin as ‘*verba volant, scripta manent*,’ meaning that written words are residue whereas spoken words have no such material deposit. However, what is written not only comes from the oral tradition or from the mind, but also oral tradition continues to feed ‘written literature’, to give it life and meaning. This complementary act of reading, as necessary for ‘written literature’, justifies the concept of orature, the object of the present study. Nora-Alexandra Kazi-Tani puts it well when she writes:

It is exactly here, in the manner in which the frontier between oral and written is transgressed, that the originality of [orature] lies, in the sense that writing brings about the double performance intended to give the illusion of the warmth of the human voice and to include the reader in the ‘HERE’ and ‘NOW’ of direct communications. One does not have the impression of reading the African authors but of listening to them.<sup>162</sup> Orature, which will be given a detailed definition later, designates a type of ‘written literature’ that requires performance. There is in this kind of literature what L. J. Calvet calls a ‘picturalité de l’oralité’ (pictography of orality) that incites the tongue to speak, to voice it out.<sup>163</sup> Only through reading aloud or performance does ‘written literature’ regain its living biotope. Obviously, what is written needs the help of spoken language to be understood. Spoken and written languages are complementary. ‘Spoken literature’, ‘written literature’ and orature are intimately linked to one another though they have distinct characteristics to which we now turn, because the more one understands the characteristics proper to each, the more one sees the intimate link that binds them together and the transfer from one realm into the other.

### I.1.C) Transfer of Language

Only by knowledge of the characteristics proper to spoken and written languages can one identify the transfer from one into the other. Therefore, the presentation of the following characteristics<sup>164</sup> will precede the study of the transfer.

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<sup>161</sup> The picture is scanned from W. Carleton, *T.&S. I*, p. 406.

<sup>162</sup> N. Kazi-Tani, *Roman africain de langue française*, p. 14 : ‘C’est justement là, dans la manière dont cette frontière entre l’oral et l’écrit est transgressée, que réside l’originalité [ de l’orature], en ce sens que l’écriture réalise la double performance de donner l’illusion de la chaleur humaine et celle d’impliquer le lecteur dans l’ «ICI» et le «MAINTENANT» des communications en direct. On n’a pas l’impression de lire les auteurs africains mais de les écouter.’

<sup>163</sup> L. J. Calvet, *La tradition orale* (Paris : Presses Universitaires de France, 1984), p. 72.

<sup>164</sup> The distinctive features that will be given in this section are the results of research done on the English language. There is no evidence on the applicability of these characteristic elements to other languages,

Research has revealed that written language has the greater use of abstract terms, choice of words, explicitness, elaboration, formality, reliance on a dead language and the less personalised usage of words than spoken language.<sup>165</sup> Some aspects in this list, namely impersonality and dead language, are proper to written language, whereas the other characteristics (choice of words, formality, etc.) are used in both spoken and written languages, with this difference that written language uses them more often than spoken language does. One can also identify this difference in degree of usage in Ong's characterisation of 'spoken' expression as additive rather than subordinative, aggregative rather than analytic, close to the human lifeworld, emphatic and participatory rather than objectively distanced, situational rather than abstract,<sup>166</sup> characteristics which are applicable particularly to Pacéré's poetry as we shall see in part three (cf. III.2.d).

Of general interest for orature especially are five other general main characteristics of spoken versus written language or literature that I now propose to consider. The first and the most obvious distinctive characteristic of written and spoken literatures is relative to the ways of their conservation. In the literary tradition, the process of memorising relies on the use of letters. Our thoughts, stories and creative arts are rendered perennial in conventional letters kept on paper. In the realm of 'spoken literature' (inclusive of oral literature and drum literature), the spoken words are now kept semi-alive on tapes or compact disks. However, it must be again observed that, semi-dead in writing (because it can be resurrected through performance), the spoken word is only semi-alive on tapes as tapes contain the performance without the performer; only in real performance is the spoken word truly alive and personal.

Before these modern technologies, mnemonic devices such as formulaic phrases were used as counterparts of letters in the written tradition. Deborah Tannen, in her study of the literate and oral continuum in discourse, confirms this fact when she observes that while knowledge, in literate society, is seen as facts and insights preserved in written records, in oral traditions, 'oral epics are not memorised but reconstructed at each telling session through the use of formulaic phrases on the skeleton of a familiar plot'.<sup>167</sup> She

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especially Mooré and Irish. Characteristics that seem unlikely to be applicable to Irish and Mooré will be progressively pointed out.

<sup>165</sup> Cf. J. Goody, *The Interface Between the Written and the Oral*, pp. 263-4.

<sup>166</sup> Cf. W. J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, pp. 36-57.

<sup>167</sup> D. Tannen, 'The Oral/literary Continuum in Discourse', in D. Tannen, ed., *Spoken and Written Language*, p. 1.

quotes Ong who said that in oral culture, formulaic expressions such as sayings, clichés, and proverbs are the repository of received wisdom, signalling knowledge that is already shared. Used to remember whole stories, proverbs and all mnemonics are like a condensed literature. A proverb or a *zabyuure* is a summary of a long story. A Yoruba proverb expresses this idea very well: ‘The proverb is the horse of the spoken word; and when the spoken word is lost, it is with the help of the proverb that one can find it.’ Proverbs and *zabyuya* are to ‘spoken literature’ what written letters are to ‘written literature’, means of remembrance. Proverbs can hardly be lost because they are used in daily conversation. So they last as long as they are used. Likewise, we will lose our current modes of ‘written literature’ if we stop using our writing symbols in favour of other symbols, like those referred to in the general introduction. What is written is preserved from being lost as long as somebody can read it.

Connected to these two modes of preservation is the particular attention each of them requires from its audience. Angela Hildyard and David Olson<sup>168</sup> have shown that while listeners, in oral tradition, pay attention to the theme of the story, building a coherent representation of what is meant, in the literary tradition, on the other hand, readers pay closer attention to the meaning of sentences, recalling more incidental details which are more accurate in their judgements of what is in fact in the text. In other words, the second major characteristic difference of ‘spoken’ and ‘written’ literatures, as pointed out by linguists,<sup>169</sup> is that in literate tradition, the meaning is in the printed text, thought being analytic, sequential, and linear, and truth residing in logical or coherent argumentation. In the spoken tradition, however, the meaning is not in the text, but in the context (this is especially relevant to the literature of the *bendre*), thought being elaborated through a stitching of formulaic language and truth residing in common-sense reference to experience and knowledge acquired through identification with the speaker or characters. Apropos, Melville Jacobs suggests that we should speak of ‘actors’ instead of ‘characters’ in relation to oral literature because in it ‘emphases are upon actors, acts, scenes,

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<sup>168</sup> A. Hildyard and D. R. Olson, ‘On the Comprehension and Memory of Oral vs. Written Discourse’, in D. Tannen, ed., *Spoken and Written Language*, pp. 31-32.

<sup>169</sup> Cf. D. Tannen, ed., *Spoken and Written Language*.

epilogues, and the like, rather than plots, motifs, and episodes'.<sup>170</sup> The importance of performance is highlighted here.

Thirdly, oral and literary traditions also differ in relation to the function of the audience. Commenting on the Gaelic short story, the Irish critics Maurice Harmon and Frank O'Connor opined that the oral tale requires an audience, whereas the literary tale does not. Cathal Ó Hainle strongly disagrees with them. He observes that though their distinction seems impressive, in reality it contains little of value. 'The performance of an oral tale in narration', Ó Hainle argues, 'requires an audience, but the tale itself has existence [in the memory of the taleteller, I would add,] before the performance, just as the literary story has existence [in a closed book] before the reading'.<sup>171</sup> Whereas Harmon and O'Connor imply that the oral tale is essentially defined by audience, for Ó Hainle the two forms require audiences; readers are the first audiences of the literary tale, as they listen to the tale by reading it. This discussion brings to light the frequent ignorance or denial of the acoustic element in reading and of the fact that the printed tale was often used as an oral tale in nineteenth-century Ireland (cf. II.2.B). Many aspects of the oral tale, such as the use of formulaic language, the lack of subtlety in characterisation and basic simplicity of form, some of which are translated in the printed form of the tale, are actually determined by the fact that it is destined for a live audience. Indeed, in storytelling, the role of the teller is to show the audience what the point of the story is – to answer beforehand the question 'so what?' Deborah Tannen writes:

Speakers communicate the point of a story (...) by means of 'evaluation,' either external or internal. External evaluation is the obvious kind: the teller steps outside the story to poke the reader verbally and say, 'Hey, here's the point! This can be done by such comments as 'And this was the incredible thing,' or by explaining, for example, 'When he said that, I felt awful! (...) Direct quotation is a common form of internal evaluation.<sup>172</sup>

In West African storytelling tradition, the audience can interrupt the narrator and ask for explanation whenever they do not find the story clear.<sup>173</sup> In this sense, approbation and

<sup>170</sup> M. Jacobs, *The Content and Style of an Oral Literature: Clackamas Chinook Myths and Tales* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1959), p. 7.

<sup>171</sup> C. G. Ó Hainle, 'The Gaelic Background of Carleton's *Traits and Stories*', in *Eire-Ireland*, vol. 18, 1 (1983), 13.

<sup>172</sup> D. Tannen, 'The Oral/literary Continuum in Discourse', in D. Tannen, ed., *Spoken and Written Language*, p. 8.

<sup>173</sup> Cf. M. Ano N'Guessan, 'Le conte traditional oral', in *Notre librairie*, 86 (1987), 42.

disapprobation not only make the narrative lively and interesting but also incite the storyteller to respect the culture in being true to the story as far as possible. This contribution of the audience makes oral storytelling a collective art. To some extent, such is the case of Carleton's *Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry* in which the audience is asked to play an active role. Carleton uses intrusion and other didactic devices in his works. As Terry Eagleton puts it, 'Carleton feels no compunction in arresting his narrative to preach, propagandise, engage in amateur sociological analysis, advance his pet panaceas for social ills.'<sup>174</sup> The use of intrusions by the audience, more abundantly in the fireside stories especially, gives to Carleton's stories the quality of a collective art, resembling oral literature.

Fourthly, another theoretical feature of spoken versus written versions of the same story is that written texts tend to be shorter, have longer words, more attributive adjectives and subordinate clauses than spoken narrative.<sup>175</sup> Length is one difference between the spoken story and the written story: Carleton had difficulties writing short stories and some publishers were led to cut down his long articles that were submitted to their periodicals but he would restore these stories to their full lengths in his book editions (cf. II.2.A). But this characteristic does not apply to orature which conserves the length of the spoken story. Pacéré's collections of poetry, with the exception of the first two, are made of one long poem per collection, corresponding to a session of drum poetry. Similarly, in comparing one of Carleton's stories to its spoken version, Brian Earls notes that Carleton's 'Condé Cullen' is fourteen pages long while Amhlaoibh Ó Luinse's story extends to a little less than a page and a half,<sup>176</sup> which shows that the two stories are oral versions of the same story, each storytelling having its own length. Even some of the stories in the two volumes of *Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry* are so impressive by their length that they appear like short novels.

Finally, flexibility is more a characteristic of the spoken language than of its written counterpart. Fixity of text, David Buchan observes, came in with literacy. 'A literate mind,' he writes, 'assumes that a story and the words in which it is told are, and must be, the same. The oral mind does not subscribe to this belief; the oral composer aims

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<sup>174</sup> T. Eagleton, *Heathcliff and the Great Hunger: Studies in Irish Culture* (London and New York: Verso, 1995), p. 152.

<sup>175</sup> Cf. W. L. Chafe, 'Integration and Involvement in Speaking, Writing, and Oral Literature', in D. Tannen, ed., *Spoken and Written Language*, p. 35.

at stability of story, not stability of text.<sup>177</sup> However, a thorough examination of traditional storytelling reveals the presence of a form of fixity. Writing about Gaelic storytelling, J. H. Delargy reports of a story-teller, Seán Ó Conaill who, in order not to forget his stories, ‘used to repeat them aloud when he thought no one was near, using the gesticulations and the emphasis and all the other tricks of narration, as if he were once again the centre of a fireside story-telling’.<sup>178</sup> This passage informs us of the relative fixity of oral stories. The traditional way of ending stories, in both Western and African contexts, confirms this aspiration to fixity: ‘That is my story, if there be a lie in it, be it so. It is not I who have made or invented it’, or ‘I have put the story back to where I took it.’<sup>179</sup> Therefore, though, generally speaking, the spoken discourse is more flexible than the written, it is nonetheless not devoid of fixity. Carleton uses this flexibility and fixity when he changes his stories from one edition to the next around a fixed kernel, as we shall see later on.

These are the major characteristic features proper to spoken and written literatures. With these features in mind, it is now easier to examine the passage from one continuum into the other or the transfer of language. The transfer of the spoken language into the written one requires a great effort, especially when one passes from one language to another, as from spoken Irish into written English in the case of Carleton, or from spoken Mooré into written French in the case of Pacéré. ‘I write in French but I feel, nay I think, in Negro-African,’ said the great Senegalese poet L. S. Senghor.<sup>180</sup> The translation of thoughts in one’s mother tongue into another tongue involves tremendous effort. In the case of African writers especially, translation is realised at three different levels according to Nora Kazi-Tani: from the spoken tradition to the written one, from the mother tongue (e.g. Mooré) to the language of the written book (e.g. French), from the common everyday language to the idiolect.<sup>181</sup> This process of translation is also relevant to Carleton who wrote in English though his thought process was in Irish. The tedious work of translation

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<sup>176</sup> Cf. B. Earls, ‘A Note on Seanachas Amhlaoibh I Luinse’, in *Béaloideas*, 52 (1984), 31.

<sup>177</sup> D. Buchan, ‘Oral Tradition and Literary Tradition’, p. 59.

<sup>178</sup> J. H. Delargy, *The Gaelic Story-Teller With Some Notes on Gaelic Folk-Tales* (The Proceedings of the British Academy vol. 31, London, 1945), p. 12.

<sup>179</sup> Cf. Respectively, M. Richter, *The Formation of the Medieval West: Studies in the Oral Culture of the Barbarians* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1994), p. 95 and M. A. N’Guessan, ‘Le conte traditional oral’, in *Notre librairie*, 86 (1987), 42.

<sup>180</sup> M. Pierre, ‘Pour la Négritude’, in *Magazine littéraire*, 195 : *Afrique Noire, l’autre littérature d’expression française* (mai 1983), 31.

<sup>181</sup> Cf. N. A. Kazi-Tani, *Roman africain de langue française*, p. 208.

leaves the writer with a dilemma which Sony Labou Tansi, a Congolese writer, in an interview about the problems he encountered in his career, expressed in these terms: 'There are words that cannot contain the whole force and power of a thought. Either a word must burst or the poetry must be watered down. One must make an effort, undertake a work on the language.'<sup>182</sup>

This applies also for all writers in the process of creating, of expressing thoughts in words. The task is harder for a multilingual writer. Gabriel Okara, in his essay 'African Speech... English Words', explains how he deals with the linguistic problem that confronts the African novelist in the process of writing:

As a writer who believes in the utilisation of African ideas, African philosophy and African folklore and imagery to the fullest extent possible, I am of the opinion the only way to use them effectively is to translate them almost literally from the African language native to the writer into whatever European language he is using as his medium of expression. I have endeavoured in my works to keep as close as possible to the vernacular expressions.<sup>183</sup>

Okara applied his theory in his writings, most notably in his novels. The influence of Ijo, Okara's mother tongue, on his novel *The Voice* is obvious, as is evident from the following passage:

Shuffling feet turned Okolo's head to the door. He saw three men standing silent, opening not their mouths. 'Who are you people be?' Okolo asked. The people opened not their mouths. 'If you are coming-in people be, then come in.'<sup>184</sup>

In the narrative of Okara—and Carleton before him—when the author makes his characters speak or think, he pushes them to translate literally their language, as in the above quoted passage. Not all African writers adopt this strategy; however, some do. There are some examples of procedures of translation in Burkinabe literature. Writing about the challenges of translation in African literature, Kwaku A. Gyasi gives the examples of Nazi Boni—the pioneer writer in Burkinabe literature—and Achebe and Kourouma. Nazi Boni has tried to resolve the difficulty of translating his Bwamu ideas, thoughts and feelings in French by using French words whose meanings depend on the

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<sup>182</sup> S. L. Tansi in an interview by *Mois en Afrique* (Spring 1982), cited by M. Pierre, 'Deux générations pour une littérature', in *Magazine littéraire*, 195 (mai 1983), 30: 'Il y a des mots qui ne peuvent pas contenir toute la force, toute la puissance d'une pensée. Ou un mot éclate ou c'est la poésie qui est comprimée. Il faut faire un effort, tout un travail sur la langue.'

<sup>183</sup> G. Okara, 'African Speech... English Words', in *Transition*, 10 (1963), 15.

<sup>184</sup> G. Okara, *The Voice* (London: Heinemann, 1964), p. 26.

significations that these words have in his Bwamu language. For example, referring to the death of her mother, Hakanni, the heroine of the novel *Crépuscule des temps anciens* said: ‘La vieille n’avait-elle pas fait son soleil?’(Hasn’t the old woman made/passed her sun?’<sup>185</sup> In this sentence, Kwaky Gyasi comments, the word ‘soleil’ (sun) does not have the same meaning in French as in Bwamu: in French, it can be translated by ‘jours, temps, ère, époque’ (days, time, era, period). ‘Soleils’ in Ahmadou Kourouma’s *Les soleils des indépendances* also means ‘days, era, time, period’.<sup>186</sup>

Pacéré resorts to the same process of translation/transposition or calque in his poetry. In his poems, he uses French words but endows them with Moaaga meanings. For example, when referring to the Moaaga dance he uses the word ‘trembler’ (to tremble) which in French means ‘to shiver [with cold]’, Pacéré gives it a new meaning unknown to French speakers: ‘to dance the warba’. The warba is in fact a traditional dance that makes the whole body tremble. This kind of transfer makes the poetry of Pacéré and Sony Labou Tansi difficult to understand and an attendance at the performance of their works is necessary.

Like many African writers but before them, Carleton had to deal with multilingualism. For example, in Ireland of earlier times, a medieval Irish town such as Kilkenny had at least five vernacular languages spoken side by side in its streets: Native Irish Gaelic, immigrant English, Welsh and Flemish and Norman-French, without forgetting that the first language of learning in medieval times was Latin.<sup>187</sup> Carleton’s mother tongue was Irish; he learned Latin at school and he wrote in English. To transfer his feelings and thought from Irish into English, he had to find strategies. Sometimes, finding no exact English equivalent for Irish words of endearments, Carleton preferred to use the Irish words, expressive of his thoughts and feelings, in his narrative written in English. For the sake of the non-Irish, however, he explained his Irish words and phrases in footnotes. Pacéré does likewise in coining the word ‘bendrologie’ to enlarge the French vocabulary instead of taking the term ‘griotique’ formed from the French word ‘griot’ or the term ‘drummologie’ from the English word ‘drum’, because the feeling and thoughts

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<sup>185</sup> N. Boni, *Crépuscule des temps anciens* (Paris : Présence Africaine, 1961), p. 67.

<sup>186</sup> K. A. Gyasi, ‘Writing as Translation: African Literature and the Challenges of Translation’, in *Research in African Literatures*, vol. 30, 2 (Summer 1999), 77.

<sup>187</sup> Cf. H. L. C. Tristam, ed., ‘Preface’ to *Medieval Insular Literature between the Oral and the Written II: Continuity of transmission* (Tübingen: Gunter Nar Verlag, 1997), p. 1-3.

associated with the Moaaga term ‘bendre’ are not expressed in the French or English concepts.

In orature, translation is not limited to multilingualism but extends to the translation from one mode (spoken or written) to another. The mutual interaction between the spoken tradition and its counterpart—literary tradition—calls for the knowledge of some keys in order to find out in each form what is borrowed from the other. For example, in the process of putting the written language into its spoken biotope, spoken language came to use terms and phrases of written tradition in its everyday communication. Transfer from the written tradition to the spoken language includes expressions such as: ‘full stop, that is it’, ‘come to a full stop’, ‘we can’t pay higher wages, period’, ‘...in brackets’, ‘...between quotation marks’, ‘there is a question mark against his name’, ‘to dot one’s i’s and cross one’s t’s’, etc.<sup>188</sup> In this way, spoken language is enriched by written expressions.

The transfer of spoken discourse to writing is usually signalled by the use of some features, which Robin Tolmach Lakoff spells out in his article on the mingling of oral and literate strategies in written material. Focusing on the transferring of spoken mode to the written mode, especially on representations in novels of spontaneous conversation, he writes:

In the past, novelists seem to have represented spoken discourse by the same rules by which the rest of the narrative exposition is unfolded. There are occasional deviations, scraps thrown to verisimilitude: the use of contractions, perhaps a few ‘wells’ here and there; but otherwise, one would be hard put to differentiate between the spoken dialogue and the written exposition of most novels before the mid-twentieth century.<sup>189</sup>

The interaction between the two traditions is historical; the attempt at separating them is recent. To find out spoken discourses in literary writings, Lakoff advises that attention be paid to the use of quotation marks, italics, capitalisation, nonfluencies and the comic strip. He points out that the use of quotation marks enables writers to personalise their writing by bringing into it the emotional directness of oral speech. Carleton’s *Traits and Stories* swarms with quotation marks to express dialogues and oral speech. There are only a few

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<sup>188</sup> For the equivalent phrases in French, see C. Hagège, ‘La ponctuation dans certaines langues de l’oralité’, in *Mélanges linguistiques offerts à Emile Benveniste* (Louvain: Ed. Peeters, 1975), p. 251.

quotation marks in Pacéré's poetry because the nature of the poetry itself partakes of the spoken language in the sense that it is the performance of the poem that makes the poem.

Closely related to the use of quotation marks is the use of italics to stress some idea as important, which might be expressed orally by either pitch-loudness changes or by gestures. Lakoff says that 'italics, because their use suggests the tonal and emotional range characteristic of oral discourse, can be used in writing to suggest something similar: the writing is made to seem fresher, more spontaneous, more emotionally open and direct.'<sup>190</sup> These reasons account for Carleton's abundant use of italics in *Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry*. Pacéré uses capital letters to the same effect.

The comic strip also characterises spoken style. It is one of the earliest forms of communication to try to convey essentially oral concepts in print. This is actually a blending of oral and literate culture and examples of this can be found in comic books. In them, we see frequent attempts to reproduce oral self-correction devices, for emotional effect (e.g. pauses and repetition) and non-standard dialect and colloquialism. Lakoff<sup>191</sup> signals two types of problems caused by the comic strip. One occurs when word form cannot in fact be pronounced as written; for example, the dropping of vowels to form impossible consonant clusters: "T' th' store". The other involves spelling representations actually designating the only way a form can be pronounced so that it is hard to see what is gained by the special colloquial spelling; for example, *yuh* or *ya* for *you* or *ta* for *to*. Carleton uses these abundantly and we will focus on these in detail in due course.

Building from this detailed overview of spoken and written traditions, with particular references to Irish and Burkinabe contexts whenever possible, and of the Western critics who try to draw them apart with restricted definitions and characteristics, could we not look at 'spoken' and 'written' literatures in another way? I suggest one should approach them from the angle of orature. From the perspective of orature spoken language and written language are not too far apart; they are complementary. Indeed, they have been so for centuries. The research of J. R. R. Adams on oral and written traditions and Denis Zimmermann's study on the Irish storyteller show that 'written literature and

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<sup>189</sup> R. T. Lakoff, 'Some of my favorite Writers are Literate: The Mingling of Oral and Literate strategies in Written Communication', in D. Tannen, ed., *Spoken and Written Language*, p. 244.

<sup>190</sup> Ibid., p. 248.

<sup>191</sup> Cf. Ibid., p. 252.

oral arts have coexisted for a very long time and have exchanged elements and techniques'.<sup>192</sup> Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Ireland the printed word coexisted with the spoken word, and similarly in Burkina Faso in the twentieth century, as a result of colonisation. In the context of nineteenth-century Ireland, J. R. R. Adams reports that 'the material sold by the Chapman or the village shop frequently bore some relationship to oral tradition; songs in particular come to mind as obvious examples'.<sup>193</sup> In many places, the written books served as support to and surrogates for memory. Yet, to evaluate works from the point of view of orature, one first needs a clear understanding of what orature is.

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<sup>192</sup> Cf. G. D. Zimmermann, *The Irish Storyteller* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2001), p. 11.

<sup>193</sup> J. R. R. Adams, *The Printed Word and the Common Man: Popular Culture in Ulster 1700-1900* (Belfast: The Institute of Irish studies, 1987), p. 4.

## Chapter Two: Definition and Characteristics of Orature

Born after colonization, African ‘written literature’ in European languages, observes Nora-Alexandra Kazi-Tani in her study of the African novel, turned out to be unclassifiable into a category on account of its being rooted in African literary traditions and, at the same time, open to other cultures.<sup>194</sup> Attempts to locate it in the French literary tradition and to evaluate it according to the conventions of this literary form fail to get to the marrow of this literature. In their studies on African literatures, Ruth Finnegan, Duncan Brown and Robert Cornevin,<sup>195</sup> to cite just a few names, show that studies on African literatures carried out almost exclusively by European literate academics have led to the development of inappropriate understandings, evaluations, mistakes and debatable stylistic viewpoints. Different factors rooted in orality and literacy contributed to fashion African literature. This literature cannot be fathomed without a prior knowledge of these factors. My hypothesis is that Carleton’s early works and some works in African literature belong to the literary form of orature, that is, a form that is distinct from ‘spoken’ and ‘written’ literatures, a type of ‘written literature’ that not only mixes elements of ‘spoken’ and ‘written’ literatures and genres, but also a ‘written literature’ that has the potential for being performed. Orature takes on board the live, dynamic, flexible, repetitive and mnemonic qualities of ‘spoken literature’ and couples them with the permanent, enduring features of ‘written literature’ in such a way as to endow it with qualities for performance. We have already shown that writing of any kind combines visual and acoustic elements and that performance of any kind (either aloud or in the imagination of the reader), is required for its acoustic elements to emerge. The difference between works of orature and any other writing is that in works of orature authors provide explicit aids for performance so that the act of reading their works becomes a performative act; ‘an act,’ as John Neubauer has argued, ‘by which the text is actually constituted, not unlike the performative constitution of music’.<sup>196</sup>

More and more recent studies on Irish oral literature take on board considerations on performance. Angela Bourke for example lays emphasis on performance in her study

<sup>194</sup> Cf. *Roman africain de langue française*, p. 320.

<sup>195</sup> Cf. D. Brown, ‘Introduction’, in D. Brown, ed., *Oral Literature and Performance in Southern Africa* (Oxford: James Currey Publishers, 1999), p. 8.

<sup>196</sup> J. Neubauer, ‘Music and Literature: the Institutional Dimension’, in G. D. Atkins and L. Morrow, eds., *Contemporary Literary Theory* (Amhurst: University of Massachussets, 1989), p. 8.

of Irish oral traditions. She observes that oral performers offer entertainment, that ‘oral performance allows individuals to earn prestige and respect, often over a wide area and many generations, and to convey their understanding of life to their peers and to younger people.’<sup>197</sup> Similarly, more and more critics study ‘African literature’ as a whole from the perspective of performance.<sup>198</sup>

To substantiate our claim for the existence of orature as both a literary theory and form—understood as ‘an established pattern’ of literature with a ‘unifying principle of design in a given work’<sup>199</sup>—that is distinct from ‘spoken’ and ‘written’ literatures, and to support the consideration of Pacéré’s poetry and Carleton’s *Traits and Stories* as belonging to this literary form, a detailed definition of orature and its characteristic elements is necessary. To make the definition clearer, the term orature will be set in contrast with other terms used by other specialists in performance studies.

### I.2.A) Definition of Orature as a Literary Form

The definition of the term ‘orature’ will draw firstly on its etymological and subsequent meanings, secondly on the meaning given to it in performance studies, especially by Roach, thirdly on its conventions as a creative art, then on its relationship with ‘spoken’ and ‘written’ literatures, and finally on a contrast between ‘orature’ and other concepts.

‘Terms such as “oracy”, “orature” and “oraliture”’, Duncan Brown writes, ‘have been proposed to escape the tyranny of a literate epistemology.’<sup>200</sup> The formation of these words, joining the first letters of ‘oral/ity’ with the last letters of ‘literature’ expresses the primary meaning of ‘orature’ to be a substitute for ‘oral literature’.<sup>201</sup> In fact, Pio

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<sup>197</sup> A. Bourke, ‘Oral Traditions’, pp. 1195-1196.

<sup>198</sup> The following studies are examples: D. Brown, *Voicing the Text: South African Oral Poetry and Performance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998); D. Brown, ed., *Oral literature and Performance in Southern Africa* (Oxford: James Currey Publishers, 1999); D. James, *Songs of the Women Migrants: Performance and Identity in South Africa* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999).

<sup>199</sup> C. Baldick, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), term ‘form’, p. 86.

<sup>200</sup> ‘Introduction’, in D. Brown, ed., *Oral literature and Performance*, p. 8. I first encountered the term ‘oraliture’ to mean ‘oral literature’ in C. Le Pelletier, *Encre noire : La langue en liberté* (Guadeloupe-Guyane-Martinique : Ibis Rouge Editions, 1998), p. 13.

<sup>201</sup> M. Jacobs, *The Content and Style of an Oral Literature*, p. 7.

Zirimu<sup>202</sup> from Angola is said to have coined the term ‘orature’ as a substitute for the apparently contradictory terminology of ‘oral literature.’ Claude Hagège, in his comparison of writing and orality, accounts for the creation of the term orature on the grounds of the literariness of oral style when he writes:

The oral style is truly a literary genre. It is a question of a cultural tradition that seems to justify the creation of a term, *orature*, which could become parallel to that of writing, understood as literature.<sup>203</sup>

All through his book, Claude Hagège consistently applies this original meaning of ‘orature’ to mean oral literature.

However, like many words, the term ‘orature’ has evolved since its creation. The term ‘orature,’ wrote Mshai Mwangola, ‘has since been re-conceptualized, with a shift in emphasis from articulated words as a defining characteristic to the idea of an interdisciplinary aesthetic system weaving together numerous genres in the performance of a concept.’<sup>204</sup> ‘Orature’ underwent a shift in meaning, from being a substitute for ‘oral literature’ to being defined as performance and mixture of genres. This second meaning is the matter of primary concern of this thesis. The term ‘orature’ is used throughout this work not as equivalent to ‘oral literature’, but as a literary form at the cusp between ‘oral literature’ and ‘written literature’, weaving them together. Joseph Roach also lays emphasis on mixture and interaction between the two traditions when he says that ‘orature goes beyond a schematized opposition of literacy and orality as transcendent categories’ to acknowledge the interaction of these modes of communication over time.<sup>205</sup> Orature has the advantage of overriding the often-artificial separation of oral and literate forms and of highlighting the complex intersections of performed and written forms. It expresses the elocutionary dimension of ‘written literature’.

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<sup>202</sup> E. Mwangi, ‘Literature: Bridging the Gap Between Theory and Practice’, in *Lifestyle Magazine Home* (January 12, 2003), in <http://www.nationaudio.com/News/DailyNation/Supplements/lifestyle/19012003/story120114.htm>

(Accessed on 8 March 2006) wrote: ‘“Orature” is a term coined in the 1970s by Ugandan linguist and literary enthusiast Pio Zirimu to denote oral texts.’ M. S. Mwangola (Department of Performance Studies Northwestern University Evanston Illinois), ‘Completing the Cycle: Stage to Stage’, in [www.codesria.org/Links/conferences/accra/mshai.pdf](http://www.codesria.org/Links/conferences/accra/mshai.pdf) (Accessed on 8 March 2006), also wrote: ‘The term “orature” was originally coined by Ugandan scholar Pio Zirimu as an alternative to “oral literature”.’

<sup>203</sup> C. Hagège, *L’homme de paroles*, p. 84: ‘Le style oral est un véritable genre littéraire. Il s’agit d’une tradition culturelle qui paraît apporter une justification à la création d’un terme, *orature*, lequel deviendrait symétrique de celui d’écriture, entendue comme littérature.’

<sup>204</sup> E. Mwangi, ‘Literature: Bridging the Gap’.

<sup>205</sup> J. Roach, *Cities of the Dead: Circum Atlantic Performance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), pp. 11-12.

Orature is best treated as performance because performance resurfaces the dead ‘written literature’ into the spoken world. Joseph Roach and later the Irish studies critic Marjorie Howes use ‘orature’ as a synonym of performance. For them, orature is the performance of ‘written literature’; orature and literature are thus interdependent. Roach says that things written down ‘remain partially recorded in the literature. But they are actually remembered and put into practice through orature, a practice that may be prolonged, supplemented, or revised by printed and photographic representations of the performance events’.<sup>206</sup> The written text is a dead thing, removed from the living human lifeworld but has the potentiality for being resurrected through performance into the living human world by living readers. Orature makes this resurrection possible for the benefit of the audience. Marjorie Howes expresses this mediation facilitated by orature when she says that orature ‘exists in a constantly changing relation to various kinds of literacy and literate culture, and its performances are mediated by them’.<sup>207</sup> In relation to ‘spoken literature’, orature mediates by means of written letters for conservation purposes in view of later performances; and in relation to ‘written literature’, orature mediates by means of performance to restore it to the spoken medium. It is in this sense that orature exists in a constantly changing relation to both ‘spoken’ and ‘written’ literatures. Performance works here as memory; without performance the written text remains dead.

To perform, according to Joseph Roach, a specialist in theatrical history and dramatic literature, means ‘to bring forth, to make manifest, and to transmit’ but also to reinvent.<sup>208</sup> Roach quotes Hibbitts’ definition of performance as ‘not an object, but a routine of words and gestures. A witness to a contract testifies not to the identity or correctness of a piece of paper, but to phenomena seen and heard’.<sup>209</sup> This routine of words and gestures recreates the past, actualises the memory of the past. The audience participates in this re-enactment of the past through the participatory techniques of orature which allow people to speak in one another’s voices. Memory flourishes with the opportunity to participate and the poetry is woven from the tips of many tongues.

Roach also shows that in a dichotomous relationship between a predominantly oral culture and a literate one where written texts—such as treaties and works of literature—

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<sup>206</sup> Ibid., p. 13.

<sup>207</sup> M. Howes, ‘Tradition, Gender, and Migration in “The Dead”, or : How Many People Has Gretta Conroy Killed?’, in *The Yale Journal of Criticism*, vol. 15, 1 (2002), p. 151.

<sup>208</sup> J. Roach, *Cities of the Dead*, p. xi.

may serve as powerful instruments of forgetting, performance or orature works on behalf of living memory by bringing the two traditions together. While the oral-aural life world and community of oral literature are often lost when the folklorist transcribes oral traditions into print, the artist of orature is an active composer trying to preserve the oral-aural dimensions of oral literature.<sup>210</sup> This idea is well expressed in Adeeko Adeleke's definition of orature as 'the creative and imaginative art of [written] composition that relies on verbal art for communication and that culminates in performance'<sup>211</sup> or appeals to readers for performance. Performance can articulate what otherwise might never be properly communicated. This particular point is underlined by Roach in his definition of orature as performance: 'Orature is an art of listening as well as speaking; (...) repetition is an art of re-creation as well as restoration. Texts may obscure what performance tends to reveal.'<sup>212</sup> Orature as an art of listening and speaking expresses the acoustic element in writing: one is called to 'speak' the written words in order to listen to them. Roach calls 'repetition' the conversion of the text into spoken: the reading of a written text is like repeating the spoken text which existed before being written down. And yet, this process is more than a mere repetition, it is 're-creation as well as restoration'. Re-creation acknowledges the art of the performer in the task of restoration. Performance makes clear what looks obscure in the written text.

One can notice that Roach's definition of orature is mainly focused on performance. It has the advantage of bridging oral and written modes which have been held separate. However, what is missing in Roach's definition of orature is the important point concerning the mixture of performing genres within the same work, as we shall see later in the examination of the core elements of orature.

Another way of defining orature is to apprehend its process of creation. Orature comes from the transformation of the conventions of 'oral' and 'written' literatures.<sup>213</sup> Orature as a literary form has its own conventions, which will be given later, similar to

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<sup>209</sup> Ibid., p. 56.

<sup>210</sup> N. A. Kazi-Tani, *Roman africain de langue française*, p. 37, makes the difference between folklore and African literature.

<sup>211</sup> Adeeko Adeleke, 'Theory and Practice in African Orature', in *Research in African Literatures*, vol. 30, 2 (Summer 1999), 222.

<sup>212</sup> J. Roach, *Cities of the Dead*, p. 286.

<sup>213</sup> Cf. T. Todorov, 'Les transformations narratives', in *Poétique*, 3 (1970), 322-333 explains how such narrative transformations take place.

‘cunning writing’ or ‘writing of craftiness’ (*écriture de la ruse*<sup>214</sup>). Artists of orature modify the traditional narrative style to suit a new literary form and to please their audience. Dorothy S. Blair, in her historical study of Sub-Saharan African Francophone Literature, acknowledges that African writers of works of orature departed from the traditional western literary conventions; she shows how African ‘poets and story-tellers long ignored or disdained the written form, in so far as writing tends to crystallize composition into too rigid categories, limit the form and impoverish the concept of reality’.<sup>215</sup> They did so not only because the matter they use was from non-literate societies<sup>216</sup> but also in order to preserve the mark of reality in its living, fluid, formless quality and in its rhythm. Orature appears in this way as a kind of carnival, and rightly so when seen from the standpoint of its breaking down of traditional literary conventions. This is part of the nature of carnival as Kobena Mercer explains: ‘Carnival breaks down the barriers between active performer and passive audience,’ as a technique to remember the past.<sup>217</sup> It is the proper characteristic of orature as act or site of collective memory to include bodily movement, physical practices and words as forms of memory.

To confer on orature conventions proper to it also implies the necessity of a new literary criticism based on these conventions for the evaluation of works of orature. Robert Cornevin, in his study of the Francophone literatures of Black Africa, became aware of the impossibility of criticizing African works of imagination without taking into account the complexity of the ancestor-based culture that shaped them and made them different from other works produced in other countries.<sup>218</sup> Many critics made mistakes when they approached Carleton’s *Traits and Stories* or Pacéré’s poetry from the purely Western conventional stylistic point of view. Their appreciation of the contents of these works is often debatable. Orature has its distinct conventions and ought to be evaluated with these conventions.<sup>219</sup>

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<sup>214</sup> H. Cixous, ‘Joyce, la ruse de l’écriture’, in *Poétique*, 4 (1970), 422.

<sup>215</sup> D. S. Blair, *African Literature in French : A History of creative Writing in French from West and Equatorial Africa* (London, New York, Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1976), p. 25.

<sup>216</sup> By ‘non-literate societies’ I mean societies that did not have a system of writing, though these societies were literate in the sense that they possessed a spoken literature, a point made earlier in the first chapter.

<sup>217</sup> K. Mercer in his account of London’s Notting Hill Caraval, cited by J. Roach, *Cities of the Dead*, p. 285.

<sup>218</sup> Cf. Robert Cornevin, *Littératures d’Afrique noire de langue française* (Paris : Presses Universitaires de France, 1976), p. 17.

<sup>219</sup> Cf. R. H. Kaschula, ‘Exploring the Oral-Written Interface with Particular Reference to Xhosa Oral Poetry’, in *Research in African Literatures*, vol. 28, 1 (Spring 1997), 173. He says that some scholars tend to deal with texts belonging to the orature genre with either oral or written conventions, but seldom with the

With the advent of digital and computer science, we can even distinguish two or more types of orature: print-medium orature and typographic orature (audio and computer included). These two types share some common points. In oral-medium orature, ‘thoughts must come into being’, according to Ong, ‘in heavily rhythmic, balanced patterns, in repetitions or antitheses, in alliterations and assonances, in epithetic and other formulary expressions, in standard thematic settings (the assembly, the meal, the duel, the hero’s helper, and so on), in proverbs which are constantly heard by everyone so that they come to mind readily and which themselves are patterned for retention and ready recall.’<sup>220</sup> This dynamism and flexibility are also present in typographic orature where we can make type talk and walk.<sup>221</sup> Indeed, with the advent of computers, type which was static and inactive in ‘written literature’ can now zigzag, dance, grow, speak and zoom across the screen. Typographic orature is visual and aural. On the page, the visuality and the aurality of typographic orature are expressed through the arrangement of lines or verses in poetry and the capitalisation or italicisation of words. Pacéré’s poetry and Carleton’s *Traits and Stories* are good examples of typographic orature, as the subsequent chapters will show.

Yet another way of defining orature is to contrast it with the traditional concepts of ‘oral (spoken) literature’ and ‘written literature’. Seeing writing as the only possible form of cultural transmission, Pope Gregory the Great wrote: ‘*Quod loquimur transit, quod scribimus permanet.*’<sup>222</sup> Commenting on this assertion with the knowledge that many ancient and present societies did/do not have writing and yet managed to keep and transmit traditions, Richter concludes: ‘One could thus turn Gregory’s statement into its negative and maintain that “*non omne quod loquitur transit, non omne quod scribitur permanet*”.’<sup>223</sup>

Let us examine the relationship between orature, ‘spoken’ and ‘written’ literatures in the light of these statements. We can identify oral literature with ‘*Non omne quod loquimur transit*’, that is, not all that is spoken passes away. This means that some of the things that are spoken are lost but also that some stay. The fact that some do remain points

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conventions of orature itself. He also bemoans a profound lack of critical debate about oral poetry in literary studies, especially in South Africa.

<sup>220</sup> W. J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, p. 34.

<sup>221</sup> ‘Typographic Orature’ in <<http://www.cat.uc.edu/dave/musings/digitalorature.html>> (Accessed on 20 March 2004).

<sup>222</sup> Pope Gregory I, *Moralia in Job*, cited by M. Richter, *The Formation of the Medieval West*, p. 81. Translation: What is spoken passes, what will be written will remain permanently.’

<sup>223</sup> M. Richter, *The Formation of the Medieval West*, p. 81.

to the existence of some literary features or mnemonic devices in ‘spoken literature’. ‘Spoken literature’ appears in this way as records of knowledge preserved in speech. Orature mediates in the preservation of this literature for future performances.

We can also equate ‘written literature’ with ‘*Quod scribimus permanet*’ in the sense that print is a means against forgetting. Literature, in this sense, acts as historical records. On the other hand, what is written actually exists only if it is being used. A book which has never been read and will remain so forever is like something once spoken and forgotten. In this instance, it can be said that ‘*non omne quod scribimus permanet*’. Orature can be associated with this half of the statement for it acts as a remedy to forgetfulness in ‘written literature’. Orature aims, through performance, at making literature alive, at transforming the recorded memory into living memory.

Verbal art appears as the common factor between the three concepts (orature, ‘spoken’ and ‘written’ literatures), with orature serving as intermediary between the other two. Richter shows this connection when he develops Ruth Finnegan’s idea that ‘oral’ and ‘written’ literatures possess in common the verbal text:

Written material was generally communicated (...) by reading aloud. This could be done in a variety of manners, by varying the tone of the voice, by accompanying gestures, as well as by silences. In this respect, reading a text aloud could have the essential characteristics of a performance.<sup>224</sup>

Performance, in orature, mediates between the written text and the spoken word. Taking into account the capital importance of performance within the parameters of ‘spoken’ and ‘written’ literatures, we can present orature as a medium through which the past or what is written—which belongs to the past by the very fact of being written—remains alive. To perform is indeed to bring forth and to transmit. The passage of stories from oral performance into print or from the mind to the paper is called literature and the passage of print into performance is termed orature. Identifying orature with performance in this instance, Roach refers to Rowe’s idea that the words the poet wrote can really live only through the medium of the actor’s voice and bodily expression testifies to the continuing prestige of orature even (or perhaps especially) in an expanding culture of literacy speeded

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<sup>224</sup> Ibid., p. 235.

up by the dissemination of print.<sup>225</sup> There is an equation here of orature with performance which, as we have already pointed out, is but one of the main elements of orature.

In other words, the difference between ‘spoken literature’, ‘written literature’ and orature lies in this: ‘spoken literature’ is, in the strict sense, that which is not written, that which has no material residue. ‘Written literature’ distinguishes itself from ‘spoken literature’ with print as medium of expression, as powerful instrument of forgetting. Orature shares some characteristics of both ‘oral’ and ‘written’ literatures but goes beyond the frame of forgetting to be a means of living memory. Orature subsists in a steadily changing relation to ‘spoken’ and ‘written’ literatures, incorporates aesthetics of both, because without aesthetics, that is, literariness, one cannot speak of literature. However, the aesthetics of the written text do not bind the performer; the latter can, and usually does, bring in new aesthetics in the act of performing the written text.

The importance of aesthetics in orature may lead one to ask: does orature purport to be art for art’s sake or is it an instrumentalism in art? Dealing with the specific case of Clackamas literature, Melville Jacobs<sup>226</sup> says that it offers no evidence for supporting either view. However, he makes a worthwhile observation that it would not have been maintained had it not served and pleased. It can be argued that in general, orature serves needs, working as historical memory, and is intrinsically pleasurable.

A final way of defining orature is to compare and contrast the term ‘orature’ with other concepts. A comparison with other terms, such as ‘*écrit-parlé*’, folklore collection, oral-derived literature, *griotique*, cultural literatures, *bendrologie*, *drummologie*, word and music studies, and drama-poetry will make clearer the definition of orature by showing a distinction of orature from related, but different categories of ‘spoken literature’, and also will point out the inadequacy of previous critical definitions.

Orature is very similar to what the French call ‘*écrit-parlé*’ (written-spoken). This term designates a type of discourse in which one reads or declaims a written text. It has its own rules, which, according to the linguist Dubois, are different from oral discourses and from texts meant to be read silently by the addressee.<sup>227</sup> This term underlines writing as support to performance, showing that everything written is intended to be spoken. Though

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<sup>225</sup> Rowe, ed., *Shakespeare’s Works*, cited by J. Roach, *Cities of the Dead*, p. 101.

<sup>226</sup> M. Jacobs, *The Content and Style of an Oral Literature*, p. 7.

<sup>227</sup> J. Dubois et al., *Dictionnaire de Linguistique* (Paris : Larousse, 1973), p. 175.

it is similar to orature in this way, there is, however, no idea of mixture of performing genres in the term ‘*écrit-parlé*’, as it is the case in orature.

Orature and folklore have something in common. Generally speaking, folklore includes everything associated with folk, such as folk art, crafts, tools, costume, music, belief, medicine, recipes, custom, dance, games, gestures, speech and literature or verbal art: myths, legends, tales, proverbs, maxims, sayings, riddles, and poetry. Most of these have a performance aspect, but are nevertheless not orature. As a science, folklore devotes itself to the study of residual peasant culture, to popular culture in general. Folklife, folk culture, popular culture and subaltern culture are usually held as synonyms of folklore. Folklore collection is a compilation of all the aforementioned oral arts for preservation sake, sometimes without much consideration of the social context in which they were delivered. Duncan Brown sadly tells of how the oral tradition in South Africa ‘has largely been “written out” of cultural and social histories, or has been co-opted by apartheid education to promote fossilised and highly questionable versions of “tribal” history and life’.<sup>228</sup> He warns critics of performance genres not to take folklore collections at face value because of the influence of colonialism or the collectors’ political agendas on the collection of the folklore of any colonized country. To a certain extent, anybody who can write can be a folklorist, can transcribe oral songs, poems or stories. However, to produce a work of orature, one needs to be an artist and needs knowledge of the culture, the phonetic repertoire in the language to capture aesthetic qualities of art. This is why Nora-Alexandra Kazi-Tani has said that in the context of African literature, traditional oral culture is different from folklore.<sup>229</sup> Pacéré, who is an artist of orature, shows himself as folklorist with his recent publication of African proverbs, sayings and wisdom of the elders.<sup>230</sup>

In the context of Ireland especially, Ó Giolláin, in his attempt to locate Irish folklore, says that folklore generally refers to anything having a picturesque aspect, anything that is not serious, anything that bears an element of local colour, namely folk song, regional costume and festival, anything purely oral, traditional and rural.<sup>231</sup> Folklore

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<sup>228</sup> D. Brown, ‘Introduction’, in D. Brown, ed., *Oral Literature and Performance*, p. 4.

<sup>229</sup> Cf. *Roman africain de langue française*, p. 37.

<sup>230</sup> Cf. F. T. Pacéré, *Pensées africaines : proverbes, ddictions et sagesse des Anciens* (Paris : L’Harmattan, 2004).

<sup>231</sup> Cf. D. Ó Giolláin, *Locating Irish Folklore: Tradition, Modernity, Identity* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2000), p. 1.

has to do with the residual of the Irish ancient past and with the countryside, ‘in Ireland particularly with the West and even more so with the Irish-speaking West. Perhaps most of all with places like the Aran Islands or the abandoned Blaskets.’<sup>232</sup> Carleton did not come from these parts of the country. His works do not totally fit in this definition of folklore though there are some folkloric elements in them, especially dialects of Irish language and some popular stories, songs and proverbs.

Indeed, orature, like ‘written literature’ in general, is not folklore but uses elements of it. Chaucer, Dante, Shakespeare, and the writers of the Irish Revival down to Angela Carter’s re-working of well-known folktales, all used folklore. Already in 1893, W. B. Yeats wrote:

Folk-lore is at once the Bible, the Thirty-nine Articles, and the Book of Common Prayer, and well-nigh all the great poets have lived by its light. Homer, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Shakespeare, and even Dante, Goethe, and Keats, were little more than folk-lorists with musical tongues.<sup>233</sup>

M. H. Thuente, who quoted these lines from Yeats, demonstrates, in her study of Yeats and folklore, that literature and folklore influence each other. Literature has always been enriched by folklore and the latter in turn received the influence of literary works such as Aesop’s *Fables*, *The Gesta Romanorum*, *Arabian Nights*. All these works were familiar to Carleton (cf. II.2.C). Artists of works of orature may take — but not necessarily so — their raw material from folklore collection and write it in such a way that its reproduction or performance will be true to the original. Carleton’s *Traits and Stories* and Pacéré’s poetry both come from folklore, from the store of existing stories and cultural, oral, or drum expressions but are artistically created to fall into the literary form of orature. In other words, folklore is a shared heritage; a work of orature in its written form is a creation, a work of imagination based on what exists already. Anybody can tell a story that is part of the folklore; but to be an artist of orature, to write a story that belongs to the literary form of orature, one needs an initiation. Orature is a work of creative individual (and collective) artistry whereas folklore is a collective source.

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<sup>232</sup> Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>233</sup> M. H. Thuente, *W. B. Yeats and Irish Folklore* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1980), pp. 1-2, 40-41. The quotation from Yeats is taken from this source.

Orature is also related to the term ‘oral-derived’ literature which is used by some specialists. John Niles<sup>234</sup> justifies the use of this terminology on the grounds that early English literature and many other literatures in general had an oral basis. This is the reason why specialists are inclined to use the term ‘oral-derived’ literature. Though related, orature is different from an ‘oral-derived literature’ in three ways. Firstly, orature is not compulsorily orally derived, that is, orality is not the only source of works of orature. Like literature, orature can have its origin in pure imagination or in drum literature. Secondly, not all orally derived works present qualities of orature, such as literariness and performance. Folklore, for example, does not. Thirdly, the term ‘oral-derived literature’ does not express the aspect of combination of many genres or forms into one. Behind the term itself lie both a failure to consider oral literature as literature *per se* and an attempt at privileging ‘written literature’ as unique literature being nourished by orality. We have already shown the limits of this conception while dealing with the primacy of ‘spoken literature’. For all these reasons, the term ‘orature’ is preferable to ‘oral-derived literature, as it includes it and goes beyond it.

Orature also covers the term ‘*griotique*’ which is defined by its founder, Niangoran Porquet, as a theatrical activity that includes dramatic, poetic, narrative, and epic arts.<sup>235</sup> The scope of orature is broader than that of ‘*griotique*’. ‘*Griotique*’, by definition, is a mixture of genres and of spoken and written traditions as in the case of orature. However, the scope of ‘*griotique*’ is reductive because it is linked with the *griot*, which is not universal. It applies only to cultures that use the *griot*. Orature as a literary form, by contrast, is not limited to one continent, or to nations that use griots in their cultures, but applies to any work of any nation that has a potential for performance or reading aloud and that weaves together many genres or forms into one. Orature has the advantage of presenting a universal dimension in the same way that the terms ‘literature’ and ‘spoken literature’ do.

A similar distinction can be made with regard to ‘*drama-poésie*’, ‘word and music studies’, and orature. Word and music studies deal with traces of music in the written word. ‘*Drama-poésie*’ (drama-poetry) is a concept which Urbain Amoa enunciated at the end of his study on Pacéré’s poetry, because he thought this term better expresses what

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<sup>234</sup> J. D. Niles, *Homo Narrans*, p. 9.

<sup>235</sup> Cf. ‘La griotique de Niangoran Porquet, Propos recueillis par Amadou Koné’, in *Notre librairie*, 86 (1987), 91:

Pacéré's poetry actually is. He defines his concept of 'drama-poetry' with the following characteristics:

- 1- It has for its object a poetical text and not a play ;
- 2- This poetical text is a production by a master of the word;
- 3- The internal structure of the discourse follows a ritual celebration of some events of life and aims at a perfect communion with the visible world as well as with the invisible world;
- 4- Neither the decor, the actors, nor the stage directions are explicit.

What we dare call *drama-poetry* is then not a dramatic poem (play [tragedy]), nor a theatrical poem. *It is defined as a poetical creation in verse or in prose that stages many actors whose movements are shown through a stage direction that is almost always implicit.*<sup>236</sup> (Italics are Amoa's)

The concepts of 'drama-poetry' and 'word and music studies' are similar to that of orature in the sense that they express a work of art as a mixture of genres, namely drama and poetry, or word and music. However, unlike orature, 'drama-poetry' is limited either to the unique genre of music or to poetry that is written by specific people and dealing with a particular topic. By definition, each one of these two terms on its own excludes some of the following genres in its composition: music, poetry, drama, storytelling and dance. The mixture of oral and written modes is not manifest in their definitions either. The term 'orature' includes 'drama-poetry' and 'word and music studies' and, therefore, cannot be reduced to them; it has a wider scope.

Orature still maintains this wider scope in comparison with some of the following terms which are suggested by Pacéré and Bouah: *Bendrologie*, *Drummologie*, and Cultural Literatures. *Drummologie* and *bendrologie* are sciences, whereas orature is a type of literature. They are sciences whose object is the study and use of the language of African tam-tams as source of documentation and knowledge of oral expression. Orature may fall within the scope of study of the *drummologue* or *bendrologue* in his search for knowledge.

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<sup>236</sup> U. Amoa, *Poétique de la poésie des tambours*, p. 209 :

1. 'Il a pour objet un texte poétique et non une pièce de théâtre ;
2. Ce texte poétique est une production d'un maître de la parole ;
3. La structure interne de ce discours obéit à un rituel lié aux circonstances de la vie en vue d'une parfaite communion aussi bien avec le monde visible que le monde invisible ;
4. Ni le décor, ni les personnages, ni les didascalies ne sont explicites.

Ce que nous osons appeler *drama-poésie* n'est donc pas un poème dramatique (pièce de théâtre), ni une poésie théâtrale, *elle se définit comme une création poétique en vers ou en prose mettant en scène plusieurs*

Orature is written and ready for performance; the interest of the *bendrologue* and *drummologue* goes beyond the written to include everything related to drums as sources of communication. The terms overlap but are different.

Pacéré seems to identify literature with culture when he speaks of cultural literature (including oral, instrumental, gestural and sacred literatures), that is of a culture which expresses its literature but also of a literature that is expressive of its living and animated culture.<sup>237</sup> The expression ‘cultural literature’ can be misleading in two ways. Firstly, it seems redundant since any literature bears some cultural marks. Secondly, the term ‘cultural literature’ in the definition of its author tends to reduce the literature of a country to its culture and vice-versa. It is not a synonym of ‘literature of the *bendre*’, which is a metalanguage. By ‘cultural literature’ Pacéré includes all cultural life. Tam-tam can be used for cultural entertainments as it may be used to convey a literature. The phrase ‘cultural literatures’ does not favour the necessary distinction between literature and culture, as orature does.

Orature, as a literary form, is related to all these terms, but is different from them because it has a universal dimension and has the advantage of showing the complementarity between ‘spoken literature’ and ‘written literature’, and of presenting literature as mixture of genres and containing oral-aural qualities. As a theory too, orature can be compared and contrasted with other theories, as the ensuing discussion will illustrate.

#### I.2.B) Definition of Orature as a Literary Theory

Orature is also a literary theory, and as a theory, it is a systematic account of the nature of literature and the methods for analysing it. The specificity of the theory of orature lies in its cutting the boundaries of earlier literary theories. Tracing the beginning of theory to the days of Goethe, Macaulay, Carlyle and Emerson, the philosopher Rorty, defined it as

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*personnages dont les mouvements et déplacements sont indiqués par une didascalie presque toujours implicite.*

<sup>237</sup> *Le langage*, p. 83.

a kind of writing (...) which is neither the evaluation of the relative merits of literary productions, nor intellectual history, nor moral philosophy, nor epistemology, nor social prophecy, but all these things mingled together into a new genre.<sup>238</sup>

This definition of theory, especially the aspects of hybridity in it, suits orature understood as a mode of literary criticism. Orature adopts social, cultural and historical approaches in its evaluation of literary works. Strengthened by historical and cultural insights, the theory of orature is a common-sense critique of literature viewed as only written, and an alternative exploration of literature in terms of the literary form of orature, as mediation between 'spoken' and 'written' literatures. The theory of orature questions what is taken for granted and evaluates literature in terms of performance and hybridity or mixture of genres.

There are similarities and differences between orature and structuralism/post-structuralism, especially with reference to the theories of Barthes, Foucault and Derrida. Both orature and post-structuralism call for the 'decentring' of literary criticism. Western norms of intellectual outlook, Peter Barry reports, used to be the firm centre against which deviations and aberrations could be identified as 'other' and marginal.<sup>239</sup> Post-structuralists question this centralisation of literary criticism. Barthes in 'The Death of the Author' and Derrida in 'Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences' brought about the 'decentring' of this universe, moving from the authoritative 'centre' to the possibility of many interpretations and to the broadening of literature to include the productions of non-Western literatures. In his preface to the 1970 edition of *Mythologies*, Barthes considers the 'centring' bourgeois norms and conventions as 'essential enemy' and commits himself to treat 'collective representations as sign-systems'.<sup>240</sup> He broadens the notion of literature to include many cultural realities of mass-culture (myths, wrestling match, plastics exhibition, film, etc.). Orature theory also demands the 'decentring' of literary criticism and shows that it is wrong to apply Western conventions to literatures of different cultures.

Other similarities exist between orature, in the form of Negritude, and structuralism. In his article on 'Negritude, Structuralism, deconstruction' Sunday Anozie,

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<sup>238</sup> R. Rorty, *Consequences of Pragmatism (Essays: 1972-1980)*, (Great Britain: The Harvester Press, 1982), p. 66.

<sup>239</sup> Cf. P. Barry, *Beginning Theory: An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University press, 1995), pp. 66-67.

<sup>240</sup> R. Barthes, *Mythologies*, A. Lavers, trans. (London: Granada Publishing, 1972), p. 9.

the pioneer of structuralist criticism of Anglophone African literature,<sup>241</sup> underlines that the three concepts (Negritude, structuralism and deconstruction) have more in common than at first may strike the eye of a casual observer. He illustrates some of the basic relationships and assumptions of Senghor's Negritude and structuralism with Senghor's poem, 'Le totem', showing how this poem stands in relation to Negritude as 'totemism' does in relation to Lévi-Strauss' structuralism.

Many structuralist insights emerge from Senghor's theory of African creativity; his theory is relevant here, as he praised Pacéré for the African creativity he found in Pacéré's poetry.<sup>242</sup> Senghor's views that all arts in Africa are both collective and committed, and that writing impoverishes reality, are not greatly different from those held by structuralists, especially Lévi-Strauss and Roland Barthes. In fact, Barthes wrote that writing impoverishes reality by crystallizing it.<sup>243</sup> 'Writing,' Senghor also states, 'impoverishes reality. It crystallizes it into rigid categories; it fixes it when the nature of reality is to be alive, fluid, and without contours.'<sup>244</sup> Reality has a liberating character and force that refuses to be fixed, categorized and frozen; its essence is to be fluid. Both structuralists and Senghor, Onozie reveals, have a common view on 'writing', partly due to the influence on both of Rousseau who showed the primacy of spoken language over written language. Writing is poor when taken as independent from the voice and the context surrounding its production, and all other features that cannot be written in the text. Literary criticism was once limited to the 'poor' written text, but Barthes goes against this kind of assessment.

In *S/Z*, Barthes distinguishes what is written and what is impossible to be written but which is in the practice of the writer. He sees interpretation as aiming at the discovery of the scriptible text. Barthes' theory of literary criticism consists in making the reader not a consumer but a producer of text. The scriptible text is for him 'poetry without the poem' or 'writing without the style'. This text cannot be found in a bookshop; it is the reader in the process of re-writing the text. To interpret a text is not to find out its meanings but to appreciate the plurality of which it is made. There is no official entry but different entries

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<sup>241</sup> Cf. S. O. Anozie, *Structural Modes and African Poetics: Towards a Pragmatic Theory of Literature* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981).

<sup>242</sup> Cf. L. S. Senghor, 'Lettre à Pacéré, 1<sup>er</sup> Octobre 1976', in H. Louguet Kaboré, *Maître Titinga Frédéric Pacéré, origine d'une vie* (Paris : L'Harmattan, 2001), p. 216.

<sup>243</sup> Cf. R. Barthes, *Le degré zéro de l'écriture* (Paris : Seuil, 1953).

of which none is the main entry. Barthes' text is a weaving of many voices.<sup>245</sup> A photographic message, for example, is a complex of concurrent messages with the photograph as centre, and surroundings constituted by the text, the title, the caption, the lay-out and by the very name of the paper which can heavily orientate the reading of the message.<sup>246</sup> It is a message without a code and so a continuous message accessible to many. The reading of the photograph is always historical, as it depends on the reader's knowledge. The Nigerian writer and critic, Wole Soyinka mentions, in the conclusion of his article on Barthes and other mythologies, that even a frame of a frozen cinema picture, arrested in time and rendered ineffable, returns to reinforce the historic moment from which it is extracted with a force of truthfulness and recognition, through the reader's performance of it. He shows that literature, regardless of its medium of expression (the language of manual signs, gesture, curve or slice of fingers, every conjunction of motions in wrists and palm), 'would still signify a field of values, whatever the colouring through which the user were to subject such a signifier at its moment of application'.<sup>247</sup> The reader, critic or viewer's own history completes the forms, canvas, sculpture, the ahistorical testimony of the written narrative. Cultural message and perceptual message come together when the viewer looks at the image or picture. The same complexity and plurality are inherent in performance of 'spoken literature', which makes it accessible to many. The audience is involved in the task of performing the literature with their historical and cultural knowledge.

This aspect of the audience is further developed in Stanley Fish's reader-response theory of criticism. Fish claims that literature is about its readers, that 'the experience of the reader, rather than the "text itself" is the proper object of analysis.'<sup>248</sup> In his introduction to his book, Fish clarifies that the phrase 'those who share interpretive strategies', which may suggest that individuals stand apart from the community to which they belong, is to be understood as referring to component members of the community. The audience interprets the text with codes and conventions provided by the community in which its members live. 'Members of different communities', Fish writes, 'will disagree

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<sup>244</sup> L. S. Senghor, *Liberté I*, p. 267. 'L'écriture appauvrit le réel. Elle le cristallise en catégories rigides; elle le fixe quand le propre du réel est d'être vivant, fluide, et sans contours.'

<sup>245</sup> Cf. R. Barthes, *S/Z* (Paris : Editions du Seuil, 1970), pp. 10-27.

<sup>246</sup> Cf. R. Barthes, *Image, Music, Text*. S. Heath, trans. (London: Fontana Press, 1977), p. 15.

<sup>247</sup> W. Soyinka, 'The Critic and Society', p. 54.

because from each of their respective positions the other “simply” cannot see what is obviously and inescapably there.<sup>249</sup> He says that ‘there is no single way of reading that is correct or natural, only “ways of reading” that are extensions of community perspectives.’<sup>250</sup> Fish perceives literary criticism as no longer about determining a correct way of reading but about determining from which one of a number of possible perspectives reading will proceed. Text, reader and author are now seen to be the products of interpretation. Fish’s theory solves the problem of ‘reader versus text’ by the consideration of both text and reader under the larger category of interpretation. However, his theory does not necessarily abolish the categorisation of literature into genres, though it shares with orature the consideration of the audience as creators in the task of performing the text.

The difference between orature and post-structuralism is that structuralism is explicitly silent about the categorisation of genres and, therefore, condones it, whereas orature raises the question of categorisation. Commenting on Anozie’s African structuralism, Appiah says that ‘it is the distinctively structuralist contribution to the discussion of novels and sonnets (...) to see them as systems of a certain type; systems that can be analysed in terms of structural rules analogous to those of the syntax and semantics (and phonology) of natural languages.’<sup>251</sup> Structuralism maintains the systematisation of narratives into genres; its contribution lies in giving new meanings to already categorised narrative genres. In his essay on ‘structural analysis of narratives’, Barthes says that ‘in order to describe and classify the infinite number of narratives, a “theory” (in this pragmatic sense) is needed.’ He makes it his task to find this theory and to define it.<sup>252</sup> He classifies narrative into the following categories: ‘myth, legend, fable, tale, novella, epic, history, tragedy, drama, comedy, mime, painting, stained glass windows, cinema, comics, news item, conversation’ and sees it as ‘able to be carried by articulated language, spoken or written, fixed or moving images, gestures...’<sup>253</sup> Thus, Barthes’ theory endorses classification of narratives into genres; orature, however,

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<sup>248</sup> S. Fish, *Is there a Text in this Class? The Authority of Interpretive Communities* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1980), p. 21.

<sup>249</sup> Ibid., p. 15.

<sup>250</sup> Ibid., p. 16.

<sup>251</sup> A. Appiah, ‘Strictures on Structures: The Prospects for a Structuralist Poetics of African Fiction’, in H. L. Gates, ed., *Black Literature and Literary Theory*, pp. 139-140.

<sup>252</sup> R. Barthes, *Image, Music, Text*, p. 82.

<sup>253</sup> Ibid., p. 79.

questions this segmentation of genres showing that all these are potentially mixed in every narrative. Orature works on the basis that a narrative is a mixture of genres.

Post-structuralism therefore points out levels of meaning in the same narrative without changing the narrative from one category to another. The contribution of the theory of orature is in highlighting mixture of genres and mixture of meanings. The theory of deconstruction is an approach to narrative with the a-priori idea that it is already a construction that should be deconstructed and affixed a new meaning. Derrida's deconstruction presents reading and interpretation as not just reproducing what a writer thought but the reconstruction of a pre-existing non-textual reality to lie alongside the text. By contrast to the deconstructionist, the critic of orature approaches the narrative as already deconstructed (a mixture of genres) and works from the assumption that one's appropriation of the narrative will result in a construction or shaping of it following one's cultural interpretive strategies. As members of interpretive communities, critics of orature assess a narrative as if there are no pre-existing marks in it and that it is their function, as interpreters, to mark the narrative with their preoccupations.

### I.2.C) Core Characteristics of Orature as Both Literary Form and Theory

Orature, as a literary theory, encourages critics in their evaluation of works of art to look for and pay attention to determinant criteria of orature, namely mixture of literary forms and of oral and written modes, qualities of aurality and wordpower, and potential for declamation or performance. Mixture of genres, which has been ignored in many theories of literary criticism, sometimes entails a transfer of language and also raises the question of collective or individual authorship regarding works of orature. Our analysis of mixture or hybridity as one of the characteristics of orature will be followed by examples of how to read each of our supposedly single genres in terms of potentially multiple genres, using the criteria of orature as mixture of genres.

#### I.2.C.i) Hybridity as a Characteristic Element of Orature

The first core element of orature is its mixture of genres or forms. Orature shows that the classification of literature into different genres, viz. poetry, drama, short story, novel and music, is culturally determined, and does not reflect the contents of works

labelled under these headings. In his recent *Introduction to Literary Studies*, Mario Klarer cautions against the classification of genre into three classical literary forms of epic, drama, or poetry, because this classification is ‘slightly confusing as the epic occurs in verse, too, but is not classified as poetry’.<sup>254</sup> A similar confusion exists in classical drama, as it is also written in verse, but is not classified as poetry. For example, the difference between the words spoken by the actor St Ruth (taken as a sequence to stand on its own) in the drama, *The Battle of Aughrim* (a play which Carleton knew), and any other classical poem is hard to find;<sup>255</sup> the drama appears like a long poem recited by different actors. Poetical form, therefore, permeates drama and epic. And the classical epic itself potentially contained other forms which are later revealed as the relatively young literary forms of the novel and the short story. Mario Klarer refers to ‘the tendency today (...) to abandon the term “epic” and introduce “prose”, “fiction,” or “prose fiction” for the relatively young forms of the novel and the short story’.<sup>256</sup> So, the three classical categories are now expanded to five, with many changes in some of them, as today’s poems that seem like ‘snippets’ of ordinary talk, without metre or rhyme, were not treated as literature in the past. Western classification of literature into genres is thus a historical construction that sets itself against the intertwining of genres in literature.

In the African context, all genres are considered entwined. For example, writing about traditional oral storytelling with examples from Ivory Coast, Marius Ano N’Guessan observes that the short story is a complex mixture of music, dance, theatre and poetry; song remaining one of the essential characteristics of short stories.<sup>257</sup> Writing about oral poetry, Zadi Zaourou also says that almost one hundred percent of poetry in Black Africa is sung.<sup>258</sup> Zaourou’s own poetry, Hourantier comments, is danced, sung, declaimed, mimed with gestures and signs for the delight of the eyes and ears in order to bring it to people’s awareness.<sup>259</sup> Stories are told, accompanied with music, in popular entertainments; the storyteller himself being a dramatist or comedian. In a strict sense,

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<sup>254</sup> M. Klarer, *An Introduction to Literary Studies*, p. 3. Also C. Baldick, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*, terms ‘form’, p. 86, ‘genre’, p. 90.

<sup>255</sup> Cf. R. Ashton, *The Battle of Aughrim Or, the Fall of Monsieur St. Ruth*, in C. Wheatley and K. Donovan, eds., *Irish Drama of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Bristol: Thoemmes Press and Edition Synapse, 2003), Act 1, scene 1.

<sup>256</sup> M. Klarer, *An Introduction to Literary Studies*, p. 3.

<sup>257</sup> M. A. N’Guessan, ‘Le conte traditionnel oral’, in *Notre librairie*, 86 (1987), 36-46.

<sup>258</sup> Cf. B. Z. Zaourou, ‘La Poésie orale’, in *Notre librairie*, 86 (1987), 50.

<sup>259</sup> M.-J. Hourantier, ‘La Parole poétique du Didiga de Zadi Zaourou’, in *Notre librairie*, 86 (1987), 89.

there is no single genre per se: epic, short story, proverbs, fable, and music are all mixed together into one in one single performance.

The Western classifications of literary genres are synecdochical in the sense of the definition of a whole by only one of its components, as the following figure, inspired from my theory of orature, shows:

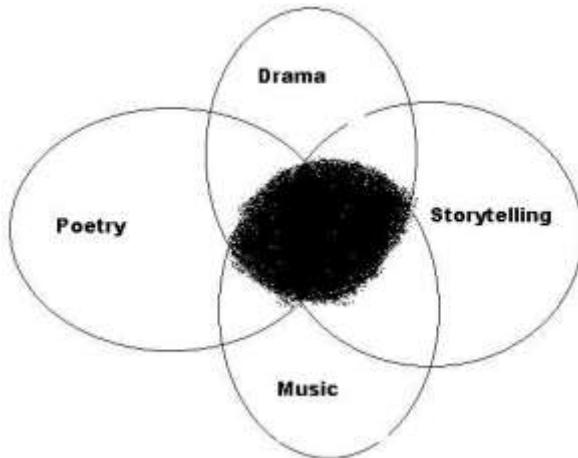


Fig. 5: Mixture of Genres

The overlapping of these shapes creates a synergy or common area (black), which corresponds to our definition of orature. The genres featuring in each circle are not exhaustive. They could well represent the overlapping (or transfer) of spoken and written modes. This overlapping shows that an interdisciplinary or inter-genre approach is the most satisfactory approach in the evaluation of literature of this kind.

Though we may still maintain the classic distinctions of genres (e.g. poetry, drama, etc.), in the light of this research, these genres should be affixed the term 'orature', for example, 'orature poetry', 'orature play', etc., to show that even though from one angle one may see only poetry or drama, etc., in reality, many other genres and modes are involved. Orature has the advantage of urging the audience to approach and to enjoy literature in its wholeness without prejudice, preconceived idea, or a prior critical mind. The role of literary critics of works of orature thus becomes to unveil this mixture of genres and intertwining of spoken and written traditions in the performance.

Showing mixture as one of the characteristics of orature form, Joseph Roach delineates the forms of works belonging to orature as follows:

Orature comprises a range of forms, which, though they may invest themselves variously in gesture, song, dance, processions, storytelling, proverbs, gossip,

customs, rites, and rituals, are nevertheless produced alongside or within mediated literacies of various kinds and degrees.<sup>260</sup>

Two important points are made here: literature survives through the mediation of orality, writing, print and digital means, in the interaction between spoken and written traditions; each of our current genres comprises a range of forms. Of poetry, the poet Senghor wrote: 'The poem is unfinished unless it is made a chant, spoken word and music at the same time.'<sup>261</sup> These words of Senghor express the nature of poetry as a mixture of many other genres. For example, Máire Ní Mhurchadha has demonstrated the truthfulness of these words in showing the possibility of reading Senghor's poetry musically.<sup>262</sup>

Speaking of his own writings too, Pacéré says that he calls it 'poetry' because no adequate term is available:

... concerning the label 'POETRY'. I never willingly wanted to use this reference in talking about my so-called 'poetical' writings. (...) I have always insisted, as regards my writings only, that at the very least this word be understood in a particular sense.<sup>263</sup>

Pacéré is careful in the use of the Western concept of poetry for his writings because his writings contain more than poetry. Since they contain drama and music as well, the term 'poetry' is inadequate. Hence, my suggestion of the term 'orature' for his poetry and for all works of the same literary form.

Pacéré is not an exception; the poetical works of many other writers fall within the same category. Jean Derive, among many other critics, has observed, writing about the form of traditional poetry in African countries, that the majority of the productions are oral and often appear in the form of chants or declamations accompanied with music, as poetry has always been associated with chants and music in all cultures throughout the centuries.<sup>264</sup> This is the kind of poetry that, if written, belongs to orature, because it is a mixture of genres and oral and written traditions.

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<sup>260</sup> J. Roach, *Cities of the Dead*, pp. 11-12.

<sup>261</sup> L. S. Senghor, *Poèmes*, p. 166 : 'Le poème n'est accompli que s'il se fait chant, parole et musique en même temps.'

<sup>262</sup> Cf. 'Pour une lecture musicale de la poésie de Senghor' (M.A thesis, National University of Ireland, Maynooth, 1997).

<sup>263</sup> *La poésie*, p. 110 : '... il s'agit de l'étiquette « Poésie ». Nous n'avons jamais voulu utiliser à dessein cette référence en parlant de nos écrits dits « poétiques »; (...) nous avons toujours tenu et parlant seulement de notre plume, à ce que pour le moins, ce mot soit pris dans un sens particulier.'

<sup>264</sup> J. Derive, 'Une deuxième vie pour la poésie négro-africaine, la traduction en Français ? Problèmes de poétique et de lectorat', in J.P. Little and Roger Little, eds., *Black Accents : Writing in French from Africa, Mauritius and the Caribbean* (Valencia : Grant and Cutler, 1997), p. 200.

Written drama and novel combine other genres, such as music, song and poetry. *The Battle of Aughrim*, for example, contains all these forms, as it is written in poetical form and presents some actors singing. The experience of well-known novelists, that of the Cameroonian Francis Bebey for example, also evidences the association of music and writing. Bebey, talking to an Irish audience, once said: 'I am not a musician, I am not a writer, I am only a man. A man in whom music and writing or literature are conjugated.' Music paved the way to Bebey's career as a writer. He disliked school and preferred storytelling instead because storytelling involves an audience. Writing was boring for him because of the lack of an immediate audience: 'I would take my biro and would begin a sentence, but I could see nobody before me. Nobody was responding, nobody was dancing, nobody was singing, nobody was accompanying me. I was frustrated. And I would stop doing this exercise.'<sup>265</sup> Then, one day, he went to a public office and saw a typist typing; her machine was producing both rhythmical, musical sounds and text. His career as a writer started the day he could type with his ten fingers. The musical rhythm of the machine led him to write one sentence after another. For him, one cannot dissociate literature and music, and as he told his Irish audience, 'in African life there is music but also the tale and all the things which are not put together in Europe'.<sup>266</sup> In other words, his novels of orature form and those of many other African writers are intertwined with music, poetry, proverbs and riddles.

The mixture of genres in orature, a mixture which goes hand in hand with collective authorship, can be explained on the grounds of cultural entertainments involving simultaneous performances from musicians, storytellers, poets, actors, and audience who jointly co-operate in the performance, as illustrated in the general introduction, and who sacrifice their individual authorships for a collective one. For example, storytelling everywhere and in Ireland especially, was essentially, as Zimmermann puts it, 'a social—co-operative—activity; to narrate [was] to act on listeners, and an audience's sense of sharing an experience and thus belonging together may be as valuable as individual imaginary release. The foundations of the art belong to a common heritage.'<sup>267</sup> The focus was on collectivity within which individual talents were expressed and promoted for the common good. Authorship was less important than the purpose of the art: to entertain the

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<sup>265</sup> F. Bebey, 'Propos sur l'écriture et la musique', in J. P. Little and R. Little, eds., *Black Accents*, p. 256.

<sup>266</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 257.

<sup>267</sup> G. D. Zimmermann, *The Irish Storyteller*, p. 9.

collectivity. ‘The question of authorship,’ Angela Bourke writes, ‘is not straightforward in any oral tradition, for performance is at least as important as composition,’ for ‘performance, not text, is what is remembered and discussed’.<sup>268</sup> Carleton’s late affirmation of authorship of his *Traits and Stories* (cf. II.1.B) may well be explained by having lived in a culture where hybridity in performance and collective authorship were established.

By opting for anonymity (by not stating his ownership) and by using works of other artists (poets, singers, illustrators) sometimes without acknowledging them,<sup>269</sup> Carleton can also be seen as an artist offering his talents of storyteller in a collective enterprise. In ‘spoken literature’, authorship is collective in spite of contributions by individuals, a fact which is well expressed in the saying by Lord John Russell (1792-1878) that ‘a proverb is one man’s wit and all men’s wisdom’, which makes clear the implicit presence of individual participation or performance in collective authorship. All individuals were equally treated, the storyteller not differently from the musician, the illustrator from the writer. Within this same context, Hayden White has argued that ‘the comic strip cannot be treated as qualitatively inferior to a Shakespeare play or any other classic text’.<sup>270</sup> A play can be compared to another play, a comic strip to another comic strip, but a comic strip cannot be valued inferior as to a play, as all the different arts are autonomous and deserve the same respect and treatment.

However, the promotion of individual performers was to lead to individual authorship and to the categorisation of holistic arts. According to McLuhan, typography, whose appearance led to the separation between written tradition and the spoken mode or performance, paved the way to this individualism.<sup>271</sup> The categorisations result from the shift, in the Western world especially, from collectivity to individualism, which is perceptible in the progressive change of *Traits and Stories* from anonymous collective authorship towards individual authorship.

Orature is also a mixture in another way: a mixture of spoken mode in written letters. Taking the example of Moiloa’s *Thesele*, Swanepoel shows that oral and written

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<sup>268</sup> A. Bourke, ‘Oral Traditions’, p. 1196.

<sup>269</sup> B. Hayley, *Carleton’s Traits and Stories*, p. 257 reports that in the second edition of the second series (1834) the name of the illustrator, W. H. Brooke curiously does not appear on the title page, nor the fact that the edition is illustrated.

<sup>270</sup> H. White, *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation* (1987, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), p. 211.

modes are mixed in orature texts and that ‘mixture, *mélange*, or even transitional text are useful terms to approach a text’ that belongs to the literary form of orature, such as Moiloa’s. ‘Literary orature in the full sense of the adjective and the noun’, he continues, acknowledges the interface or mixture of ‘spoken’ and ‘written’ literatures.<sup>272</sup> In other words, orature maintains a permanent relationship between spoken and written traditions. In her book on literacy and orality, Ruth Finnegan highlights this interaction and mixture between oral and literary traditions in orature.<sup>273</sup> Like other critics she confirms that mixture is a key element to look for in a work that belongs to orature.

The existence of orature underlines the fact that the oral and literary traditions are not mutually exclusive. It presents literature as a contained but dynamic circle: literature is first spoken, then it may use the channel of writing, print, or digital as surrogates of memory, but what is preserved in such ways becomes literature only when it is resurrected into the spoken world through performance of any kind. This performance may again be preserved in written or digital mode so that the circle becomes endless. In this way, ongoing transfer is at the heart of orature. Such a category of mixture gives us a global vision of a gyrating circle in literature going from spoken to written/tape/digital, then back to spoken again, as we can see in the following picture:

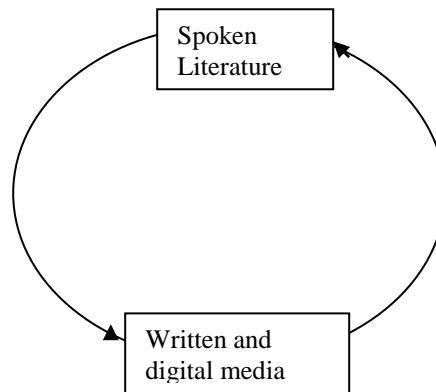


Fig. 6: Cycle of Orature

<sup>271</sup> Cf. J. Peignot, *De l'écriture à la typographie* (Paris : Gallimard, 1967), p. 136.

<sup>272</sup> ‘An Exploration of J. J. Moiloa’s *Thesele*, *Ngwana Mmamokgatjhane*, The Epic tradition, and the Oral-Written Interface’, in *Research in African Literatures*, vol. 28, 1 (Spring 1997), 121 (for the two quotes).

<sup>273</sup> R. Finnegan, *Literacy and Orality: Studies in the Technology of Communication* (New York: Blackwell, 1988).

Even the literature invented in our minds comes into existence when spoken out internally in the mind, in the same process as in eye-reading; then from this ‘performance’ it is later transferred to the memory or to written and digital forms. Literature in the perspective of orature is a cyclic activity, comparable to what Paul Ricoeur calls the circle of threefold *mimesis* in narrativity: (1) the prefiguring of our life-world as it seeks to be told; (2) the configuring of the text in the act of telling; and (3) the refiguring of our existence as we return from narrative text to action. This triple *mimesis* involves a circular movement from action (or performance) to text and back again to action.<sup>274</sup>

The rediscovery of this unending chain in literature has given hope to critics who otherwise saw the new media as spelling doom for literature. Hillis Miller’s pronouncement that literature is not dying, but only changing its medium, is understandable in this context.<sup>275</sup> Richard Kearney too, acknowledging the threat of modern technologies to the power of narrativity, sees mutations in story-forms rather than the end of the story and draws this powerful and insightful statement:

Storytelling will never end, for there will always be someone to say ‘Tell me a story’, and somebody else who will respond ‘Once upon a time...’ To be sure, the old stories are giving way to new ones, more multi-plotted, multi-vocal and multi-media.<sup>276</sup>

Richard Kearney sees the advent of modern technologies as a catalyst for new possibilities of interactive, non-linear narration. The Irish storyteller, Ciaran Carson, made a similar point, referring to ‘three good points about stories: if told, they like to be heard; if heard, they like to be taken in; and if taken in, they like to be told’.<sup>277</sup> The western world is now becoming aware of a reality which Africa experienced long ago, when its disdain of writing did not kill its orature which is still living. Performance ensures this life of literature, using writing and other media as support.

Jonathan Culler draws our attention to the fact that ‘works that today are studied as literature in English or Latin classes in schools and universities were once treated not as a special kind of writing but as fine examples of the use of language and rhetoric’ and that students were asked to memorize them rather than to interpret them.<sup>278</sup> This practice of

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<sup>274</sup> P. Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, vol. 1, K. McLaughlin and D. Pellauer, trans. (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1984), pp. 52-86.

<sup>275</sup> Cf. J. Hillis Miller, *On Literature* (London and New York: Routledge, 2002).

<sup>276</sup> R. Kearney, *On Stories* (London: Routledge, 2002), p. 126.

<sup>277</sup> C. Carson, *Fishing for Amber: A Long Story* (London: Granta Books, 1999), p. 1.

<sup>278</sup> J. Culler, *Literary Theory: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 21.

memorising was still kept in nineteenth-century Ireland, as William Carleton and his classmates memorised classics. For example, Carleton knew Michelburne's *Ireland Preserved; or, The Siege of London-Derry* (1705) and Robert Ashton's *The Battle of Aughrim: Or, the Fall of Monsieur St Ruth* (1728), by heart and could stage them without the written text (cf. II.2.C). In this context, Neuburg's assumption that in popular education reading was taught before writing is reasonable, as the first aim was to help people to know the Scriptures and live by them.<sup>279</sup> Reading helped human memory to re-appropriate the written material that was used as speech surrogate. Reading as a performative act was possible because the written text has inherent qualities of aurality.

### I.2.C.ii) Performance as a Determinant Feature of Works of Orature

Performance is only possible if the work has oral-aural qualities. Written words would not be possible to be read if the letters were not representation of sounds; alphabetical letters are aurality filled. Therefore, aurality and wordpower (cf. I.1.B.ii), which are aspects of performance and important features to look for in performance, make of performance the second core element of orature, as the presence of wordpower and aurality in a work of art makes declamation or performance possible. Invitation to performance can be seen in the aurality or theatricality of the text. Sometimes, the theatricality of a text may be determined by its orthography. As J. J Rousseau puts it, 'when the orthography of a language is clearer than its pronunciation, this is a sign that is written more than it is spoken.'<sup>280</sup> This is the case for algebra and other languages consisting solely of consonants or individual letters as in modern text messaging. Otherwise, when the pronunciation is clear, as in the orthography in Carleton's special spellings, this is a sign that it is meant to be spoken rather than to be conserved in written form. For example, 'C U' is clearer in written form than in spoken form, as everybody who uses Roman alphabets can read it, but not everybody can pronounce it to match the pronunciation of the sender. The French will pronounce it [sé y] and the Germans [tse: u:] whereas the sender meant [si: ju:]. The orthography 'see you', which is less clear than 'C U' to all users of Roman alphabets, is a testimony that this linguistic spelling is more

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<sup>279</sup> Cf. V. E. Neuburg, *Popular Education in Eighteenth-Century England* (London: The Worburn Press, 1971), p. 57.

<sup>280</sup> *Essai sur l'origine des langues*, chapitre 7, p. 62.

spoken than written. In this sense, more than being indicative signs like directions signs, our linguistic spellings carry with them invitations to declamation or performance.

Patrice Pavis in his *Dictionary of Theatre* says that declamation, in its origins, was a theatrical, chanted way of reading a text aloud. He writes that natural declamation gave birth to music, music to poetry; music and poetry to the rhythmic art, which in turn gave birth to dance.<sup>281</sup> These different arts are linked; they are performing arts. The link is much more obvious in story-telling, especially in the Irish and Burkinabe contexts. Carleton's *Traits and Stories* are intercalated with songs or poetical verses. These stories, like Pacéré's poetry, are thus designed for declamation in the context of reading aloud. Pacéré compares melody to the book form through which the spoken words, like written letters, are expressed.<sup>282</sup> For Pacéré, music and the spoken words are the two wings of orature. Without performance there is no appropriation of literature, as there is performance even in silent solitary eye-reading.

The importance of performance comes to the fore in the literature of masks or dance. This literature, critics (including Pacéré) have observed, cannot be adequately transcribed because it is theatrical; it can only be described with explanatory text notes in lieu and place of the silent gestures or movements.<sup>283</sup> Studying the art of theatre, Terence Gray expressed this relationship between orality and dance, as complementary media of literature in theatrical performance, when he wrote:

It must... be conceded that there are moments in great drama for which words prove an inadequate medium for the expression of emotion. ... At such moments ... the character should dance. ... Where words become artificial and unnatural, movement does not, because it can never be so.<sup>284</sup>

Dance is thus presented as an adequate medium for the expression of some feelings that cannot be put into words. Analysing the plays of Yeats from the perspective of dialogue into dance, Sylvia Ellis ascribes a semantic content to dance when she says: 'Dance is certainly a "symbolic system", the unit of which is gesture.'<sup>285</sup> Dance and the literature of masks are similar in the use of gestures or bodily movement in the expression of

<sup>281</sup> P. Pavis, *Dictionnaire du théâtre* (Paris : Messidor/Editions sociales, 1987), p. 105.

<sup>282</sup> *Le langage*, p. 320 : 'la mélodie constitue seulement la forme du livre pour présenter l'écriture.'

<sup>283</sup> Ibid., p. 252 and T. F. Pacéré, 'La littérature des masques', in *Notre librairie*, 101 (avril-juin 1990), 31-34.

<sup>284</sup> T. Gray, *Dance-Drama: Experiments in the Art of the Theatre* (Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons, 1926), pp. 26-27.

<sup>285</sup> S. C. Ellis, *The Plays of W. B. Yeats: Yeats and the Dancer* (London: Macmillan Press Ltd, 1995), p. 250.

emotional and intellectual experiences that cannot be converted into oral or written words. These forms of orature, which are used in Carleton's and Pacéré's works (cf. III.2.A), remain incomplete, nay nonexistent, when their inadequate conversions into printed words are not performed, that is, reconverted to bodily movements. Performance is also necessary for early medieval poetry which is known today mainly through the printed word though 'it was intended to be voiced aloud', because it was composed by masters of the art of oral-recreative song and not by competent writers.<sup>286</sup>

The mediation between the text and its declamation is missed, writes Joseph Bya, when there is no performance. He sees readers-aloud as necessary active mediators between the writer, its work of art and the audience.<sup>287</sup> There is evidence that written materials were subsidiary to hearing in medieval times when texts were read to groups or when one read aloud even when reading to oneself.<sup>288</sup> The practice of reading aloud is attested in both African and European contexts in different historical periods. Specific examples from Ireland and Burkina Faso will be given in the subsequent chapters of this work.

Performance in orature works at two points: before or during the process of writing and after it. Michael Richter suggests considering performance as an element in the act of creation of the work of art. It is through many performances that the work of art is finally refined. In a way, performance in 'the process of creation is more important than the finished product, the means more important than the end'.<sup>289</sup> In other words, without resetting the work into performance, we lose the most important thing in it. Many critics lay strong emphasis on performance: one such critic, Duncan Brown who writes on Irish and South African literatures, underlines the lack of critical debate on literature and performance and calls for critical studies based on performance.<sup>290</sup> Melville Jacobs, studying the oral literature of the Clackamas Chinook, also distinguishes performance as the main common characteristic of works of orature. Observing that some folklorists have tended to treat the oral literatures of non-Western peoples as if their subject matter were analogous to novels, short stories, or poetry, Melville Jacobs instead firmly believes that

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<sup>286</sup> J. D. Niles, *Homo Narrans*, p. 9.

<sup>287</sup> J. Bya, 'Entre texte et lecture', in *Littérature et idéologies*, Colloque de Cluny II (2, 3, 4 avril 1970), pp. 111-112.

<sup>288</sup> Cf. W. J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, p. 119.

<sup>289</sup> M. Richter, *The Formation of the Medieval West*, p. 93.

<sup>290</sup> D. Brown, 'Introduction', in D. Brown, ed., *Oral Literature and Performance*, pp. 1-17.

an emphasis on Chinook literature as a kind of *theatre* does better justice to its content, designs, and functions.<sup>291</sup> The point is valid for works of any nation that belong to orature.

Each of the various forms of literature is performative. For example, poetry in its written form belongs to orature, because poetry is not fully poetry unless performed. Paul Valéry captured this essential feature of poetry when he wrote in his first course on poetics: 'It is the performance of the poem which is the poem.' Then, expatiating on this subject he further extends his call for poetry to be continually performed: 'The poem is purposely made to be reborn from its ashes in order to endlessly become again what it has just been.'<sup>292</sup> In other words, the performance of a poem calls for another performance and so on and so forth. Any poem reduced to the naked text is incomplete. Performance is part and parcel of the nature of poetry.

This factor of performance in poetry, especially in the African context, flows from the genesis of poetry as the following description of the origin of poetry by Eugène Casalis, a missionary pioneer who arrived in Southern Africa in 1833, reveals:

The hero of the piece is nearly always the author. Upon returning from combat he purifies himself in a nearby river, then, he goes to put down, religiously, in the depth of his dwelling, his lance and his shield. His friends surround him and demand of him the recitation of his exploits. He recounts them with emphasis; the heat of sentiment leading him on his expression becomes poetic. The memory of the young takes hold of the most striking parts; they are repeated to the delighted author, who ponders over them, and connects them in his mind during leisure hours; at the end of two or three months these children know the praises perfectly, which are thereafter declaimed at the solemn celebrations of the tribe.<sup>293</sup>

In conformity with this definition of poetry as performance, Niangoran Porquet wrote his poems, *Mariam et griopoèmes*, *Soba ou la grande Afrique*, *Zaoulides*, as samples to be used in *griotic* performances.<sup>294</sup>

In Ireland too, performance plays an important role in the transmission of contemporary Irish poets' work. Theo Dorgan has evidenced that whereas poetry readings in past decades were few, he could count over six hundred performances with traditional

<sup>291</sup> Cf. M. Jacobs, *The Content and Style of an Oral Literature*, p. 7.

<sup>292</sup> P. Valéry, *Oeuvres I* (Paris : Gallimard, 1957), p. 1350 and p. 1373.

<sup>293</sup> E. Casalis, *Études sur la langue sechuana* (1841), p. 53, quoted by A. Ricard, 'From Oral to Written Literature', in *Research in African Literatures*, vol. 28, 1 (1997), 193.

<sup>294</sup> A. Koné, 'La griotique de Niangoran Porquet', in *Notre librairie*, 86 (1987), 91.

music per annum by the mid nineteen nineties.<sup>295</sup> Those who perform their poetry with music include Thomas Kinsella, John Montague, Richard Murphy, Ciarán Carson, and Seamus Heaney. For example, Ó Riada and Ceoltóirí Cualann accompanied with traditional Irish music Murphy's first performance of *The Battle of Aughrim* on the BBC Radio 3 in 1968; the Chieftains did likewise at the performing launch of Montague's *The Rough Field* in the Round House in London in 1972. This resort by contemporary Irish poets to traditional Irish orature, already pioneered by Carleton and others, as our later discussion will show, is comparable in illuminating ways to the African Negritude movement.

Written drama, too, belongs to the literary form of orature as an example of writing serving as supplement to speech. Though it is written, for the audience it is an oral communication given in a theatre with an oral setting environment. The written text serves primarily as support to the performance. In performance, the actor is to the acting as the letter is to the writing. Derrida expresses this relationship when he deals with the two kinds of public persons:

There are two sorts of public persons, two men of spectacle: on the one hand the orator or preacher, on the other the actor. The former represents himself, in him the representer and the represented are one. But the actor is born out of the rift between the representer and the represented. Like the alphabetic signifier, like the letter, the actor himself is not inspired or animated by any particular language. He signifies nothing. He hardly lives, he lends his voice. It is a mouthpiece.<sup>296</sup>

In a larger sense, a T.V. presenter, a teacher, a lecturer or a homilist, with written texts at hand, are actors when they address the audience or congregation. In this respect, orature is much used in our everyday life, more than literature but less than mere spoken language.

The short story also involves performance. Ngal, writing about the violation of African discourse, expresses the role of performance in storytelling in the following terms: 'A tale is not what you believe. It is not outside the teller. The latter is at once the stage space, the actor, the public, and the plot. (...) What a performance!' <sup>297</sup> The short story form is thus compared to drama from the point of view of performance. Zimmermann's study on *The Irish Storyteller* also reveals that, because storytelling in Ireland was a

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<sup>295</sup> Cf. T. Dorgan, ed., *Irish Poetry Since Kavanagh* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1996), p. 13.

<sup>296</sup> J. Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, p. 305.

cooperative activity, ‘meeting a good storyteller in performance can be a tremendous experience, and because of the power he seems to have, an individual practitioner can be depicted as a remarkable personage’.<sup>298</sup>

In African traditional civilizations, every literary art is theatrically performed. Urbain Amoa’s *Poétique de la poésie des tambours* highlights the theatricality inherent in Pacéré’s poetry. Ritual theatre also involves transformations or metamorphosis as in Carleton’s ‘Three Tasks’ (1830, 1843).<sup>299</sup> The nature of performance in all these cases is the involvement of the community in the creative process as well as in the criticism. In some creative performances the audience are neither silent listeners nor do they wait for the chief performer’s nod to join in. Instead, they break into the performance with their appreciations. In his lecture, ‘The audience as Actor: invitations to speak, sing and dance in Early English drama’ given at the Maynooth Medieval Forum in May 2005, Professor Richard Rastall showed that in medieval religious plays, the audience played the role of the crowd, responding ‘amen’ at the appropriate time, singing refrains in Latin when invited to and joining in a dance with the cast at the end of the play.<sup>300</sup>

Even the novel, which is a young literary form and which is commonly linked to solitary reading today, is also a performative genre. Dickens, Carleton and many other novelists read aloud their novels to audiences (cf. II.2.A). In the African context, Coetzee argues that ‘the true African novel is an oral novel. On the page it is inert, only half alive; it wakes up when the voice, from sleep in the body, breathes life into the words, speaks them aloud.’<sup>301</sup> Examples of such novels that are meant for public reception as an ‘oral text’ include Ngugi’s novel, *Devil on the Cross*. Originally written in the Gikuyu-language as *Caitaani Mutharabaini* then translated into English as *Devil on the Cross*, this novel was read aloud in buses, bars, and other public settings; in other words, it was appropriated by the oral tradition from which it was taken. Talking about the reception of this novel, Ngugi writes: ‘*Devil on the Cross* was received into the age old tradition of storytelling around the fireside; and the tradition of group reception of art that enhances

<sup>297</sup> M. a M. Ngal, *Giambatista Viko*, p. 16: ‘Un conte ce n’est pas ce que tu crois. Il n’est pas en dehors du conteur. Celui-ci est à la fois l’espace scénique, l’auteur; le public, le récit. (...) Quelle performance!’

<sup>298</sup> G. D. Zimmermann, *The Irish Storyteller*, p. 12.

<sup>299</sup> Cf. T. & S. 1, pp. 23-50.

<sup>300</sup> ‘The Audience as Actor: Invitations to Speak, Sing and Dance in Early English Drama’, a lecture given by Richard Rastall, Professor of Historical Musicology, Member of the Institute for Medieval Studies, University of Leeds, on Tuesday 10 May 2005 in St Patrick’s College Maynooth. See also ‘The Mystery Plays 25 Years On’, in <[www.leeds.ac.uk/reporter/452/mysteryp.htm](http://www.leeds.ac.uk/reporter/452/mysteryp.htm)> (Accessed on 8 March 2006).

the aesthetic pleasure and provokes interpretation, comments and discussion.<sup>302</sup> Commenting on Ngugi's theory of the oral-aural African novel, Christopher Wise suggests that novels that have oral-aural qualities should be seen as novels capable of being resurrected: these works are not 'oral texts, but are instead (and unavoidably) reified and lifeless artefacts; that is to say, they are ontological things that are only later resurrected as spoken words within an oral-aural setting.<sup>303</sup> This is exactly the form of orature as written, therefore half-dead, but potentially able to live again.

Any act of reading involves performance of some kind and degree, and we have shown that literary theorists increasingly see the act of reading as a performative act that is similar to the performative constitution of music (cf. I.1.C). The use of punctuation, especially that of the 'full stop' in antiquity, started like the current musical notation, with the Greeks and Romans giving more or less value to it according to whether they put it on top of the line, in the middle or in the bottom of the line.<sup>304</sup> In Greek for instance, the two extreme positions (top and bottom) signal high and low tones as in music, with the 'dot' on top of the line and subscribed by a comma (similar to our semi-colon) corresponding to the question mark (?), which ends with a high tone, whereas the 'dot' at the bottom of the line is the same as our current full stop, which ends with a low tone. Jérôme Peignot extends the comparison of written symbols with musical notation to the accents used in some languages like French where acute accent, circumflex accent and grave accent correspond respectively to high, middle and low tones.

Are the accents not like farewells, the last musical notation of our broken alphabet? It is through them, through these resonant keys that lie on lines, that our books are once more musical. Only by means of its accents does a writing move, flutter and buzz. This din is that of the mind [especially in silent reading]. Writing buzzes and the page is musical. And punctuation? What else is it, if not the setting up of pages into music? All literature becomes a matter of punctuation. The semi-colon is the stumbling block of all writers.<sup>305</sup>

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<sup>301</sup> J. M. Coetzee, *Elizabeth Costello*, p. 45.

<sup>302</sup> W. T. Ngugi, *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature* (London: James Currey, 1986), p. 45.

<sup>303</sup> C. Wise, 'Resurrection the Devil: Notes on Ngugi's Theory of the Oral-Aural African Novel', in *Research in African Literatures*, vol. 28, 1 (Spring 1997), 135.

<sup>304</sup> Cf. J. Peignot, *De l'écriture à la typographie* (Paris : Editions Gallimard, 1967), p. 239.

<sup>305</sup> Ibid., p. 137. 'Les accents ne sont-ils pas comme des adieux, les dernières notations musicales de notre alphabet déchiré? C'est par eux, par ces touches sonores qui se posent sur les lignes que nos livres relèvent encore de la musique. Ne serait-ce que par le truchement de ses accents, une écriture bouge, papillonne,

Performance and music pervade writing. Writing thus may be seen a sound notation of spoken words and needs performance to complete the circle of transfer from spoken to written and from written to spoken modes, thus causing oral literacy and literate orality to work hand in hand in aural literature.

## Conclusion

This first part has provided us with definitions of ‘spoken literature’, ‘written literature’ and orature, and shed light on the primacy of ‘spoken literature’ over ‘written literature’, on the transfer from one continuum to the other, based on the characteristics proper to each, and on the definition of orature with its determining core elements. The last section of this part proved that the classification of literature into different genres, viz. poetry, drama, short story, novel and music, is culturally determined, and does not reflect the contents of works labelled under these headings. Why call ‘poetry’ a work that displays not only poetical features but also musical and dramatic elements? Why call ‘drama’ a work that also contains musical and poetical elements without being melodrama? Why call ‘written literature’ a work whose very existence necessitates performance and music? Only orature, as a literary theory, provides satisfactory answers to these questions.

A cultural and historical survey of literature from the perspective of a theory of orature shows that all literatures are culturally linked. Literature in mixed genres and modes finds its source in the collective dimension of society. However, the individuation of art which intervened in the history in the West turned art from an object for collective enjoyment into a potential material for literary criticism. Indeed, to title a work poetry, drama, short story, music is already to project an (unconscious) criticism on it. Criticism tends to replace delectation, which was and still is, at least in theory for many people, the first aim of literature. Orature as a literary form and theory aims at retrieving and restoring this lost nature of literature as holistic and multi-genre and at rehabilitating its primary aim of entertainment rather than criticism.

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bourdonne. Ce tintamarre est celui de l'esprit. L'écriture bourdonne et la page est musicale. Et la ponctuation? Qu'est-elle d'autre, sinon la mise en musique des pages? Toute la littérature se réduit en une affaire de ponctuation. Le point et virgule est la pierre d'achoppement de toutes les plumes.'

The following part will develop the themes of collective production and appropriation of literature in both Burkina Faso and nineteenth-century Ireland, following the methodology of orature already defined, in order to show the presence of this literary form in both countries, a form which is expressed in *Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry* by the nineteenth-century Irish writer, William Carleton, and in the poetical collections of the contemporary Burkinabe writer, Frédéric Titenga Pacéré.

## Part Two: Orature in the Irish and Burkinabe Cultures

From the definitions constructed in part one, hybrid performance genres and mixture of spoken and written media emerge as the main characteristics of orature. Prior to showing the presence of these elements in Pacéré's poetry and Carleton's *Traits and Stories*, an overview of the historical and cultural contexts of Pacéré and Carleton and of their writings is necessary to explain how social and historical events fashioned the lives of Pacéré and Carleton and predisposed them for the literary form of orature. To this end, a historicist approach that interprets literature by situating it within the historical situation in which it was produced will be used.

### Chapter One: Orature in Burkinabe and Nineteenth-century Irish Cultures

It is difficult to understand a literary work without knowing the historical context of its production. Knowledge of the national history of Burkina Faso and Ireland is a key to understanding their literatures and vice versa. Carleton's works need to be read with some sense of Irish history, not merely because they are historically produced, responding to and reflecting particular historical circumstances, but because, as Norman Vance puts it, 'historical memory, including the memory of earlier literary modes and concerns, is one of the constant themes of Irish writers and a sometimes intolerable pressure upon them.'<sup>306</sup> This is verified by W. B. Yeats who, at the beginning of his 1893 book on Irish folklore, poetically expresses the pressure of memory on him as a writer when he says: 'Hope and Memory have one daughter and her name is Art (...). O beloved daughter of Hope and Memory, be with me for a little.'<sup>307</sup> To write a book on Irish myths, fantasies and folklore, memory and hope (that this memory will not fail) are necessary. In Norman Vance's perspective, the complexity of historical memory and of the historical background of Ireland in the nineteenth century is essential to a better understanding of the Irish writings of that period. This also requires a more detailed understanding of the relationship between spoken and written literatures. For example, the traces of Irish oral bards or ballad sheet literature that mediated between print and orality, the memory of Irish

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<sup>306</sup> N. Vance, *Irish Literature Since 1800*, p. 4.

<sup>307</sup> W. B. Yeats, *The Celtic Twilight, Myth, Fantasy and Folklore* (Dorset: Prism Press, [1893], 1990), p. 1.

language and folk tradition that were dying out in an Ireland that was in a transitional state,<sup>308</sup> all these were literary modes and concerns that put pressure on Carleton in his career as a writer. This chapter aims at highlighting the cultures in which Pacéré and Carleton lived and were fashioned by historical and social events that predisposed them to produce works that belong to orature. The historicist critical approach to literature, which will guide us through this chapter, requires an analysis of the hybridity which is characteristic of both Burkina Faso and nineteenth-century Ireland in cultural, educational and linguistic terms.

## **II.1.A) Social and Historical Context of Burkina Faso**

The Burkinabe Nation is made up of over sixty different ethnic and linguistic groups; however, as historian Salfo-Albert Balima underlines, Burkina Faso is not a heterogeneous Nation because, though complex and rich in diversity due to the presence of many ethnic groups, an intimate symbiosis has developed over the centuries between the sixty different ethnic groups and languages.<sup>309</sup> Before the arrival of the colonisers in 1890, the geographic territory of Burkina Faso was shared by many kingdoms or empires, the most important of which was the Moaaga Empire or the Moogo. Pacéré and I come from this ethnic group which forms over 40% of the whole population of Burkina Faso, estimated at twelve million inhabitants. Of the remaining other ethnic groups, each with its own language, the most important ones are the Gurunsi, Senufo, Lobi, Bobo, Mande and Fulani. Communication between these ethnic groups which form one nation is made possible through the French language; otherwise, one has to speak another language in addition to one's mother tongue. Bilingualism is a characteristic of many of the citizens in the country.<sup>310</sup> Pacéré is multilingual; he speaks Mooré, French, English and other languages.

In 'the country of honest people' (literal meaning of Burkina Faso), many religions coexist: indigenous beliefs, Islam, Christianity (mainly Roman Catholic), in decreasing order of majority, live together in peace. Pacéré's ancestors were followers of traditional

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<sup>308</sup> Cf. *T. & S. I*, 'General Introduction', p. ii.

<sup>309</sup> S. A. Balima, *Légendes et histoire des peuples du Burkina Faso* (Paris : J. A. Conseil, 1996), p. 33.

<sup>310</sup> A. Batiana et C. Caitucoli, 'Aspects du multilinguisme au Burkina Faso', in Université de Ouagadougou, ed., *Annales*, série A, vol. v (1992), 173-191.

religion. Pacéré himself, prior to his conversion to Catholicism, belonged to this ancestral religion, wrongly known in the Western world as ‘animism’ or pejoratively called ‘paganism’. The possibility of conversion from one religion to another brings about a conscious or unconscious hybridity. Some converts uncomfortably stand with two feet apart in different religions. Pacéré bears this religious hybridity in his name: *Titinga*, on the one hand, and *Frédéric* on the other hand. *Titinga* means fetish of the land. We shall discuss this hybridity in more detail later.

Politically, the Moaaga Empire was well organised before the arrival of the colonisers in 1890. Captain Monteil (1855-1925), who crossed the Moaaga Empire in April 1890, spoke highly of it in these terms:

In my opinion, it is the only country where customs of a very old black civilisation are kept intact, a civilisation that refined itself throughout a long period of peace and commercial prosperity and that lost the character of wildness which is a legendary attribute of black institutions.<sup>311</sup>

Six years later, the lieutenant Chanoine wrote in his report of November 5, 1896:

The [Moogo] is inhabited by a very dense and homogeneous population which uses the same language and the same facial marks everywhere. Villages made of groups of cylindrical straw-roofed huts lie near each other. Fields are many and well farmed. Each village has herds of cattle and sheep and a huge number of horses. Everything in the country displays a rich and happy life.<sup>312</sup>

These two descriptions from imperialist outsiders who are eager to take hold on the Empire highlight interesting details about the Moaaga civilisation: its community-centeredness, homogeneity and prosperity. The basis of the social organisation of the Moosé on community or closed neighbourhoods, and not on an aggregation of individuals, is of capital importance in the perspective of orature, especially with regard to the element of cultural hybridity. We shall return to this point towards the end of this section. These descriptions are also reliable not only because they contrast with the general European

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<sup>311</sup> P. L. Monteil, *De Saint-Louis a Tripoli par le lac Tchad*, quoted by S. A. Balima, *Légendes et histoire*, p. 115 : ‘D’après le jugement que j’en puis porter, c’est le seul pays où se soient conservées intactes les coutumes d’une très ancienne civilisation noire—civilisation qui, au cours d’une longue période de paix et de prospérité commerciale, s’est affinée et a perdu le caractère de sauvagerie qu’il est de légende d’attribuer aux institutions noires.’

<sup>312</sup> Quoted by Balima, *Légendes et histoire*, pp. 117-8: ‘Le [Moogo] est habité par une population très dense, très homogène, chez qui la même langue et les mêmes tatouages sont partout en usage. Les villages formés de groupes de cases cylindriques en chapeau de paille, sont très rapprochés les uns des autres. Les champs

prejudices on African countries but also because they are set in contrast to reports on other African countries by the same colonisers. In other words, these Europeans have seen some African cultures that seem to confirm their expected stereotyped views on Africa but the Moaaga Empire is ‘the only country’ that exceptionally surprised them.

Another factor which substantiates the usefulness of these foreign reporters, especially on the aspect of community centeredness, is the high density of the population, estimated at 50 inhabitants a sq/km; this density reveals that the Moogo (or Moaaga Empire) has had an interior peace and harmony for centuries.<sup>313</sup> Particularly interesting for this study are the traditions relative to communication or literature. We will restrict, therefore, our historical and social survey to these aspects.

Strictly speaking, the Moogo did not employ a system of writing comparable to what we use now (cf. I.1.B. ii). However, the absence of writing in no way lessened this civilisation as a system of text other than alphabetical letters was in use. In fact, drums played an important role as means of communication. Villages were built in such a way that drum language could be heard from one village to another in case of necessity. *Gāngāongo*, the tam-tam for long distance messages, could be heard within a radius of five kilometres. Explaining the mechanism of communication with this drum, Pacéré writes that the message of this tam-tam was re-echoed every five kilometres from the centre to the periphery.<sup>314</sup> For example, when slave-dealers were nearby on the border, the inhabitants of the area used their *gāngāongo* to warn the other villages. Following the reception of the news, orders were given, again by drums, for example to gather the army of certain areas in order to help the village under attack. This is why no Moaaga was ever sold into slavery and why the Moaaga Empire was never conquered prior to colonisation.<sup>315</sup> The language of this tam-tam which served to preserve the territory was made of short sentences, slowly drummed and repeated for a better hearing depending on the weather.

Unfortunately, this language was to be replaced by telephone, under the French occupation, and nowadays by satellites of communication. But the *gāngāongo* was not the only instrument used for communication; the *bendre* and other instruments were used and

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sont nombreux et bien cultivés. Chaque village possède des troupeaux de bœufs et de moutons, et un grand nombre de chevaux. Tout dans le pays montre une vie riche et heureuse.’

<sup>313</sup> Cf. *Ainsi*, p. 12.

<sup>314</sup> Cf. *Le langage*, pp. 84-85.

are still used for other purposes: literature, dance, talk, and genealogies. While under colonisation the system of writing and print entered Burkina Faso, the colonisers' *tabula rasa* strategy could hardly wipe away the age-old drum literature. The two types of literature survived in parallel. The coexistence of these two forms of 'letters', spoken and written, created an influential cultural hybridity for the indigenous youngsters sent to the new school of the colonisers, including Frédéric Titinga Pacéré.

Burkinabe literature in general, not only Pacéré's poetry, bears the marks of the history of the country during the colonial period. Made a colony in 1919, Burkina Faso (formerly Upper Volta) was suppressed in 1932 and its territory shared with the colonies of Ivory Coast, Niger and Sudan.<sup>316</sup> Fifteen years later, it would be reconstituted, following the Second World War, in 1947. This historical insecurity slowed down literary creation and prevented the intellectuals of this part of the continent participating in the literary boom of the 1950s. The Burkinabe intellectuals were busy reconstituting their territory, whereas the intellectuals of the other countries, Senegal for example, had no such worries and so could devote themselves to writing. Even after achieving its independence from France in 1960, Burkina Faso experienced unrest with repeated military coups during the 1970s and 1980s before the multiparty elections in the early 1990s. These conditions were not favourable for literary production.

Another reason that accounts for the lateness of Burkinabe people participating in the production of written literature is to be found in the poor education which was provided for in the territory by comparison to the neighbouring countries. Burkina Faso's high population density and limited natural resources resulted in poor economic prospects for the majority of its citizens. Landlocked, it was well known for the courage and strength of its people, many of whom were used as a labour force to work in plantations, road works and other hard tasks during the ordeals of colonisation. General Charles Mangin (1866-1925), looking for soldiers during the First World War, turned to Burkina Faso:

Western Africa is the land of men, that is, of cheap soldiers. 500 000 men will be recruited. We can recruit up to 75 000 men a year. Other colonies provide us with gold; this one will provide us with men.<sup>317</sup>

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<sup>315</sup> Cf. *Le langage*, pp. 72-73.

<sup>316</sup> Cf. S. A. Balima, *Légendes et histoire*, p. 218.

<sup>317</sup> C. Mangin, *La force noire*, quoted by S.A. Balima, *Légendes et histoire*, p. 205: 'L'Afrique occidentale, c'est la terre des hommes, c'est-à-dire des soldats bon marché. Le recrutement portera sur 500 000 hommes.'

Interested in Burkina Faso just for labour, the colonisers did not provide for a high standard of education for the children of this country. Very few Burkinabe students continued their studies in France. Robert Cornevin, in his book on literatures in Black Africa, shares this opinion. He begins his section on Upper Volta (former name for Burkina Faso) with the information that Upper Volta has for a long time had one of the world's lowest rates of schooling.<sup>318</sup> The rate of literacy was 7.5% in 1975, 12.7% in 1985 and 15.5 in 1991.<sup>319</sup> The literacy rate is estimated at 35% today.<sup>320</sup>

If on one side the lateness in the start of written literature in Burkina Faso can be deplored, in another side it can be viewed positively as it allowed spoken literature (voiced or drummed) to continue to thrive in the absence of written literature. The publication of the first literary works in the 1960s resulted in two media of literature coexisting interactively, thus producing orature. Nazi Boni's *Crépuscules des temps anciens*, the first Burkinabe novel written in French, was published in 1962.<sup>321</sup> It is no surprise that in this pioneering work oral and written traditions coexist together with French and *Bwamu*, a Burkinabe language, as the study of Millogo shows.<sup>322</sup> But before the publication of the first novel, drama as a genre was already flourishing; the playwright Lompolo Koné's play, *La jeunesse rurale de Banfora*, won the André You Award of the Académie des Sciences d'Outre Mer in 1956. Lompolo Koné led the building of centres for youth and cultural entertainment in many places at this period. Unfortunately, none of these early dramatic works was published, so that from the point of view of published fictions, Nazi Boni's novel remains the first in the list. It is written in the Negritude perspective, exalting ancestral values and defending them against the colonisers.

The plays, though unpublished, deserve attention for two main reasons. Firstly, it is not by mere chance that Burkinabe literature started with drama. Drama existed in a special form, before the arrival of the Westerners, in the storytelling sessions that took

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On peut recruter jusqu'à 75 000 hommes par an. D'autres colonies nous donnent de l'or ; celle-ci nous donnera des hommes...'

<sup>318</sup> R. Cornevin, *Littératures d'Afrique noire de langue française*, p. 224.

<sup>319</sup> Ministère des Arts et de la Culture, *Livre blanc sur la culture* (Ouagadougou : Découvertes du Burkina, 2001), p. 8.

<sup>320</sup> Cf. <[www.burkinaonline.bf/burkina/burkina.html](http://www.burkinaonline.bf/burkina/burkina.html)> (Accessed on 8 March 2006).

<sup>321</sup> It is the first novel but not the first published book. The two works of Dim Dolobsom Ouédraogo, *L'empire du Mogho Naba, coutume des Mossi de la Haute-Volta* (1932) and *Les secrets des sorciers noirs* (1934) are more ethnographic or history books than fictions.

<sup>322</sup> Cf. L. Millogo, *Nazi Boni, premier écrivain du Burkina Faso : La langue bwamu dans Crédit des temps anciens* (Limoges : Pulim, 2002).

place at evening times when people living in the same neighbourhood could sit and listen to one person. The existence of this speaker-audience structure paved the way for drama; the two genres overlap. The main difference between the two genres is that in drama the story is generally told and performed by many characters whereas in storytelling, most often it is a one-man show even though sometimes the audience intervenes to correct the story or to add some details. So, this tight connection between the two partly explains the beginning of Burkinabe written literature with plays and supports our classification of both plays and short stories in the category of orature.

The flourishing of drama, in the form of theatre-forum, in Burkinabe culture today also owes much to the appropriation of the literature by the community itself. Theatre-forum, also known as theatre-debate or theatre for development, allows spectators to become spontaneously and actively involved. At the end of a performance, a discussion between the audience and the actors follows, at the end of which actors go back on stage to play as the spectators suggested;<sup>323</sup> theatre and the traditional tale become thus theatre of the people and for the people.

Secondly, the preponderance of plays in this early stage of education was to leave a strong impact on some future writers, especially Pacéré who had a strong interest in drama, though none of his plays has been published. The first Burkinabe play to be published, in French, was *Sansoa* by Pierre Kpiélé Dabiré in 1969. Pacéré was first a playwright before being a poet and remains a poet without ceasing to be a playwright. His poetry bears the influence of drama and like drama his poetry finds its full expression in performance, as we shall show in the following chapters. The fact that many plays were written and performed but not published or preserved shows that writing was considered as *aide-mémoire* or support to performance, at that period when very few Burkinabe were literate. Once the performance was over, the written material or play script lost its immediate importance, that is, to mediate for orality. This is one reason why there is no trace of Pacéré's plays.

Poetry of the orature form also thrived alongside its counterpart drama, as both require performance. Burkinabe poetry in French language, which is mainly dominated by Pacéré, can be subdivided into four periods, according to Salaka Sanou's study on the

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<sup>323</sup> Cf. T. - M. Deffontaines, 'Théâtre forum au Burkina Faso et au Mali', in *Notre librairie*, 101 (avril-juin 1990), 90-95.

subject.<sup>324</sup> Firstly, poetry of the 1960s, which was published in periodicals, such as *Encres vives*, *Visages d'Afrique* and *Trait d'union*. The poetry of this period was marked by the Negritude Movement. Secondly, poetry of the 1970s, which is a poetry of assertion of Burkinabe identity. Pacéré dominates this period with his collections: *Refrains sous le Sahel*, *Ça tire sous le Sahel*, *Quand s'envolent les grues couronnées*, all published in 1976. This period also includes *Poèmes voltaïques* (1978) by Vinou Ye et Jacques Guegané. The titles of these collections are expressions of the focus on Burkina Faso, former Upper Volta, a country in the *Sahel*. In the 1980s, Pacéré carried further the particularity of Burkinabe poetry with his collections *Poésie des griots* (1982), *Du Lait pour une tombe* (1984), *Bendr Ngomde* (1985) and brought it to the international scene with collections such as *Poème pour l'Angola* (1982) and *Poème pour Koryo* (1987). The third period follows from the Burkinabe Revolution of August 1983. Poetry of this time is militant and carries political overtones. Though published in 1980, the collection *Luttes* by Babou Paulin Bamouni belongs to this period. Other collections such as *Poésie du Burkina* (1985) and *Poésie* (1988) containing poems of the first three winners of the G.P.N.A.L. (literary award), as well as *Parturition* by Bernadette Dao, *Des tombes qui pleurent* by Pierrette Sandra Kanzié, belong to this kind of poetry. The last category is poetry for children, some of which is used in the Burkinabe State curriculum for primary school education. From all these collections, Pacéré's poetry stands out because it is drawn from and fashioned by traditional drum poetry that is specific to Burkina Faso while containing at the same time a literariness that can compete with Western poetry. In other words, oral and literary conventions are used in his works of orature.

Two main assets account for this development of Burkinabe dramatic and other literary productions, namely, the encouragement of artists through literary awards and the rich cultural foundation available from which writers can draw inspiration. Firstly, the regular organization of literary contests, which have had a notable impact on the productivity of literary writers, accounts for the blossoming of Burkina Faso's emerging literature since the 1990s. Some of the most outstanding national and international cultural events as well as national literary awards that favoured the development of this literature are: the Pan-African Film and Television Festival (Fespaco), the Nation Cultural Week (SNC), the International Ouagadougou Craft Show (SIAO), the International Festival of

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<sup>324</sup> Cf. S. Sanou, 'Panorama de la poésie', in *Notre librairie*, 101 (avril-juin 1990), 61-65.

Theatre for Development (FITD), the International Festival of Theatre and Puppets of Ouagadougou (FITMO), the Atypical Nights of Koudougou (NAK), The National Grand Prix for the Arts and Letters (GPNAL), the Literary Grand Prix of the President of the Republic, etc. A number of Burkinabe writers, namely, Frédéric Titinga Pacéré, Patrick Gomdaogo Ilboudo, and Bernadette Dao have won some international awards. The introduction of Burkinabe literature into Burkinabe State school curricula, and especially the growing interest of researchers in it, has also encouraged the writers. Pacéré's production has been boosted by the awards he won, which encouraged him to hold firm against the pressures arising from many quarters to silence the voice of his orature. The humiliation of Pacéré's father by the coloniser, the suffering endured by Pacéré abroad and his struggle to find publishers, all aspects which are fully discussed in his biography (cf. II.2), are examples of these pressures.

Secondly, in their written literary productions, Burkinabe writers use creative forms and techniques borrowed from spoken tradition, which confer on their works a unique voice. One of the borrowings includes the communal dimension of Burkinabe culture whose influence on these productions is obvious. As mentioned above, Burkinabe culture is strongly community centred.<sup>325</sup> The everyday life of an individual is divided between work in and for the family and participation in the larger community of the district or the village. The dead ancestors are also always part of the community of the living. Among the reasons for telling stories only in the evenings, the suitable time of rest after day labour, is that evening is also a favourable time of gathering of the dead ancestors and the living.<sup>326</sup> In such a strongly communal culture, which continues today in many villages, oral or drum literature exists primarily for the community and not for the individual. It is a production of the community and for the community.

Writing on African oral traditions, Chevrier reports that insofar as the narrative of the teller is music, dance and chant, (orature in short), the audience participates intellectually and physically with the clapping of hands, interpellations and encouragements.<sup>327</sup> Likewise, Bernadin Sanon, Elie Yougbare and Bali Augustin Bakouan have evidenced, in their research on the problems surrounding reading in the Burkinabe

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<sup>325</sup> Cf. Ministère des Arts et de la Culture, *Livre Blanc sur la culture*, p. 19-20.

<sup>326</sup> Cf. M. Ano N'Guessan, 'Le conte traditionnel oral', in *Notre librairie*, 86 (1987), 39 ; J. Chevrier, *Littérature nègre*, p. 191.

<sup>327</sup> Cf. J. Chevrier, *Littérature nègre*, p. 201.

context, that in Burkina Faso the communal dimension of life in society is so strong that it leaves little place for solo reading.<sup>328</sup> Burkinabe customs, and African traditions in general,<sup>329</sup> lay strong emphasis on the group, the community, leaving little place for isolation and solitary entertainments.

Burkinabe traditional spoken literature is also inseparable from the community in the sense that it accompanies the activities of the community. For example, dealing with the genre of traditional chant (or orature in its mixture of music and dance), Oger Kaboré has identified this kind of literature in communal evening entertainments, in rites of initiation or funerals, in collective farming works, known as *ko-puusdm* in Mooré or *meitheal* in Irish (as we shall see later). Themes developed in this traditional Moaaga literature range from rain, love, fervour at work, laziness, etc. as symbols respectively of fecundity, adultery, wealth, sterility, etc.<sup>330</sup> This literature is therefore linked with active social life.

While the word ‘poet’ in Europe, Chevrier remarks, often carries a pejorative connotation, referring to a dreamer who does not participate in social physical works, in Africa poetry always accompanies the community’s action or causes it to happen.<sup>331</sup> In other words, some poets in Europe form a separate caste in society living on poetry as their profession, whereas in Africa poets are seen as contributors to the making up of poetry by the community itself. In both continents, poems, plays, stories and tales have individual authors at their creation as we have already shown in the previous chapter. The difference is that in Europe individual authorship is maintained as a result of individualism, whereas in Africa individual authorship is subsumed by the community once the work is created. In the Burkinabe context, Bakary Coulibaly makes the point in these terms: ‘Invention is not excluded, but the new text once voiced must be taken into account by tradition. The name of the real author disappears. Only one signature remains: that of tradition.’<sup>332</sup> The accusation often made by Western critics of spoken literature as

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<sup>328</sup> Cf. J. B. Sanon, et al., ‘Une littérature en instance : les problèmes de la lecture’, in *Notre librairie*, 101 (avril-juin 1990), 112.

<sup>329</sup> Cf. J. Chevrier, *Littérature nègre*, p. 223.

<sup>330</sup> Cf. O. Kaboré, ‘La chanson traditionnelle chez les Moosé’, in *Notre librairie*, 101 (avril-juin 1990), 37-39.

<sup>331</sup> Cf. J. Chevrier, *Littérature nègre*, p. 190.

<sup>332</sup> B. Coulibaly ‘En Jula’, in *Notre librairie*, 101 (avril-juin 1990), 40 : ‘L’invention n’y est pas exclue, mais le nouveau texte une fois ‘proféré’ se doit d’être pris en compte par la tradition. Le nom du véritable auteur disparaît. Une seule signature demeure : celle de la tradition.’

lacking values of literariness simply because it is collective (has no individual authorship) misses this fact of individual authorship subsumed by the community.

Pacéré was born and grew up in this community-centred society, and was marked by it, as from his biography two incidents can be drawn to illustrate the collective dimension in the organisation of the Moaaga society. The first incident is related to his rearing. Guegmde (lion), Pacéré's father, was the traditional chief of the village of Manéga, and had ten wives but eight children altogether. Pacéré's mother, Wango (Masks) Sawadogo (cloud) was the daughter of the chief of the Masks of Toèghin, another village near Manéga, but she was not the chief's first wife; Pogdiri was, but she was childless. Traditionally, the first wife of the chief (Pogdiri) was charged with the rearing of all the chief's children. When Pacéré was two or three months old, he was taken from his real mother and given to Pogdiri who brought up Pacéré, the first son of the chief. The poet acknowledges it in his poetry:

But,	Mais,
He had no mother!	Il n'eut pas de mère !
The Mask	Le Masque
Who gave him birth	Qui l'enfanta
Did not rear him!	Ne l'éleva pas !
She will get him back	Il ne le retrouvera
Only at the age of reason,	Qu'à l'âge de la raison,
To teach him,	Pour lui enseigner,
Literature	La littérature
And philosophy!	Et la philosophie !
The Mask	Le Masque
Who gave him birth	Qui l'enfanta
Did not rear him!	Ne l'éleva pas !
And the one	Et celle
He got for mother by chance	Que le hasard lui donna pour mère
Never conceived a child!	Ne porta jamais d'enfant !
Timini!	Timini !
Timini	Timini
Was her name!	Etait son nom ! <sup>333</sup>

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<sup>333</sup> *Quand*, p. 16.

The ‘mask’ referred to in this poem is a transliteration of the name of Pacéré’s real mother (Wango=mask); Timini is the first wife of his father. Growing up, Pacéré used to call the woman who reared him Timini instead of Pogdiri, which was difficult for him to articulate as a child. The name Timini in his poems, especially in the collection ‘*Quand s’envolent les grues couronnées*’, refers to this woman who reared him as her child. In Pacéré’s birth certificate and other official administrative papers, Sawadogo Pogdiri (Timini) stands for the name of Pacéré’s mother instead of Sawadogo Wango, Pacéré’s real mother. This is the first incident in Pacéré’s biography that alerts the reader to the collective dimension of the culture in which Pacéré was reared.

The second incident is linked to Pacéré’s name. The name Pacéré (*paasre* = to add) given to Frédéric Titinga is not the real family name of his father. Pacéré needed a birth certificate in order to register at school, but when Pacéré’s uncles went to the public registry office to establish a birth certificate for Pacéré, there was no translator for the white man who was in charge of this office. The uncles talked to each other in an attempt to explain to the officer the origins of the child. In their talk, the word ‘paase’ was recurrent. Hearing this, the officer concluded that ‘Pacéré’ might be the surname of the child; he had heard the same name the previous day while establishing birth certificates for the people of another village. For administrative reasons, Frédéric Titinga and his family had to keep this name.

These two events about the surname ‘Pacéré’ and ‘Pogdiri’ for the mother’s name in Frédéric Titinga Pacéré’s birth certificate reveal some characteristics of the culture in which Pacéré grew up. The fact that a woman takes care of a child she did not give birth to expresses the social dimension of rearing. In an interview with Urbain Amoa, Pacéré talks of his experience with this woman, Timini: ‘We were fifteen, twenty or perhaps more in her hut. We did not know that apart from this lady each one of us had a father and a mother. She was the very symbol of society. Therefore, it is with her eyes that I have seen society, and it is she who reared me according to society’s precepts.’<sup>334</sup> The child belongs more to the society than to a couple; in big households for example, the grand-father or the eldest of his sons is the father of all the children; the other male genitors of the children

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<sup>334</sup> U. Amoa, *Poétique de la poésie des tambours*, p. 301. French version : ‘Nous étions quinze, vingt et peut-être plus dans sa case. Nous ignorions qu’en dehors de cette dame, nous avions chacun un père et une mère. Elle était le symbole même de la société. C’est donc par elle que j’ai vu la société, et par elle, que j’ai été forgé selon les préceptes de la société.’

are called either ‘Kieema’ (elder brother) or Saamba (uncle). A community dimension subsumes the individual one and the child does not belong to his genitors but to the large family. The fact that the uncles take charge of the establishment of the child’s birth certificate testifies to the same concern. Many aspects of the Moaaga culture, including entertainments are community oriented; solitary hobby activities (e.g. reading of books) or games are almost nonexistent. Brought up in this community-centred culture, Pacéré started his literary career with plays, then with poetry, as forms which appeal to a large audience and which necessitate performance.

Thus, multi-layered communal dimensions of Burkinabe culture and literature influenced Pacéré who later sought to preserve them by recording aspects of them on tapes. Sekou Tall evidenced the presence in Pacéré’s poetry of this community-centeredness that is characteristic of the African conception of the world and philosophy of life.<sup>335</sup> Moreover, this historical background of Burkinabe culture has revealed—and the historical survey of nineteenth-century Ireland will make a similar observation—that to study a work of orature (that is produced in and intended to be reproduced in such a community-centred society) with the mindset of an individualistic agenda, as if it were intended for solo-reading, leads to erroneous conclusions.

## **II.1.B) Irish Society in the Early Nineteenth Century**

Like Burkina Faso, the social organisation of Ireland in the nineteenth century and in previous centuries revolved around the community as the basic unit. Integrative bonds of neighbourhood and kinship were strong in pre-famine Ireland. Writing on Irish peasantry, community and tradition in the past and taking evidence from William Allingham (1824-89), Joep Leerssen reports that in the view of many nineteenth-century writers, Ireland was seen ‘exclusively as a community, as a *Gemeinschaft*, to the extent of denying that Ireland was also a *Gesellschaft* or society.’<sup>336</sup> Hugh Dorian in his memoir (1889-90) also describes a nineteenth-century Donegal village as clustered: ‘so many and so closely packed were the dwellings that a stranger on entering the village (...) [needed]

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<sup>335</sup> Cf. S. Tall, ‘Mysticisme, conception africaine du monde et similitudes dans l’oeuvre de maître Pacéré’, in *Mélanges offerts*, p. 257 ff.

<sup>336</sup> J. Leerssen, *Remembrance and Imagination: Patterns in the Historical and Literary Representation of Ireland in the Nineteenth Century* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1996), p. 167.

the direction of a guide to make his way to the occupier of a certain dwelling whom he wished to visit.<sup>337</sup> Samuel Clark, in his description of nineteenth-century Ireland, supports these two powerful depictions when he says that clusters of houses, known in Irish as *clachan*, were large and consisted of ten to fifteen houses and occasionally as many as thirty houses grouped together.<sup>338</sup> Each house in a *clachan* had a garden or *tabga* in Mooré. It is still the same structure in many Moaaga villages in Burkina Faso today. Commenting on this pre-famine social structure, Clark reveals that the kinship group was traditionally the social unit in Irish society:

Rural neighbourhood ties have traditionally been strong in Ireland. One manifestation of this is the prevalence of agricultural cooperation, which is so firmly grounded in cultural tradition that terms with a Gaelic origin, such as *cooring*, are still used to refer to it. Ordinarily, *cooring* transpires among residents of the same or adjacent townlands, or else among people with recognised kinship ties. It often takes the form of lending a son or daughter to a relative or a neighbour for the day. In earlier times, it was also customary for a gathering, or *meitheal*, to plough or harvest together.<sup>339</sup>

A practice similar to the Irish *cooring* is also known in Burkina Faso but for a longer period than a day: a year or more, and for different purposes. For example, Pacéré attended school while living in the family of a friend of his father. The servant-maid who was in the Carleton family could well be another example of this practice. The practice of *meitheal* and the centralisation of social life on collectivity have shaped a distinctive literature accompanying these communal activities, as we have seen in the Burkinabe context.

In the eighteenth and early nineteenth century, elite and popular cultures are not fully distinguishable. Scholars of eighteenth and early nineteenth-century Irish popular culture, like Mary Helen Thuente, Denis Zimmerman and David Lloyd, have shown in their studies that the United Irish movement has cultural and literary dimensions that cannot be understood without first surveying the eighteenth-century backgrounds. Surveying these backgrounds, Thuente said that most of the United Irish leaders were people ‘of broad interests in a culture that did not segregate politics and literature into separate intellectual endeavours’ and that ‘elite culture and popular culture were not

<sup>337</sup> H. Dorian, *The Outer Edge of Ulster: A Memoir of Social Life in Nineteenth-century Donegal*, edited by B. Mac Suibhne and D. Dickson (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2001), p. 157.

<sup>338</sup> S. Clark, *Social Origins of the Irish Land War* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), p. 44.

<sup>339</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 42.

mutually exclusive,’<sup>340</sup> as songs and music from popular tradition were used by the elite to politicise the people. Quoting a critic of *The Nation* (1843), Zimmermann says that Irish politicians often insisted on the value of songs as effective means of impressing the common man, of warming their courage and increasing their union.<sup>341</sup> He gives the example of John McBride who wrote songs in 1832 to prevent ‘the perusal of those vulgar compositions that are usually popular throughout the common circle of life,’ that is, some of the ‘nonsense’ sung as street ballads.<sup>342</sup> Lloyd, in the section ‘Adulteration and the Nation’ in his *Anomalous States*, makes a similar connection between forms of nationalism and Irish popular culture, as both had in common hybridity of form and content.<sup>343</sup> Thus, within a communal setting, the composed and newly written songs were sung or converted to orality, the printed material being used as aid to performance.

Songs and music accompany dance, which is a performance art. Music and dancing are well known and practised in Ireland and Burkina Faso. In his *Tour of Ireland* (1776-9): Arthur Young gave evidence of the practice of dance in late eighteenth-century Ireland:

Dancing is very general among the poor people, almost universal in every cabbin [sic.]. Dancing-masters of their own rank travel through the country from cabbin to cabbin, with a piper or blind fiddler; and the pay is six pence a quarter. It is an absolute system of education. Weddings are always celebrated with much dancing; and a Sunday rarely passes without a dance.<sup>344</sup>

To consider dancing as a ‘system of education’ or as an art that historically ‘antedates music, sculpture, and painting’<sup>345</sup> and not simply as a mere entertainment, one is called to put it on a par with the system of written letters which are used to educate people. This argument is justified when we take into consideration Breathnach’s information that in some parts of Ireland ‘it was not uncommon to hold the dancing school in conjunction with a hedge school, the different classes being conducted simultaneously at either end of

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<sup>340</sup> M. H. Thuente, *The Harp Re-strung: The United Irishmen and the Rise of Irish Literary Nationalism* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1994), p. 17.

<sup>341</sup> G. D. Zimmermann, *Songs of Irish Rebellion: Irish Political Ballads and Rebel Songs 1780-1900*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Dublin: Four Courts Press, [1966], 2002), p. 75.

<sup>342</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 76.

<sup>343</sup> D. Lloyd, *Anomalous States: Irish Writing and the Post-Colonial Moment* (Dublin: The Lilliput Press Ltd, 1993), pp. 88-124.

<sup>344</sup> A. Young, *A Tour in Ireland 1776-1779*, vol. 1, A. W. Hutton, ed. (Dublin: Irish University Press Shannon Ireland, [1780], 1970), p. 446.

the premises.<sup>346</sup> Two systems of education, one using gestures or body movements (cf. I.2.C.ii), and the other using alphabetical letters, went hand in hand, but for a writer such as Carleton, both could be transcribed only with letters of the alphabet and other visual techniques (III. 2.A).

The communal structure of this culture paved the way for communal entertainments like dances, but also for communal literature in which people found pleasure in assembling and listening to a literary person or storyteller. Referring to the meeting places for this literature, Dorian writes: ‘the house of meeting was also filled with anxious listeners, many of whom had neither chair nor stool to rest upon, but were glad enough to get inside the door in any shape, so glad were they to be within hearing distance.’<sup>347</sup> The master whom people came to listen to in this house of meeting was called the ‘local celebrity’, a literate entertainer and storyteller. If these places of meeting existed in late nineteenth-century Ulster, as Dorian wrote in 1889-90, it goes without saying that a much stronger similar system was in place in Carleton’s time. Writing on the pre-famine Irish culture, Clark testifies: ‘A hamlet was invariably a centre of social activity—the locus of spinning parties, story-tellers, and fiddlers or pipers.’<sup>348</sup> Storytelling, poetry, music and chant were mixed together, as in our definition of orature, to the great delight of Irish audiences. Forms of storytelling in the evenings around the hearth as well as rural communal celebrations in villages, on different occasions, such as funerals, weddings, markets and patterns were popular. Weddings, baptisms, fairs and wakes, James Murphy reports, were occasions for communal celebration. The ‘merry wake’ for example, was found in the countryside as well as in the towns and was ‘characterised by drinking, singing and various games. It thus had a carnivalesque dimension and was a means whereby the community reordered itself in the face of the disruptive power of death.’<sup>349</sup> The social organisation in close neighbourhoods catalysed this sharing of beliefs, joys, pains and entertainment.

Within this setting, spoken literature absorbed elements of print culture rather than simply vice versa. Scholarly studies have revealed a cycle of orature (cf. fig. 6 in I.2.C) in

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<sup>345</sup> F. O’Neill, *Irish Minstrels and Musicians with Numerous Dissertations on Related Subjects* (Darby: Norwood Editions, 1973), p. 417.

<sup>346</sup> B. Breathnach, *Folk Music and Dances of Ireland* (Cork: Ossian Publication Ltd, 1996), p. 50.

<sup>347</sup> H. Dorian, *The Outer Edge of Ulster*, p. 137.

<sup>348</sup> S. Clark. *Social Origins of the Irish Land War*, p. 46.

Western literature by showing that performance, in the form of reading aloud, was a common practice in medieval times and beyond, and became a métier in Victorian times (nineteenth and early twentieth century) in Europe.<sup>350</sup> The contributors to the symposium on *Oral Tradition, Literary Tradition* have shown that ‘there have been various interactions between oral and written literature, various flowings into and out of each other’ and have concluded that ‘within the field of medieval literature (...) interdisciplinary cooperation on an international level is a sine qua non.’<sup>351</sup> This medieval practice was still operational in mid nineteenth-century Britain, as in an article on Charles Dickens, a critic in *The Times* (1868) showed evidence of the interaction between print and oral cultures in the British context, through the practice of reading-aloud:

“Readers” are abundant; there is not a literary institution that does not in the course of a year publish a programme of entertainment in which some plays or poems to be “read” by some person of celebrity, general or local, do not hold a prominent place, and the innocent amusement of the poor “penny readings” in the parish schoolroom are now commonly encouraged by every clergyman who takes a practical interest in his flock. Some readers draw everywhere; the attraction of others is confined to particular districts; but amid all the variety of “readings” those of Mr. Charles Dickens stand alone.<sup>352</sup>

Various types of reading-aloud practices are mentioned in this passage: on the one hand, annually-organised sessions of reading aloud in literary institutions by celebrities, and, on the other hand, daily or weekly sessions of ‘penny readings’ in parish facilities (halls, schools), in the open air of districts or at the fireside in homes. With the establishment of literary Institutions, Athenaeums and Mechanics’ Institutes in the 1830s and 1840s, reading-aloud and other kinds of light entertainment increased, supplemented and later took the place of the ‘lecturings’.

Another critic in *The Times* (1870) described the virtuoso-acting of Bellew who ‘standing in the orchestra of St. George’s Hall, (...) reads a large portion of *Hamlet*, while

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<sup>349</sup> J. H. Murphy, *Ireland: A Social Cultural and Literary History, 1791-1891* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2003), p. 31.

<sup>350</sup> Cf. J. Rose, ‘Rereading the English Common Reader: A Preface to a History of Audiences’, in *Journal of the History of Ideas*, vol. 51, 1 (1992), 47-70; H. L. C. Tristam, ed., *Medieval Insular Literature Between the Oral and the Written II: Continuity of Transmission* (Tübingen: Gunter Nar Verlag, 1997).

<sup>351</sup> H. Bekker-Nielsen et al., eds. *Oral Tradition, Literary Tradition: A Symposium* (Odense: Odense University Press, 1977), respectively, p. 57 (contribution by D. Buchan, ‘Oral Tradition and Literary Tradition: The Scottish Ballad’) and p. 7 (preface by the editors).

<sup>352</sup> Cf. *The Times* (7 October, 1868), 10.

the business of the play is carried on by a company of actors, who follow his words not only with appropriate gesticulation, but with a mute motion of the lips.<sup>353</sup> Thus, reading-aloud was an art which required qualities or skills, such as the ability to create intonation, emphasis, to switch from one dialect to another or from one voice to another (using language for characterisation), to tell one's hearers what to admire particularly. Lord Alfred Tennyson<sup>354</sup> and English writers such as Wordsworth, William McGonagall, Charles Dickens, Wilkie Collins, Edmund Yates, Charles Kingsley, Matthew Arnold, George MacDonald, 'Ian Maclare', Edwin Arnold, Martin Tupper, Oscar Wilde, Anthony Hope, Hall Caine, Conan Doyle, as well as governesses or ladies' companions, fathers in families and even clergymen, were artists of reading-aloud.<sup>355</sup>

'The books for the living voice,' wrote a critic in *The Nation* (1907), 'are essays, letters, diaries, biography, fiction and poetry'<sup>356</sup> but also 'penny journals' as referred to above, religious books, especially the Bible, and surprisingly plays, as in the case of the virtuoso-acting of Bellew. Housemaids who dusted the books received orders such as 'Don't put my Scott, my Dickens, my Thackeray upside down on the top shelf. I shall want it tonight' for reading aloud.<sup>357</sup> These authors were the choicest ones for reading aloud. The fact that so much literature was read aloud, observes Collins in conclusion of his study on reading-aloud, means that many people experienced nineteenth-century literature as a group or community, rather than as individuals,<sup>358</sup> a fact which is not sufficiently acknowledged in literary criticism. Yet, the crowds for such communal entertainments included people from all social classes, rich and poor alike, literate and illiterate, though the music halls may be different for each class.

Poverty and illiteracy were not the only reasons for this practice. Writing of the practice of reading aloud in medieval times, Coleman said that 'the audiences who preferred to have their literature read to them included monarchs, nobles, lawyers, and academics—none of whom could possibly have been constrained by illiteracy or lack of

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<sup>353</sup> 'St. George's Hall', in *The Times* (7 February 1870), 11.

<sup>354</sup> Cf. J. H. Morse, 'Reading Aloud', in *Independent*, vol. 62 (1907), 942-944; P. Collins, *Reading Aloud: A Victorian Metier* (Lincoln: Keyworth and Fry Ltd., 1972), pp. 4-5.

<sup>355</sup> Cf. P. Collins, *Reading Aloud: A Victorian Metier*.

<sup>356</sup> 'The Pleasant Practice of Reading Aloud', in *The Nation*, vol. 85, 2216 (Dec. 19, 1907), 560.

<sup>357</sup> J. H. Morse, 'Reading Aloud', 944.

<sup>358</sup> Cf. P. Collins, *Reading Aloud: A Victorian Metier*, p. 27.

books.<sup>359</sup> For these people who could read and who could afford the books, sheer appreciation of hearing things read aloud became the reason for delight in reading-aloud sessions. Carlyle said that readers-aloud such as Dickens and Thackeray were just going about ‘exhibiting themselves to a lot of inquisitive people who were too lazy to read what they paid their shillings to listen to’.<sup>360</sup> Similarly, Ruskin, following Dickens’s death made this objection against the practice of reading aloud: ‘Everybody wants to hear—nobody to read—nobody to think; to be excited for an hour—and, if possible, amused.’<sup>361</sup> This aural reception of literature continued throughout the nineteenth century. Thus, reading aloud was practised even in the British upper class which was literate and could afford to purchase Carleton’s early nineteenth-century writings.

The practice was spread throughout all social classes; poor and/or illiterate people took part in reading aloud sessions in Britain. Philip Collins reports that, at twopence for adults and a penny for children, recitals were given to people in a village smithy, or in the parish schoolrooms for the innocent amusement of the poor ‘penny readings’. The poor people, he said, were so delighted with such performances that they could not help stopping the artists to tell them how much they appreciated their art. One such artist, Charles Dickens, confided his experience in a letter: ‘One of the pleasantest things I have experienced here [in Liverpool] this time, is the manner in which I am stopped in the streets by working men, who want to shake hands with me, and tell me they know my books.’<sup>362</sup> Dickens also received similar responses from his audiences following his reading aloud performances in Belfast, Dublin, Cork and Limerick. In his 1858 letter to Miss Georgina Hogarth, he said that his reading at Belfast was more successful and had a better audience than in Dublin and other Irish places. In Belfast, the ‘dear girls’ looked at him in the street with requests: ‘do me the honor to shake hands Misther Dickens and God bless you Sir; not ounly for the light you have been to me this night; but for the light you’ve been in mee house Sir (and God love your face!) this many a year.’<sup>363</sup> Thus, Dickens was known in Ireland as a reader-aloud; Carleton who knew Dickens and who

<sup>359</sup> J. Coleman, ‘On Beyond Ong: Taking the Paradox out of “Oral Literacy” (and “Literate Orality”)’, in H. L. C. Tristam, ed., *Medieval Insular Literature between the Oral and the Written*, p. 158.

<sup>360</sup> Carlyle reported in H. Vizetelly, *Glances back through Seventy Years* (1893), cited by P. Collins, *Reading Aloud: A Victorian Metier*, p. 26.

<sup>361</sup> Ruskin, letter of 1874, quoted in P. Collins, *Reading Aloud: A Victorian Metier*, p. 26.

<sup>362</sup> C. Dickens, *Letters*, III, 717, quoted in P. Collins, *Reading Aloud: A Victorian Metier*, p. 19.

<sup>363</sup> ‘Letter to Miss Georgina Hogarth, 29 August 1858’, in G. Storey and K. Tollotson, eds., *The Letters of Charles Dickens*, vol. 8: 1856-1858 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 643.

called himself the master of Thackeray and Dickens as well as the Irish national writer was to be the Irish Dickens, as writer and reader for the Irish.<sup>364</sup>

In the Irish context, Niall Ó Ciosáin has revealed, in his study on print and popular culture in early nineteenth-century Ireland, that for cultural, financial and material reasons, printed materials were not always available. He points out that in these circumstances a frequent form of transformation of written materials into oral recitations operated through performances, rumours or repetition to other people, quite independently of the printed texts. The practice of reading aloud was, for him, the most obvious and classic way in which written texts entered an oral culture when Irish society at this time was partially literate.<sup>365</sup> He substantiates the existence of the practice of reading-aloud in Ireland in the following words:

In Ireland, gatherings at night for storytelling, known as ‘áirneáil’ or ‘scoraíocht’, were a central feature of rural life from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries, and the principal locus of transmission of oral literature. The reading of manuscripts in Irish at these gatherings is well attested, both by observers and by the evidence of the manuscripts themselves. There seems no reason to suppose that printed books would not also have been read aloud, or that storytellers would not have taken material from them for recitation at such gatherings. In any case, what is being referred to as ‘reading aloud’ is the recitation of a printed text, whether the printed object itself is present or not.<sup>366</sup>

The last sentence is of paramount importance; the practice of reading aloud involved reciting a printed text, whether this text was physically present or not. In this sense, teachers or lecturers who tell their students a story taken from a book are thus involved in the practice of reading aloud or circle of orature.

Ó Ciosáin has identified two kinds of reading aloud in early nineteenth-century Ireland: a ‘vertical’ reading taking place between the prestigious literate and the poor illiterate and a ‘horizontal’ reading between equals, both dating from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The vertical reading places the reader above the listener: the rich read to the poor, the literate to the illiterate, and the learned to the unlearned.

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<sup>364</sup> *Life*, vol. 2, p. 158.

<sup>365</sup> N. Ó Ciosáin, *Print and Popular Culture in Ireland, 1750-1850* (London: Macmillan Press Ltd, 1997), p. 186.

<sup>366</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 187.

Newspapers, especially, were read in this way. The following quotations from Ó Ciosáin substantiate this point:

The writer [Mason] has often known Cox's Magazine to be read aloud to a crowd of villagers on a Sunday evening, while the people swallowed down every word, and imbibed every principle, more deeply instilled by the comments of the reader.

The men whom you saw are poor labourers who have finished their day's work, and they are gathered together at the door of the school so that the teacher, when he has finished his lessons, can read the newspapers aloud.

'And who gives them this newspaper?' I asked.

'I get it' said the priest.

[A travelling labourer working on a large farm] was always anxious to hear the newspapers, which Mr. S—[the owner], as is not unusual in this part of Ireland, often read to the labourers of an evening, after their work was finished.<sup>367</sup>

This type of reading was formally and regularly done either on Sunday evenings, or after work, or after Mass. The 1840s portrait of Henry McManus's *Reading 'The Nation'* after Mass is the best-known Irish illustration of reading-aloud. Hugh Dorian also reported in his memoir (1889-90) of these meetings, 'held on the afternoons of Sundays (...), generally in the house nearest to the place of worship,' of anxious listeners waiting for a reader or performer.<sup>368</sup> This use of fixed times suggests massive audiences and important occasions that should not be missed.

Further substantiating the continuity of this circulation of literature in late nineteenth-century Ireland, particularly in Ulster, Dorian gave the example of Stephen Swanson who 'had the advantage of being able to read' and who travelled to either the priest's house or the squire's (the then subscribers to newspapers) for news which he 'carefully stored up for the night's proceedings, his ambition being satisfied if he was able to carry to the board something new, strange or wonderful, and to be able to enlarge on what he had read.'<sup>369</sup> Swanson was thus using printed literature as *aide-mémoire*, learning the written material by heart in order to recite it later, as stated in Ó Ciosáin's definition of reading aloud above. Another local celebrity who was involved in this circle of orature

<sup>367</sup> W. S. Mason, *A Statistical Account or Parochial Survey of Ireland*, vol. 3 (Dublin: Faulkner Press, 1814-1819), pp. 639-640, cited by N. Ó Ciosáin, *Print and Popular Culture in Ireland*, p. 188.

<sup>368</sup> H. Dorian, *The Outer Edge of Ulster*, p. 137.

<sup>369</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 125.

was Dominick Carson whose ‘repetition of fables, of rhymes and such like to a degree of perfection incredible,’ Dorian still remembered and wrote: ‘*The Arabian Knights, Gulliver’s Travels*, and especially Burns’ *Poems* were to him as easy as the alphabet.’<sup>370</sup> Describing one specific form of reading aloud in the nightly meetings, once a paper was found, Hugh Dorian recorded:

The paper would be opened up before the fire and if it was good, all seemed satisfied already; the next person sought was the reader, for we must bear in mind that none of the members of themselves wished to read any of it just then as it would prevent them from their share in the discourses. The reader was sought for and got. Pity the reader, for as regards the papers, there was no scruple whatever as to date or editor, he was generally one of the best of the scholars who was captured for to perform. The poor sufferer dared not refuse, but he had the unwelcome and arduous task of reading aloud as best he could for the whole assembly [and received] the correction, explanation and interpretation of the master who as he thought fit gave orders to stop for explanation and to proceed when comment was over.<sup>371</sup>

This account shows that there was a membership group of literate people and that not all members wished to read aloud, as some preferred to act as masters who could stop the reading for explanation and interpretation, which were an integral part of the practice of reading aloud. It also gives a new understanding of the practice of reading aloud, in comparison to Ó Ciosáin’s model of classification in two types, by showing that the relationships between the reader aloud and the audience were hierarchical but also interactive. All these are different models of ‘vertical’ reading aloud and show the presence throughout nineteenth century of a culture of performance that fed on print culture in a collective setting.

‘Horizontal’ reading, on the other hand, was practised in the household environment by children to their illiterate parents, or in literary circles by a literate to other literates. As more and more Irish people were getting educated, children were often literate when their parents were not, and could read to them and translate for the parents who could not speak English. Some popular printed materials, Ó Ciosáin has shown, recommended this practice: an Irish translation of *Think Well On’t* (1819) has this recommendation in its preface: ‘I advise fathers and mothers to make their children (if

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<sup>370</sup> Ibid., p. 127.

<sup>371</sup> Ibid., pp. 142-143.

they are scholars) buy this book and frequently to read a chapter to the household.<sup>372</sup> These recommendations reveal the low rate of literacy at that historical period, and suggest that reading aloud was a widespread practice within families and across social classes.

In literate circles, in nineteenth-century Ireland, economic and material reasons or simple pleasure led some literate people who wanted to read a text to sit in a group and listen to one read aloud for the benefit of all. Niall Ó Ciosáin has noted that in many areas of Ireland from about 1820, the frequency of such horizontal reading increased, as poverty rose at the same time as literacy rates increased, following the State funding of primary education. In his opinion, the pre-famine decades ‘were certainly a golden age for the cheapest collectively read (or sung) text, the single-sheet ballad.’<sup>373</sup> He also observed that the internal elements in these horizontal types of reading were made of ‘many interruptions, explanations, comments and criticisms,’ (as illustrated in Dorian’s account above), especially when the reading text was a ‘historical legend, or narratives concerning local beliefs and traditions.’<sup>374</sup> We find the same thematic presented by and within Carleton’s text, and unsurprisingly, the same interruptions and comments. The situation is similar to other cultures of orature where people interact with the teller in gatherings for storytelling.

Carleton experienced these two kinds of reading aloud, particularly the vertical one, as his autobiography attests. A rambler looking for employment, Carleton arrived at Dundalk (ca. 1819) and was received with kindness on account of his fame as a legend teller. The neighbouring families began to quarrel as to which of them should receive him. He told them ‘old classical legends, which [he] transmogrified and changed into an incredible variety of shapes’<sup>375</sup> He was a mediator between the printed classics, which he knew by heart, being able to tell them without the printed materials at hand, and the audience, in a culture of orature. He would have given them Irish legends, but ‘the Irish legends did not show the “larnin”’, as his autobiographer notes. Then, he took to inventing original narratives to the delight of his audiences: ‘I used to compose these fictions in the course of the day, while walking about, and recite them at the fireside in the evening. (...)

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<sup>372</sup> This is a translation from the Irish by N. Ó Ciosáin, *Print and Popular Culture in Ireland*, p. 189.

<sup>373</sup> N. Ó Ciosáin, *Print and Popular Culture in Ireland*, p. 190.

<sup>374</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 190.

<sup>375</sup> *Life*, vol. 1, p. 171.

The number of people who came to hear me in the evening was surprising.<sup>376</sup> The fact that some Irish people came from long distances to listen to Carleton shows how widespread were these communal performances. Even when he moved to become an amanuensis to McDonagh, the literary tailor, he was still mediating as a performer by reading aloud what he had written: ‘the poor tailor, when I read over a portion of what I had written, would fly into ecstasies, snap his fingers and dance about like a madman’,<sup>377</sup> because Carleton impressed him by his good performances.

The spread of the practice of reading-aloud in nineteenth-century Irish society can also be seen in Carleton’s assertion, in his autobiography, that many illiterate Irish people kept their books ‘most carefully laid up, under the hope that some young relation [or a passer-by] might be able to read them (the books)’<sup>378</sup> for them. During his random visits to people’s houses when he was looking for a job, Carleton himself found books, pamphlets, romances and novels even in houses where the people could not read English.<sup>379</sup> The fact that they were keeping the books, though they could not read, shows that these books were kept for the purpose of reading aloud anytime a literate person chanced to pass by.

Thus, it can be said without doubt that Carleton experienced spoken literature ‘absorbing’ elements of print culture in a collective setting, took part actively in the process and would transcribe this experience in print form when he started writing. Carleton’s own works are witness to his experience of this communal appropriation of print literature in an oral mode. A fairly detailed account is provided in his novel, *Fardorougha the Miser or the Convicts of Lisnamona* (1839). Carleton’s description of a hedge school-house, which was used as a meeting place for entertainments, reveals the practice of reading aloud of written texts, a ballad in this instance, and the mixture of genres (ballad reading, melody and drama) that is characteristic of the whole communal entertainment:

The appearance of those who were here assembled was indeed singularly striking. A large fire of the unconsumed peat brought by the scholars on that morning was kindled in the middle of the floor—its usual site. Around upon stones, hobs, bosses, and seats of various descriptions, sat the “boys,”—some smoking and others drinking; (...) As they had not all yet assembled, nor the business of the night

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<sup>376</sup> Ibid., p. 172.

<sup>377</sup> *Life*, vol.1, p. 170.

<sup>378</sup> Ibid., p. 73.

commenced, they were, of course, divided into several groups and engaged in various amusements. In the lower end of the house was a knot, busy at the game of “spoil five” (...). In the upper end, again, sat another clique, listening to a man who was reading a treasonable ballad. Such of them as could themselves read stretched over their necks, in eagerness to peruse it along with him, and such as could not—indeed the greater number—gave force to its principles by very significant tones and gestures; some being those of melody, and others those of murder; that is to say, part of them were attempting to hum a tune in a low voice suitable to the words, whilst others more ferocious brandished their weapons, as if those against whom the spirit of the ballad was directed had been then within the reach of their savage passions.<sup>380</sup>

All the indications provided by Hugh Dorian and Ó Ciosáin are present in this passage, including night or afternoon gathering of partially literate crowds in a house. Before the beginning of the night entertainments, the audience was divided into small interpretive communities according to the hobby or amusements they liked the most. Some showed interest in listening to a man who was reading a ballad; and while the fortunate literate people perused the ballad with the reader, some of the illiterate listeners mimed it with gestures and others accompanied it with music, in a way that is reminiscent of the interposition of song, poetry and drama in Carleton’s stories.

There is also evidence that some of Carleton’s written stories were used in this way, that is, read aloud in a community setting. Brian Earls, in his study of Carleton’s stories, supports Ó Ciosáin’s theory on print culture being absorbed by orality, when he says that there are clues that the tales-of-the-Irish-peasantry have percolated down to the peasantry, presumably by being read aloud by literate members of the local community.<sup>381</sup> For example, Carleton constructed his novel, *Willy Reilly and His Dear Colleen Bawn* (1855) around a popular ballad he found ‘in a wretched state of disorder’ owing to ‘the inaccuracy of memory and ignorance’ and decided to restore it out of honour for its rustic bard.<sup>382</sup> The story, Willy Reilly, underwent at least four processes of transformation: from oral memory to print as support to memory; from the genre of story or legend to the

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<sup>379</sup> Cf. *Life*, vol. 1.

<sup>380</sup> *Fardorougha the Miser or the Convicts of Lisnamona* (Belfast: Apple Tree Ltd, 1992), pp. 180-181.

<sup>381</sup> Cf. B. Earls, ‘A Note on Seanachas Amhlaoibh I Luinse’, in *Béaloideas*, 52 (1984), 12.

<sup>382</sup> W. Carleton, ‘Willy Reilly and His Dear Colleen Bawn: A Tale Founded upon Fact’ (London: Hope & Co., 1855), pp. viii-xii; also *Life*, vol. 2, p. 201. Remark: ‘Coleen’ (dear), ‘Cooleen’ (fair) and Colleen’ (merely) are different variant spellings in the different editions of this book (See, Hayley, *A Bibliography of the Writings of William Carleton* (Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe, 1985), p. 83).

adaptation of that story into poetry, using rhyme here as technique of memorisation; from oral-printed ballad into the novel; and from a novel that preserves characteristics of ‘story’ and ‘poetry, as in the *Athenaeum*’s description of it as ‘a charming story, a kind of chivalry poem’, Willy Reilly became an oral story, as on hearing it read aloud, Mr Nolan (a *ceili* master interviewed by Henry Glassie) was able to tell the story without the book, though quoting the title and author of the book. He re-ordered the plot, compressed the 880 pages of the novel into an oral tale of few pages;<sup>383</sup> he recomposed the tale, completing thus the circle from orality to orality through writing and performance. Carleton knew Willy Reilly as a ballad from his mother who used to sing it; below are the first two stanzas of this ballad-poetry:

“Oh! Rise up, Willy Reilly, and come along with me,  
I mean for to go with you and leave this counterie,  
To leave my father’s dwelling, his houses and free land;”  
And away goes Willy Reilly and his dear Coolen Bawn.

They go by hills and mountains, and by yon lonesome plain,  
Through shady groves and valleys all dangers to refrain;  
But her father followed after with a well-arm’d chosen stand,  
For taken was poor Reilly and his dear Coolen Bawn.<sup>384</sup>

The rhyming and the recurring phrase ‘dear *Coolen Bawn*’ that ends the stanzas are helpful devices for memorisation, as we have already pointed out in the first part (cf. I.1.B.i) and will substantiate later with more examples from Pacéré’s poetry (cf. III.1.B.ii). Carleton adapted this poetry into an orature novel, upon publication of which a Connaught correspondent wrote to him to tell him the story of Willy Reilly (a legend about McDermott of Lough Key opposing the marriage of his daughter to a young fellow) with the expectation that Carleton would compile it in a book.<sup>385</sup> This example shows the circle of orature, reveals that the compartmentalisation of literature into genres is not relevant in spoken literature, and shows that ‘rhyme’ and printed letters were used as support to memory and to performance.

<sup>383</sup> Cf. H. Glassie, *Passing the Time: Folklore and History of an Ulster Community* (Dublin: The O’Brien Press, 1982), pp. 119-126 and pp. 746-748.

<sup>384</sup> C. G. Duffy, *Ballad-Poetry of Ireland* (1845), quoted in *Life*, vol. 2, p. 201.

<sup>385</sup> Cf. *Life*, vol. 2, p. 203.

Another example of this circulation of literature is the tale ‘Tadhg Gabha agus an Dial’ in *Scéalaíocht Amhlaoibh I Luinse*. Brian Earls shows how this popular tale is a retelling of Carleton’s ‘Three wishes’, which itself derives from the oral tradition of South Ulster as Carleton heard it from his youth.<sup>386</sup> *Willy Reilly and His Dear Coleen Bawn* and ‘Tadhg Gabha agus an Dial’ have twice crossed the Rubicon of the spoken and literary traditions. If the two texts which were published respectively in 1845 (in the collection of *Tales and Sketches of the Irish Peasantry*) and in 1855, that is, fifteen to twenty-five years after the first series of *Traits and Stories*, eventually returned to the spoken literature, most likely through reading aloud, there is no doubt that the stories in *Traits and Stories* underwent the same process (fuller discussion later in part three) through the reading aloud, which Carleton and other writers practised at that period.

The evidence of Carleton as an oral performer is not confined to his early career. Carleton gave public readings from his writings in order to earn more income, though his emotional nature and his failing voice at the age of seventy eventually rendered him unfit for the practice of reading aloud after the manner of Dickens. An undated letter (ca. 1859) of Dr. Corry of Belfast to David J. O’Donoghue tells of Carleton reading a story from *Traits and Stories*, ‘Tubber Derg, or the Red Well’ (1831, 1844), before a northern audience: ‘The music-hall was fairly well filled, but it was very badly lighted, and it soon became apparent that Carleton was unable to decipher correctly the book from which he read. (...) I went out and procured a number of candles; but by the time I returned, he had nearly completely broken down, and the reading had soon to be brought to abrupt conclusion.’<sup>387</sup> One expected Carleton to be successful in this experiment on account of his having been a public entertainer through storytelling and acting on stage in his youth, but there are reasons why he failed. Back in Dublin following the event, Carleton wrote in a letter to Dr. Corry explaining the causes of the failure of his Belfast reading aloud experiment: ‘For three days before I read I was ill,’ he wrote. ‘In truth,’ he continued, ‘if it had been possible I would have postponed the reading on that evening, but it was too late, as some of the tickets were out. Then the story I selected was too reflective and not calculated for [this] public audience,’<sup>388</sup> as it deals with Catholic piety, whereas the

<sup>386</sup> Cf. B. Earls, ‘A Note on Seanachas Amhlaoibh I Luinse’, in *Béaloideas*, 52 (1984), 10.

<sup>387</sup> *Life*, vol. 2, p. 281.

<sup>388</sup> ‘Letter of August 10, 1859’, in *Life*, vol. 2, p. 282; also ‘Letter of January 19<sup>th</sup>, 1863’, in *Life*, vol. 2, p. 290.

audience was predominantly Protestant. On his way back to Dublin, Carleton was also invited by a Drogheda institution to read one of his stories but he refused, as he and one of his sons were ill.<sup>389</sup> In 1864, he went again to Belfast to read his new novel, *Anne Cosgrave*, to the Messrs. Read, during which performance he was ‘heaving with emotion in the recital of some striking and heartfelt detail, and exhibiting to [them] how his stories were transcripts of portions of his own experience or observation.’<sup>390</sup>

In 1866, ‘The Athenaeum’, an intellectual society, invited ‘the celebrated novelist’, Carleton, to read a passage from his own works in Winter Palace in Dublin. Carleton accepted the invitation and told his experience in his letter to his son James: ‘The crowd was immense—the largest I ever witnessed in Dublin—consisting as it did of between six and seven thousand persons.’<sup>391</sup> The immensity of the attendance shows the popularity of the practice at that time. Following a first speaker who recited some passages from Shakespeare, Carleton addressed the audience, thanked them for supporting the ‘Athenaeum’, but ‘regretted that the state of [his] sight prevented [him] from giving a reading from any of [his] own works.’<sup>392</sup> Thus, the examples given so far show that Carleton has been a reader aloud, from his youth to his old age, in an oral culture that fed on printed materials in nightly meetings.

In addition to the mixture of performance genres and the use of print in the oral mode, another feature of nineteenth-century Irish culture was linguistic hybridity, as Joep Leerssen points out in his description of the community and tradition of Irish peasantry in the early nineteenth century:

A very important part of Anglo-Irish poetry in the early to mid-century authenticates itself as Irish by insisting on a musical, or at least oral quality, as a melody, song or ballad. In part, this was more than a mere invocation: songs and balladry constituted, in fact one of the most important cultural expressions of the Irish peasantry, and testifies to their uncertain position between two languages, English and Irish, and between the registers of orality and literacy.<sup>393</sup>

Thus, the mixture of genres (poetry, songs and music) and an interaction of oral and written traditions, which are characteristic of orature, are aspects we may find in surveying

<sup>389</sup> Cf. *Life*, vol. 2, p. 284.

<sup>390</sup> Mr. McKibbin in *The Weekly Sun* (May, 1895), in *Life*, vol. 2, p. 302.

<sup>391</sup> Cf. *Life*, vol. 2, p. 318.

<sup>392</sup> *Life*, vol. 2, p. 319.

<sup>393</sup> J. Leerssen, *Remembrance and Imagination*, p. 173.

nineteenth-century Irish performances. In this context, one can agree with Patrick Sheeran that the hyphenation in the terms ‘Anglo-Irish’ or ‘Hiberno-English’ alerts one to the hybrid nature of Irish literature, to literary confusions and complexities resulting from colonisation;<sup>394</sup> this is supported by the findings of other scholars. As mentioned earlier, Thuente traced the literary origins of the United Irish songs to English literary prose and poetry.<sup>395</sup> Leerssen has shown other hybrid complexities in the relationship of Irish song and poetry: a stock of favourite airs served for newly composed texts and some of these were glossed in manuscript as being to the air of ‘*Caitlín Tirial*’, ‘*Eibhlin a Rún*’, ‘*An Cnóta Bán*’, or other evergreens. From these facts, Leerssen makes the following suggestion: ‘Poems as written texts should be seen as mere transcripts of performed song-lyrics, almost like the sleeve notes on records and discs.’<sup>396</sup> Words and music of newly written poems, in that century, were sold in broadsheet ballads and used for performance. The significance of poetry of orature, performed with music and multilingual, will be illustrated in the examination of Carleton’s ‘literary grammar’ (cf. III.1.A).

The multilingualism that is found in Carleton’s *Traits and Stories* is characteristic of that period, as early nineteenth-century Ireland was hybrid in the domain of language as a whole. The linguistic hybridity can be traced back to the Middle Ages by the end of which Irish, English, Latin, Old Norse and Norman French had traversed the land of Ireland and its cultural life. It is no surprise, remarks Vance, that ‘writing in Ireland has drawn strength from the complex interaction of all these languages – and more – and of the different cultural traditions associated with them.’<sup>397</sup> Literature tended to be more universal than regional, rather multilingual than monolingual. For example, French and Italian quotations abound in Lady Morgan’s works together with Irish history, topography and local customs. In his own works, Carleton uses entire Irish sentences without translation and Latin, which he had learned at school, and which was the language used in the Catholic Church of the time, so that the peasantry would have recognised some phrases of Latin.

Another pertinent fact is that as early as the sixteenth century, in the reigns of Queen Elizabeth (1533-1603) and King James (1566-1625), the people of Carleton’s

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<sup>394</sup> P. F. Sheeran, ‘Legends of the Supernatural in Anglo-Irish Literature: Third Response’, in *Béaloideas* 60-61 (1992-93), 157.

<sup>395</sup> M. H. Thuente, *The Harp Re-Strung* (Syracuse: Syracuse University press, 1994), pp. 20-21.

<sup>396</sup> P. F. Sheeran, ‘Legends of the Supernatural in Anglo-Irish Literature’, 173.

county learned English from written works, viz. the Bible and the plays of Shakespeare (1564-1616), in an oral culture which already absorbed elements of print culture. Rose Shaw substantiates this extensively in the following quote, when writing of the country and period in which Carleton lived:

The people in this district speak English as learned by their forefathers from the settlers in the reigns of Elizabeth and James I.—the English of Shakespeare and of the Bible. They make a ‘tryste’ with you to meet you in the fair. They ‘convoy’ you a piece on the road, [H. V. III. 6. 76. Hamlet, I. 3, 3. Romeo and Juliet, II. 4, 203.] They say “I still take meat (food) when I go to the bog I’d as lief not be without it.” (Still, always) [Tempest I. 2, 176; II. 1, 179. Midsummer Night’s Dream I. 1, 194. Winter’s Tale IV. 4, 136. King John I. 1, 76.] I wouldn’t ‘allow’ (advise) you to go. [Twelfth Night, I, 2, 59.] He’ll rue (regret) it yet. [King John III. 1, 325; V 7, 117. Richard II. I. 3, 205. Macbeth III. 6, 42.] I’ll do it presently (at once). [Tempest IV. 1, 42; II. 1, 125; V. 1, 101. As You Like It II. 6, 11; III. 2, 152. Taming of the Shrew II. 1, 108; IV. 4, 59.] ‘Tarr ’em on!’ [King John IV. 1, 117. Troil. and Cress. I. 3, 392. Hamlet II. 2, 370.] To tent (prick). [Troil and Cress. II. 2, 16; V. 1, 11. Cor. I. 9, 31; III. 1, 236. Hamlet II. 2, 626: “I’ll tent him to the quick.”] To renage (refuse). [Lear II. 2, 84. Ant. and Cleo. I. 1, 8.] A ‘mote’ (speck) in the butter. [Love’s Labour’s Lost IV. 3, 161. Midsummer Night’s Dream, V. 1, 324. Hamlet I. 1, 112.] It’s a brave (fine) day. [Tempest V. 1, 183. Hamlet II. 2, 312.] Kibe (chilblain) [Tempest II. 1, 276. Merry Wives I. 3, 35. Hamlet V. 1, 153.] Brock (badger). [Twelfth Night II, 5, 114.] Gibe (joke). [Merry Wives III. 3, 259; IV. 5, 82. Hamlet V. 1, 209.] Strait (narrow) [Meas. for M. II. 1, 9. As You Like It. V. 2, 71. Cym. V. 3, 7; V. 3, 11.] Press (cupboard). [Merry Wives II. 1, 80; IV. 2, 117. Hamlet III, 2, 4. Ant. and Cleo. II. 7, 13. Henry V III. 7, 63]. Whisht (silence). Vessels (cups). Merin (boundary). A house well plenished, a brattle of thunder. He wrought hard. A man in his buff (naked). Our lands marched (bounded) each other, etc., etc.<sup>398</sup>

Shakespeare took these words from spoken language, but they are now marked with his written imprint. The passage of this printed literature onto orality closes a circle that is reminiscent of orature, and the oral use of this Shakespearean theatrical language by the people of Tyrone suggests their familiarity with theatrical performances of Shakespeare’s works or with these works being read. Performance restored these words back into the

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<sup>397</sup> N. Vance, *Irish Literature Since 1800*, p. 15.

<sup>398</sup> R. Shaw, *Carleton’s Country* (Dublin and Cork: The Talbot Press Limited, 1930), pp. 28-29.

spoken tradition from where they were taken. This is another example of writing serving as support to spoken tradition, which is at the basis of the theory of orature.

Another example of this interaction of spoken and written modes is the use of the Irish bull which was first an oral phenomenon, then was printed like ‘stage Irish’, and finally, printed Irish bulls were used to feed on orality, as studies revealed. In his research on this subject, Brian Earls accredited the use of bulls (a bull is a brief comic contradiction) as one characteristic of the Irish speaking English in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and ‘one of the chief verbal signals by which the Irish were identified by speakers of Standard English’.<sup>399</sup> He also noted that, apart from the theatre, there is evidence dating from the eighteenth century and early nineteenth centuries suggesting that bulls, which had oral currency, were diffused by means of joke books so much so that the nineteenth and twentieth centuries might be described as the golden age of the printed bull.<sup>400</sup> Thus, the two traditions, spoken and printed literature, intermingled in a culture of orature.

The mingling of Irish with English was characteristic of nineteenth-century Irish culture, as the census of 1851, the only accurate statistics available, reveals: of the 2,011,880 inhabitants living in Ulster, only 35,783 or 1.8% spoke Irish only; 100,693 spoke Irish and English; and 136,476 or 6.8% could speak Irish but did not speak it daily.<sup>401</sup> Carleton himself, describing the transitional state of the Irish language, wrote:

The English tongue is gradually superseding the Irish. In my own native place, for instance, there is not by any means so much Irish spoken now, as there was about twenty or five-twenty years ago.<sup>402</sup>

Carleton was influenced by this hybrid linguistic situation, by this progressive decrease of the Irish language. He tells us in his *Autobiography* and his ‘General Introduction’ to *Traits and Stories* that while his father spoke Irish and English with nearly equal fluency, his mother was not so well acquainted with the English language as his father.<sup>403</sup> The fact that his father told stories as often in Irish as in English was of a great help to Carleton in his transfer of language in his works, as he himself would write later:

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<sup>399</sup> B. Earls, ‘Bulls, Blunders and Bloathers: An Examination of the Irish Bull’, in *Béaloideas*, 56 (1988), 3.

<sup>400</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>401</sup> *Census of Ireland*, 1851, quoted by D. H. Akenson, *The Irish Education Experiment: The National System of Education in the Nineteenth Century* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970), p. 378.

<sup>402</sup> *T. & S. I*, ‘General Introduction’, p. ii.

<sup>403</sup> Cf. *T. & S. I*, ‘General Introduction’, pp. viii-ix.

I heard them as often in the Irish language as in the English if not oftener: a circumstance which enabled me in my writings to transfer the genius, the idiomatic peculiarity and conversational spirit of the one language into the other, precisely as the people themselves do in their dialogue.<sup>404</sup>

Carleton was highly successful in this transfer and much of the idiomatic colour and energy of his language, observes Barry Sloan, derives from the bilingual elements in it,<sup>405</sup> as an analysis of his ‘literary grammar’ will reveal (cf. III.1.a).

The education system in nineteenth-century Ireland created favourable conditions for the interaction and mingling of oral and written modes. From the 1825 major government report on education of the period, we learn more about the different types of school which existed before 1831 together with the numbers of pupils attending them: the hedge schools, by far the largest category, contained about 400,000 pupils, over 70 per cent of the total. Catholic day schools, the second category, accounted for 33,500 pupils. The third types were the Erasmus Smith schools and the Protestant Charter Schools with 11,000 pupils. Finally, there were schools run by the various educational societies, for example, the Society of the Education of the Poor of Ireland, known as the Kildare Place Society.<sup>406</sup> Education slowly improved in Ireland over the years; the number of people over five years of age who could neither read nor write decreased progressively over decades as the following census<sup>407</sup> reveals:

	1841	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901
Ireland	53	47	39	33	25	18	14
Leinster	44	39	31	27	20	15	11
Munster	61	55	46	39	28	20	14
Ulster	40	35	30	27	20	15	12
Connaught	72	66	57	49	38	27	21

(These are percentages of decreasing illiteracy)

<sup>404</sup> *T.&S. 1*, p. ix.

<sup>405</sup> B. Sloan, *The Pioneers of Anglo-Irish Fiction 1800-1850*, p. 145.

<sup>406</sup> D. Corkery, *The Hidden Ireland: A Study of Gaelic Munster in the Eighteenth Century* (Dublin, Gill and Macmillan, 1967), pp. 39-40.

<sup>407</sup> *Census of Ireland*, 1901, quoted by D.H. Akenson, *The Irish Education Experiment*, p. 376.

This 1841 census is the first accurate census data available, so it is impossible to have relevant data of the state of education in the early nineteenth century, which is pertinent to our study. However, gauging from these data and using an average of six percent decrease per decade, we can estimate at around 75% the illiteracy rate in Ireland in 1801 and around 95% in Connaught and 65% in Ulster where Carleton was born and brought up. These estimations are likely to reflect reality and more so for Catholic areas, as Presbyterian and Catholic schools were discouraged by the penal laws.

A system of proselytising education in the shape of the charter schools had little effect on literacy rates, as J. R. R. Adams notes: 'The charter schools were largely ineffective, and though the system lasted into the nineteenth century it did not create any significant amount of literacy, mainly because that was not the primary aim.'<sup>408</sup> Some Catholics, like Carleton in his youth, received their elementary education in hedge schools, others were taught by their parents. In this context, reflecting on the poverty of the common Irish, Margaret Chesnutt says that 'George Berkeley's query, "Whether there be upon earth any Christian or civilised people so beggarly, wretched and destitute as the common Irish?" applied just as much in Carleton's youth as it had some three quarters of a century earlier.'<sup>409</sup> One can conclude from this overview of the educational system that the number of Irish people who could read and write in early nineteenth century was very low. In this sense, solo-reading was unlikely to be common and the focus on community rather than on individuality would have worked against such initiatives.

Finance was another factor; the number of subscribers to newspapers in mid nineteenth-century Ireland was very low and caused many publishers to go bankrupt and close.<sup>410</sup> Even the penny-journals and newspapers were very expensive, and would usually be read aloud by the schoolteachers, priests or large farmers, who could afford them. Unlike modern times, in nineteenth-century Ireland, 'a considerable number of books were published by subscription,'<sup>411</sup> as Charles Benson underlines in his article on the history of printers and booksellers in Dublin in the first half of the nineteenth century. For example, *The National Magazine* (1830), to which Carleton contributed with some stories, had the

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<sup>408</sup> J. R. R. Adams, *The Printed Word and the Common Man*, p. 12.

<sup>409</sup> *Studies in the Short Stories of William Carleton*, p. 14.

<sup>410</sup> Cf. C. Benson, 'Printers and Booksellers in Dublin 1800-1850', in R. Myers and M. Harris, eds., *Spreading the Word: The Distribution Networks of Print, 1550-1850* (Winchester: St Paul's Bibliographies, 1990), p. 47-59.

<sup>411</sup> C. Benson, 'Printers and Booksellers in Dublin 1800-1850', p. 52.

following ‘cheaper prices’ for subscribers: ‘Terms of subscription for town and country 30s. per annum; 15s. the half year, and 7s. 6d. the quarter’.<sup>412</sup> Thus, printed materials, especially newspapers, were very expensive, were ‘beyond the reach of all but the well-to-do’ as a consequence of stamp duties, which amounted to 2d. per issue until 1836 and 1d. per issue thereafter.<sup>413</sup> Not everybody could afford to be a subscriber, only wealthy people who were few, and institutions, such as teaching, religious and administrative bodies. This situation explains both the fact that ‘local celebrities’ or reader-performers usually got their materials from teachers, priests or squires, and the practice of reading aloud in order to spread the news to large audiences of literate and illiterate alike. Judging from the fact that in 1830 sixty-six newspapers were published in Ireland, which sold around four million copies per year and eighty-one in 1841, with total annual sales of almost six million, Clark argues that if one assumes that a regular newspaper purchaser would buy one paper a week, then in 1841, there were around 100,000 regular purchasers in a country with a population of eight million.<sup>414</sup>

With this background, Carleton’s selling parts of his 1842-44 edition of *Traits and Stories* at one shilling each<sup>415</sup> is significant when compared to the above terms of subscription of *The National Magazine* and Bentley’s consent in 1841 to receive Carleton as a contributor to his *Miscellany* and to pay Carleton ‘twelve guineas per sixteen printed pages.’<sup>416</sup> A division by twelve of the annual terms of subscriptions to *The National Magazine* (30s.) gives 2s. and 6d. for each issue of this monthly magazine. As subscriptions were usually cheaper than the purchase of single copies, we can say that by selling his stories at one shilling each Carleton sold them at least twice more cheaply than the prestigious, literary magazine. By doing so, he was attempting to reach a wider audience outside the bourgeoisie (supra II.2.A), namely the peasantry with whom he identifies himself in his *Autobiography* and in his ‘General Introduction’ to his *Traits and Stories*, and about whom he is writing. As the following more detailed account of his biography will show, he was deeply involved in both ‘spoken’ culture as a storyteller, and in print culture, as he had the ambition to be the Irish national writer.

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<sup>412</sup> *The Dublin Literary Gazette and the National Magazine*, vol. 1, 1 (July 1830).

<sup>413</sup> B. Inglis, *The Freedom of the Press in Ireland, 1784-1841*, cited by S. Clark, *Social Origins of Irish Land War*, p. 49.

<sup>414</sup> S. Clark, *Social Origins of Irish Land War*, p. 49.

<sup>415</sup> Cf. B. Hayley, *A Bibliography of the Writings of William Carleton* (Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe, 1985), pp. 41-42.

## Chapter Two: The Authors' Interaction with Oral-Print Cultures and Audiences

### II.2.A. Carleton and Pacéré's Interaction with Oral-Print Cultures

The biographies of Pacéré and Carleton, firstly written by the authors themselves, then by their biographers Hortense Kaboré and David J. O'Donoghue respectively, and commented upon by other scholars, show the interaction of Pacéré and Carleton with the oral-print cultures we have just shown. Selecting from the information provided by the biographers of Carleton and Pacéré, this section will prioritise the salient biographical aspects that deal with the influence of spoken and written literatures on the two writers.

Carleton's biography shows him having one foot in Irish spoken literature and the other in English print culture; this itself is an evidence of the transitional state of Irish culture at that time, as it was absorbing elements of print culture. He himself writes of his involvement in oral traditions when he was still a teenager excelling at athletic contests and at dancing:

No dance missed me, I was perpetually leaping, and throwing the stone and the sledge. No football match was without me. I had gone five miles to wakes and dances. We had not only what were known as common dances in those days, but we had what were politely called balls. The difference between a ball and a common dance was this. At the ball we had whisky... There was then, indeed, great simplicity of manners, and a number of those old, hereditary virtues which had their origin in the purity and want of guile which consecrated domestic life. During all my association with these pastimes and harmless amusements, I never knew a single instance of a female coming to shame or loss of character.<sup>417</sup>

During these 'cultural evenings,' dancing, music, song and storytelling were all mixed, as illustrated by the two sketches we have shown in the general introduction. At these gatherings, usually around the fire, Carleton's father, a *seanachaidh*, told stories of pilgrims, miracles and old poems while his mother sang songs. Carleton showed faithfulness to this venue by setting his stories, at least the first four stories in the first volume of *Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry*, around the hearth of Ned M'Keown. Conscious that 'when an old person dies it is like a library which burns,'<sup>418</sup> as Hampaté Bâ

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<sup>416</sup> *Life*, vol. 2, p. 52.

<sup>417</sup> *Life*, vol. 1, pp. 92-93.

<sup>418</sup> A. Hampaté Bâ at a Conference of UNESCO, 1962, in <<http://www.saliege.com/hampate.html>> (Accessed on 20 March 2004) : 'quand un vieillard meurt, c'est une bibliothèque qui brûle.'

would put it in the context of literature in Africa, Carleton undertook to save the oral stories he heard, and which were disappearing with alarming rapidity, by transcribing them in print form. He also saved the original first edition of his second series of stories (1833), which was lost in the fire that ‘reduced the printer’s establishment to ashes’, by a pathetically toned-down retelling of this original, as ‘the Author [sic] is not in the habit of being twice pathetic on the same subject.’<sup>419</sup> Carleton’s work is a record of a library on fire or of a culture that was passing away even as he was writing about it, as Thomas Davis observed:

Well may Carleton say that we are in a transition [sic] state. The knowledge, the customs, the superstitions, the hopes of the People are entirely changing... It is chiefly in this way we value the work before us. In it Carleton is the historian of the peasantry.<sup>420</sup>

Irish culture of orature was in a transitional phase in Carleton’s time and Carleton played the literary historian by recording it artistically, using devices to put elements of song, music, poetry and stories on the written page in order to make his transcriptions preserve the qualities of the spoken literature he experienced.

Yet, though fully-versed in Irish oral traditions, Carleton had also knowledge of print culture, as he read ‘all those cheap amusing little works which were at that time the only reading books in the common schools, from “Arabian Nights” downwards’.<sup>421</sup> Cultural historian J. R. R. Adams has shown that some of the following books were used in the hedge schools at Carleton’s time:

Manson’s *Primer* and *Spelling Book*, Fenning’s *Universal Spelling Book*, the *Lilliputian Magazine*, the *Youth’s Instructor*, the *Seven Champions of Christendom and destruction of Troy*, *Hero and Leander*, *Gesta Romanorum*, *Seven Wise Masters*, the *Chinese Tales*, *Parismos and Parismenes*, *Don Belianis of Greece*; *The History of Captain Freney*, *Valentine and Orson*, *Irish Rogues and Rapparees*, *History of Redmond O’Handlon*, *Amoranda or the Reformed coquette*, *The Arabian Nights Entertainments*, *The Life of Edward, Lord Herbert*, *History of the Devil*, *Gil Blas*, *Castle Rackrent*, *History of Mrs Leeson*, *The History of the Chevalier Faublax*, *Irish female Jockey Club*, *Bertram*, *Melmoth, the Wanderer*,

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<sup>419</sup> *Traits and Stories*, Second Series in 3 vols., vol. 1, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. (Dublin: Wakeman, 1833), p. viii.

<sup>420</sup> T. Davis, *Thomas Davis: Memoir, Essays and Poems* (Dublin: Gill, 1945), p. 112. Cf. *T.&S. I*, ‘General Introduction’, p. ii.

*History of Dublin, Guide to an Irish Gentleman in Search of a Religion, The Spectator, the Siege of Londonderry* (this was Michelburne's *Ireland Preserv'd*), *The Royal Fairy Tales, Dorastus and Fawnia, the History of Reynard the Fox, the History of the Young Ascanius, The Forty Thieves, Robin Hood's Garland, the Garden of Love and Royal Flower of Fidelity, the Battle of Aughrin, Metamorphoses.*<sup>422</sup>

Some of these books were especially popular literature in the early nineteenth century and some of these, namely *Arabian Nights* and *Gulliver's Travels*, are mentioned in Dorian's account of the books that were used for reading performances by the local celebrities in late nineteenth-century Ireland.<sup>423</sup> It is impossible to show Carleton's knowledge of all these books and others not mentioned in this list<sup>424</sup> and the influence this printed literature had on his career as a writer. We are obliged to discriminate and focus on some the works which are most relevant to the theme of orature, viz. Robert Ashton's *The Battle of Aughrim: Or, the Fall of Monsieur St Ruth* (1728), Alain-René Lesage's *Gil Blas* and Shakespeare's plays in order to follow up Rose Shaw's evidence of the Shakespearean language spoken in Carleton's county (cf. II.1.B).

*The Battle of Aughrim* and *Gil Blas* were familiar to Carleton who had been an avid reader of sixpenny romances and history books and who wrote in his 'General Introduction' that it was following a reading of *Gil Blas* that he was inspired to set up on a wandering journey to Dublin in 1818.<sup>425</sup> In his autobiography, he tells of the popularity of two plays (*The Battle of Aughrim* and *The Siege of Londonderry*), the scripts of which were used as school books, saying that he directed his 'attention to the plays, which in their printed shape were school-books at the time. In fact [he] had "The Battle of Aughrim" off by heart.'<sup>426</sup> He also perused and memorised the classics in a similar way: 'even when a schoolboy I did not read the classics as they are usually read by learners. I read them as novels—I looked to the story—the narrative—not to the grammatical or

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<sup>421</sup> *Life*, vol. 1, p. 76. He named *Tom Jones, Amoranda, or the Reformed Coquette, The Life of Edward, Lord Herbert, Defoe's History of the Devil*, Virgil's fourth book, among other fictions he read.

<sup>422</sup> Cf. J. R. R. Adams, *Print and Popular Culture in Ireland*, pp. 14-15.

<sup>423</sup> Cf. H. Dorian, *The Outer Edge of Ulster*, p. 127.

<sup>424</sup> For example, there are references in Carleton's stories to Christopher Marlowe's *Dr Faustus*, François Rabelais's *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, Sophocles's *Oedipus Rex*, Michelburne's *Ireland Preserved; or, The Siege of London-Derry*.

<sup>425</sup> Cf. *T. & S. I*, p. xvi.

<sup>426</sup> *Life*, vol. 1, p. 26.

other difficulties.<sup>427</sup> This use of classics as support to memorisation, along with the use of the scripts of these plays as school books to ‘learn off’, reveal the manner in which print was used as support to orality. This is further verified in Carleton’s ability to stage the play without the printed text and to teach the actors ‘who could not read (...) to make themselves perfect in their parts.<sup>428</sup> Carleton knew this play, *The Battle of Aughrim*, like the oral stories he learned from his parents and, at the early age of ten, he mediated as reader for the illiterate actors of this play: ‘I had “The Battle of Aughrim” off by heart, from beginning to ending. This came to be known, and the consequence was that, though not more than ten years of age, I became stage director.<sup>429</sup>

More generally, as Niall Ó Ciosáin has shown, the popularity of Ashton’s *The Battle of Aughrim* is attributable to the fact that it had become more oral than written:

The popularity of *Aughrim* as a folk play can partly be attributed to its oral nature. It was spoken from memory, or read aloud, rather than read silently. The printed text, like a ballad sheet, was therefore, in Shield’s phrase, an ‘aid to performance’ rather than a self-contained text. Its participants included both the literate and the illiterate, and Carleton recalled training people who could not read to take part.<sup>430</sup>

Ashton’s *The Battle of Aughrim* had thus become an oral story with the use of print as support to memorisation and performance. *Gil Blas* too, a novel which guided Carleton in his literary career by showing him suddenly the whole unpredictable world of the picaresque,<sup>431</sup> and was perused and memorised by Carleton as if it were a true story,<sup>432</sup> was first written as a novel and underwent a similar change into orality, probably through theatrical adaptation, as a play. This transformation of printed literature into orality through theatrical performance was a common procedure: O’Donoghue gave an account of Mr. Washington Davies of Belfast who asked Carleton for permission to translate or adapt several of his stories, as he had done with two of Fenimore Cooper’s tales, but Carleton demanded a sum of 50l. for the adaptation which led the dramatist Davies to cancel his suggestion.<sup>433</sup> The adaptations of these works from one genre (story, tale) to theatrical form, from which they are reintegrated into spoken literature, was a constant

<sup>427</sup> Ibid., p. 73.

<sup>428</sup> Ibid., p. 26.

<sup>429</sup> Ibid., p. 26.

<sup>430</sup> N. Ó Ciosáin, *Print and Popular Culture in Ireland*, p. 109.

<sup>431</sup> Cf. *T. & S. I*, p. xvi.

<sup>432</sup> *Life*, vol. 1, p. 125.

<sup>433</sup> Cf. *Life*, vol. 1, pp. 295-296.

procedure and is another illustration of the argument of this thesis as to the circularity of oral and printed forms.

One can also detect influences of *The Battle of Aughrim* on Carleton's *Traits and Stories* in the perspective of orature. For example, from the perspective of hybrid form, *The Battle of Aughrim* is a mixture of drama, songs and poetry without being a melodrama in the etymological meaning of this word: it is poetry, as it is written in decasyllabic verse; it also contains songs, as in it actors such as Jemina and the Colonel Earles sing.<sup>434</sup> Moreover, because texts of plays were and are always used as 'aid to performance', suffice it to observe that the written presentation could change from one edition to another, as was the case for Carleton's *Traits and Stories*. Thus, in the twenty-second edition of *The Battle of Aughrim* in 1814, there was neither prologue, dedication nor epilogue, nor were italics used in the text or even in the stage directions, though all these elements had featured in previous editions. This variation in the written text clearly shows the precedence of oral performance over the written text, a fact which explains the differences in the editions of *The Battle of Aughrim*, as each edition was not a reproduction of a written text but a re-writing of a new performance. 'Performance, not text, is what is remembered and discussed,'<sup>435</sup> Angela Bourke observes, writing about oral traditions in Ireland. Likewise, new changes made in each revised edition of Carleton's stories are caused by new performances.

Nineteenth-century Irish writings were also influenced by Shakespeare's works, as Samuel Lover remarks: 'The fool, or natural, or innocent, as represented in the stories of the Irish peasantry, is very much the fool that Shakespeare occasionally embodies.'<sup>436</sup> The printed and performed works of Shakespeare clearly influenced storytelling practices in Ireland, an idea previously expressed by Rose Shaw in her tracing the vocabulary used by the people of Carleton's county to Shakespeare's works. In 1856, Carleton was requested, because of his interest in and knowledge of theatre, to give his appreciation of Helen Faucit, a famous Shakespearian actress, and he accepted and went to see her many times and wrote accounts which revealed his dramatic critical capacity.<sup>437</sup> References to

<sup>434</sup> R. Ashton, *The Battle of Aughrim: or, the Fall of Monsieur St Ruth. A Tragedy*, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. (Dublin: S. Powell, 1728), pp. 11, 20.

<sup>435</sup> A. Bourke, 'Oral Traditions', p. 1196.

<sup>436</sup> S. Lover, *Legends and Stories of Ireland*, cited by B. Kiely, *Poor Scholar: A Study of the Works and Days of William Carleton* (Dublin: Wolfhound Press, [1948], 1997), p. 61.

<sup>437</sup> Cf. *Life*, vol. 2, pp. 236-237.

Shakespearean phrases in *Traits and Stories* illustrate Carleton's knowledge of Shakespearean plays. For example, there is a Romeo and Juliet theme in 'The Battle of the Factions' in the romantic love of the two actors, John O'Callaghan and Rose O'Hallaghan. Some other Shakespearean references include: 'he became suicidal, and often had thoughts of "making his own quietus with his bare bodkin"' which is borrowed from Shakespeare's Sonnet 126 and *Hamlet*, II, 1.70, 74-75; 'except he divided himself like Hotspur, and went to buffets one and against the other, there was no chance of a fight,' which is taken from *Henry IV*, part I. A further example is this following more elaborate reference from 'Neal Malone':

The transition from war to love is by no means so remarkable as we might at first imagine. We quote Jack Falstaff in proof of this, or, if the reader be disposed to reject our authority, then we quote Ancient Pistol himself – both of whom we consider as the most finished specimens of heroism that ever carried a safe skin. Acres would have been a hero had he worn gloves to prevent the courage from oozing out at his palms, or not felt such an unlucky antipathy to the 'snug lying' in Westminster; and as for Captain Bobadil, he never had an opportunity of putting his plan, for vanquishing an army, into practice. We fear, indeed, that neither his character, nor Ben Jonson's knowledge of human nature, is properly understood.<sup>438</sup>

It can be observed that Carleton is quoting Shakespeare from memory rather than transcribing from a book, as there is not a word for word correspondence between his quotes and what is written in Shakespeare's plays. The situation here is similar to performance without a script at hand, as we have shown concerning the practice of reading aloud.

However, the varieties of theatre with which Carleton interacted when he was young must be elucidated, as there were at least two kinds of theatre in Carleton's Ireland. On the one hand, there were traditional, oral, theatrical settings (private house, shebeen house, church-hall) as already evidenced with passages from Dorian's memoir and Carleton's himself in the previous section; on the other hand, there was a more formal theatre that was imported from Britain. There were differences between the two, differences observed by Thackeray, in his journey around Ireland in 1842. While projecting an outsider's view on Irish traditions, Thackeray noted that one of the

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<sup>438</sup> *T. & S.* 2, 'Neal Malone', p. 416 and pp. 421-422.

differences between his own country and Ireland was that in Ireland, ‘the love for theatrical exhibitions [of the English model] is evidently not very great’:

The drama does not flourish much more in Dublin than in any other part of the country. (...) I was at a fine concert, at which Lablache and others performed, where there were not a hundred people in the pit of the pretty theatre. (...) On the nights when the regular drama was enacted, the audience was still smaller. ... At the Abbey-street Theatre, whither I went in order to see, if possible, some specimens of the national humour, I found a company of English people ranting through a melodrama...

‘Humbler popular recreations’ had many audiences but not of ‘the genteel sort.’ In passing homewards of a night, you hear, at the humble public-houses, the sound of many a fiddle, and the stamp of feet dancing the good old jig.<sup>439</sup>

The difference between Ireland and England concerning theatre, and differences within Ireland, are laid clear in these lines, as the importation of English theatre to Ireland led to the coexistence of English and traditional Irish theatre within early nineteenth-century Ireland. Claire Connolly’s argument concerning ‘illegitimate genres [that] were infiltrating the respectable stage’ results from a distinction between two forms of theatre in early nineteenth-century Ireland, as she situates ‘the arrival [in Dublin] of the theatre of spectacle’, or formal and ‘legitimate’ theatre, in 1821 with ‘the remodelling of the Theatre Royal in Hawkins Street.’<sup>440</sup> These differences may explain why Carleton’s one attempt at a play was found to be a failure when it was assessed with criteria based on formal English theatrical style.

Fully impressed by Carleton’s success as a novelist, John William Cole, the manager of the Theatre Royal aforementioned where Carleton’s play was staged, repeatedly asked Carleton to try his hand at theatrical composition. In compliance with this request, Carleton hastily put together a play in three acts, titled *Irish Manufacturer, or Bob MacGawley’s Project*, which was first staged in March 25, 1841, but which was not successful. Two explanations, which can also cast light on the theatrical dimensions of *Traits and Stories*, can be given, drawing from two critics, Cole and O’Donoghue, as the play itself is lost.

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<sup>439</sup> W. M. Thackeray, *The Irish Sketch-Book* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1863), pp. 406-407.

<sup>440</sup> C. Connolly, ‘Irish Romanticism, 1800-1830’, in M. Kelleher and P. O’Leary, eds., *The Cambridge History of Irish Literature*, 2 vols., vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 429-433.

Cole, who was also a playwright, explains the failure of the play with reference to artistic conventions of playwriting. He writes:

The subject and incidents were local, and the tendency most patriotic; the whole being constructed with reference to passing events ... In this comedy, the humour was less prominent than the pathos. A scene of a family starving for want of work was wrought up with an appalling strength, which absolutely startled the audience; but the reality was too painfully applicable to existing facts to prove either agreeable or attractive.<sup>441</sup>

For Cole, the play failed because there was less fiction in it; it was too real. O'Donoghue who reprinted the prologue of the play in two pages of the autobiography explains the failure of Carleton's play from the audience's dislike of it: 'The piece was so heartrending a representation of Dublin poverty, that some scenes were voted overdone, and the public resenting the harrowing details of the plot, it was speedily withdrawn.'<sup>442</sup> He attributes the withdrawal of the play to the taste of the audience: the play was quasi-Gothic, which the audience disliked. In summary, drawing from these two eye-witnesses of Carleton's play, it can be said that the play was judged flawed by an audience and conventions alien to Irish theatrical life. Carleton's play met with a wrong audience in/or a wrong place. It might have been appreciated differently if it were staged in a barn or public house for an 'Irish' audience and accompanied with music and dance: the atmosphere would have lessened the horrific scenes.

Like *The Battle of Aughrim* of which Wheatley and Donovan said that 'there is no evidence that [it] was ever performed in a professional theatre',<sup>443</sup> though it was a popular play which Carleton knew by heart and staged, Carleton's play, as one can judge from the two critics' assessments, was most likely influenced by a less formal tradition of dramatic performance. The play, like *Traits and Stories*, asserted itself as distinctively Irish not only by its subject and plot but also by its form, as Carleton himself stated in the prologue for his play:

They're of right Irish make, and dyed in grain,  
Fresh from the loom of Carleton's busy brain,

<sup>441</sup> J. W. Cole, 'The Dramatic Writers of Ireland—# XI.—(Conclusion)', in *Dublin University Magazine, A Literary and Political Journal*, vol. 47, 279 (March 1856), 370.

<sup>442</sup> *Life*, vol. 2, p. 48.

<sup>443</sup> C. Wheatley and K. Donovan, eds., *Irish Drama of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Bristol: Thoemmes Press and Edition Synapse, 2003), p. 361.

That wondrous workshop, where so oft was wove  
The magic web of Irish life and love.<sup>444</sup>

His play is a weaving from material of the busy brain of a man who is at once dancer, storyteller, actor and poet. The weaving image is expression of an ambition towards the faithful transcription or replica of ‘the magic web of Irish life,’ and suggests the presence of hybridity in the play.

Early nineteenth-century Irish theatre suggests similarities with a category of drama known as theatre-forum, which is still practised in Burkina Faso. Popular and traditional theatrical performance in Ireland, as illustrated below, took the form of theatre-forum, an informal theatre which needs no formal stage and a theatre in which the audience can participate freely. Theatre-forum is a theatre in which spectators are asked to participate and where dance, music and songs are used to introduce the subject, summarise the action and draw conclusions.<sup>445</sup> It is a popular theatre, with no written material as support to performance, and acted often by analphabetic people,<sup>446</sup> mainly peasants who usually organise this theatre at the end of the harvest season.<sup>447</sup> The setting that is used for it, in both Burkina Faso and Ireland at their respective historical periods, was the tree of palavers, the barn or public house. The following 1834 plate by Brooke<sup>448</sup> gives us a first-hand image of the setting used for this theatre or public entertainments in early-nineteenth-century Ireland: all players and audiences are inside a roofed house with hearth behind the harpist and the lit candles indicate that it was an evening entertainment. Some of the audiences sit on benches, others are on the floor, but the central floor is freed for the performances of actors, which were sustained by the music of the harpist while other activities, such as drinking, love-making and fighting, were going on simultaneously on either side of the stage.

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<sup>444</sup> *Life*, vol. 2, p. 49.

<sup>445</sup> Cf. B. Benon, ‘Prosper Kompaoré et l’Atelier Théâtre Burkinabè : Un théâtre de participation’, in *Notre librairie*, 101 (avril juin 1990), 80-81 ; T.-M. Deffontaines, ‘Théâtre forum au Burkina Faso et au Mali’, in *Notre librairie*, 102 (juillet-août 1990), 89-95. See also J. Leloup, ‘25 ans de théâtre en Afrique’, in *Notre librairie*, 102 (juillet-août 1990), 129-133.

<sup>446</sup> ‘Analphabetic’ and not ‘illiterate’ for they are literate in their own literature as zabyuya and mottos were used as letters. They are analphabetic because they have no written alphabet.

<sup>447</sup> Cf. J. P D. Guingané, ‘Le Théâtre en Haute-Volta : structure-production-diffusion-public’, thèse de doctorat, tome 1 (Université de Bordeaux III, 1977), pp. 182-184.

<sup>448</sup> *Traits and Stories*, second series, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., vol. 1 (Dublin: Wakeman, 1834), opposite page 48, illustrating ‘The Midnight Mass’.



This sketch gives credit to Ciaran Carson's saying, when writing about Irish traditional music, that in between songs, 'a set or two might be danced, a story told, some drink consumed.'<sup>449</sup> All these elements of dance, song and storytelling are depicted in this sketch which is strikingly similar to Carleton's own description of barns and waste houses as settings for plays in his childhood years: 'On the right hand side of the lofted floor which constituted the barn (...) was a range of chairs and forms for the audience to sit upon; on the left was a range of sacks filled with barley (...); on these the other portion of the spectators were placed.'<sup>450</sup> In one such old barn, Jack Stuart's, the teenager Carleton staged *The Battle of Aughrim* and crowds flocked to it in such huge numbers that the floor of the barn collapsed.<sup>451</sup>

Using a similar setting and general atmosphere of celebrations and rejoicing, as in the representation above, theatre-forum usually deals with current issues in an attempt to find solutions and so can be seen to be more factual than fictional. Carleton's play appears to have dealt with poverty and hunger, the 'passing events' or 'existing facts' in Cole's own words in the citation above, as these were severe at the time the play was appearing

<sup>449</sup> C. Carson, *Irish Traditional Music* (Belfast: The Appletree Press Ltd, 1986), p. 47.

<sup>450</sup> *Life*, vol. 1, p. 27.

<sup>451</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 27.

on stage in 1841. The topicality of the theme is meant to make the audience participate. For this reason, theatre-forum is also called ‘useful theatre’, ‘theatre-debate’, or ‘theatre of intervention’.<sup>452</sup> *The Battle of Aughrim*, an Irish popular play, offers features of a ‘theatre of intervention’. In the prologue to this play, Ashton asked the ‘audience, judges of the age’, to ‘judge with temper as [they] sit’ and submitted his cause to the ladies in whose ‘eyes [he] expect[ed] to gain applause’.<sup>453</sup> Legend has it that performances of the play ended with a real faction fight between Catholic and Protestants, expression of participation of the audience. In the prologue to his play, Carleton also appealed to his ‘honest citizens’ to participate;<sup>454</sup> thus, in both plays, we are in a context of Irish theatre-forum where the participation of the audience is important. The success of *Traits and Stories*, as will be discussed later, is partly due to Carleton’s knowledge of stage conventions, because ‘the conventions of the stage’, Valerie Shaw observes, ‘are more helpful to the short-storywriter than those of the novel’.<sup>455</sup> The stories of Carleton have theatrical elements that we will bring to light in the last chapter of the thesis.

Carleton’s interaction with oral culture (in its folklore materials and setting) and with print culture can be usefully compared with that of Pacéré. Firstly, as a scribe of a ‘performative language’, Pacéré, like Carleton, was also helped by his interest in theatre but in a different way from Carleton. While Carleton was inspired and influenced by ‘stage-Irish’ and the phonetics used in some plays, Pacéré did not have previous print material at hand to draw inspiration from in his transcription of the *zabyuya* and the rhythm of tam-tams. So, though both writers had access to similar oral traditions and customs which they wanted to preserve by using the medium of print, influences from different sources led them to use different techniques for transcription.

Secondly, the general tendency in Carleton’s writing career goes from (1) authenticity to Irish spoken literature, in a transitional phase, to (2) attempted assimilation to foreign literary modes (with some traces of Irishness), as seen for example in his attempt and failure to write a play for British theatre and also in his determination to write novels in response to challenges by critics that there was ‘more of memory than

<sup>452</sup> Cf. T.-M. Deffontaines, ‘Théâtre Forum au Burkina Faso et au Mali’, in *Notre librairie* 102 (Juillet-août 1990), 90-95.

<sup>453</sup> C. Wheatley and K. Donovan, eds., *Irish Drama of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, p. 365.

<sup>454</sup> *Life*, vol. 2, pp. 48-49.

<sup>455</sup> V. Shaw, *The Short Story: A Critical Introduction* (London and New York: Longman, 1983), p. 118.

imagination in [his] writings' and that 'he [would] never be able to write a novel.'<sup>456</sup> Carleton responded to this challenge by putting an end to his career as short story-writer and starting a new career as a novelist, with *Fardorougha the Miser* (1839), then *Valentine McClutchy* (1845), *The Black Prophet* (1847) and *The Emigrants of Ahadarra* (1848) among other novels. However, for many scholars, his novels continue to be seen as a series of stories, sketches or novellas of the literary form of orature. He was at home and more confident when dealing with the literary form of orature that was expressive of Irish 'spoken literature' and became a famous Irish writer in doing this; but his esteem lessened when he started trying his pen at 'foreign' literary genres. Contrary to Carleton, Pacéré's biography shows him going from assimilation, to French literary or poetic tradition, to 'authentic' Moaaga poetry of orature as an examination of his biography will reveal.

Like Carleton, Pacéré has one foot in spoken literature and the other in print culture and interacted with both cultures. He opens his first collection of poetry by asserting his place in his local village:

I was born in a village,	Je suis né dans un village,
Isolated in the Savannahs,	Perdu des savanes,
In the heat of the Sahel. <sup>457</sup>	Dans la chaleur du Sahel!

These lines constitute a refrain that recurs in the poem 'Manéga', the name of a village in Burkina Faso where Pacéré spent his childhood, at the school of Timini, before being taken at the age of six to the white man's school in a distant town to learn another language, and with it another tradition. This process itself led to hybridity, as Pacéré, recalling this experience, writes:

The school	L'école
Is an old hut	Est une vieille case
Thrown into its centre!	Jetée en son centre !
Eighty one children	Quatre-vingt et un enfants
Hopelessly shout there	Y crient désespérément

<sup>456</sup> *Fardorougha the Miser* (London: Simms and M'intyre, 1848), pp. xv-xvi, quoted by Hayley, *Carleton's Traits and Stories*, p. 424.

<sup>457</sup> *Refrains*, p. 13.

That B plus A equal TI	Que B plus A égale TI
Before memorising	Avant de retenir
That B plus A equals BA! <sup>458</sup>	Que B plus A égale BA !

The memorisation denotes a process of assimilation, of replacing one linguistic system with another, a process that is summed up in ‘B plus A equal Ti.’ ‘Ti’ is an informal way of answering some questions in the Mooré language. It means ‘that...,’ the verb ‘to say’ being understood (‘it/he/she/they... says/say/said that...’). By answering ‘Ti’, the children were starting to answer the question ‘what is ‘B+A?’ But their teacher misunderstood them in taking ‘Ti’ for the answer to the question. The children and the teacher think in two different languages. Linguistic hybridity is in process, as the children have to work with two systems of thought. (Teachers usually resorted to corporal punishment to enforce the new system in the minds of the children.) One can also see in the children’s answer with ‘Ti’ an unconscious attempt to keep their distance from the new system, or to disapprove it: ‘*You* said that B plus A equal BA’ not *we*. The children can be seen as saying ‘no’ to assimilation.

Pacéré’s education alternated between the two schools and traditions, as he always went back to Manéga for his holidays and term breaks. When he was eleven and still at school in Koudougou, his father died and he was called to assist at the ceremonies, as he was the deceased’s first son. To commemorate his father, Pacéré signed many of his works on the 4<sup>th</sup> of January, as an expression of his love for his father and, through him, his love for the ancestors and their tradition.<sup>459</sup> A parallel can be made here with Carleton’s strong love for his father because he too initiated him into spoken literature. As a mark of appreciation, Carleton wrote in his autobiography that he represented his father in his story, ‘The Poor Scholar’, as a living man, though he was dead a year before: ‘The love I bore him was a rare affection even from a son to a father. I was his idol, not merely the child of his affection, but of his worship.’<sup>460</sup> These intimate relationships between fathers and sons, for both Carleton and Pacéré, meant that the fathers passed on their knowledge of spoken literature and folklore to their children who in turn tried to

<sup>458</sup> *Quand*, p. 25

<sup>459</sup> For concrete examples, see H. L. Kaboré, *Maître Titenga Frédéric Pacéré, origine d'une vie* (Paris : L’Harmattan, 2001), p. 84.

<sup>460</sup> *Life*, vol. 1, p. 68.

perpetuate these unwritten traditions through a style of writing that uses print as support to performance.

After the funeral, the elders held back Pacéré for some time in the village for initiation into the traditions and culture before letting him go back to the white man's school in Koudougou. Thus, Pacéré had to assimilate two systems of schools, the accommodating of which unconsciously turned him into a hybrid man. On the one hand, he learned French literature at school; on the other hand, his time of initiation or *bango* in Manéga was a time of intellectual, artistic and religious training. In initiation camps, children were taught songs, dances, fables, stories and the *zabyuya* (mottos) and legends of their villages.<sup>461</sup> This mixture of genres was learned together, a sign of the beginning of orature.

At his father's funeral, Pacéré strongly felt the need for initiation in the language and literature of tam-tams, as a lack of training prevented him from understanding the messages and pieces of information which were transmitted by the drum. For the other persons of the assembly the message was clear but the young Pacéré needed a translator. At Pacéré's request, one of his uncles translated the message of the tam-tam for him:

He says that the chief has reigned for a long time. He adds that the delegation wanted him to have died sooner so that they could come and gather his bronze, his coppers, his cauris, cows and women. He specifies that anyway they are not annoyed because everything has an end and that all has been sorted out. That's why they are here and order that everything be brought out.<sup>462</sup>

The tam-tam was the only speaker on the day and the giver of orders to people to do this or that. Nobody spoke orally that day, except Pacéré's translators; the tam-tam alone directed everything and Pacéré was amazed and marvelled at this. Until then he did not know that the tam-tam could serve for something other than musical entertainment and dance. Though the *Bendre*<sup>463</sup> of his father had given him some basic notions of the language of tam-tam, he could not imagine that a whole rite could be conducted, from

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<sup>461</sup> Cf. A. Badini, *Naître et grandir chez les Mossé traditionnels* (Paris : L'Harmattan, 1994), p. 164.

<sup>462</sup> H. Louguet Kaboré, *Maître Titinga Frédéric Pacéré*, p. 80. Original French version : 'Il dit que le Chef a régné pendant longtemps. Il ajoute que la délégation voulait le voir mourir tôt afin de venir ramasser ses bronzes, ses cuivres, ses cauris, ses bœufs et ses femmes. Il précise que de toutes façons ils ne sont pas fâchés parce que toute chose a une fin et tout est rentré dans l'ordre. C'est pourquoi ils sont là, et ordonnent de faire sortir tout.'

<sup>463</sup> The leader of all the class of 'speaking' tam-tams has a rank of minister and is called Bend-Naba.

beginning to end, with the tam-tam only. From this experience, he started to find out more about the language and literature of tam-tams.

The poetic language of the *bendré* is one of three types of languages used by the Moosé in Burkina Faso: (1) everyday language, (2) the language of the elders, which is made up of a juxtaposition of proverbs, and (3) the language of tam-tams. The first is open to all; the last two are accessible to adults. The mouth (oris) is used in the first two languages; the third language is conveyed by means of tam-tams. The structure of tam-tam language is similar to that of the language of the elders insofar as both consist of a juxtaposition of phrases. However, while the language of the elders uses proverbs and proverbial sayings, the language of tam-tam is a superposition of *zabyuya* or mottos, which will be dealt with in detail below. Whereas the everyday language is a reflection of concrete realities of life, the language of tam-tam is much more spiritual, reflecting the language of the ancestors. In the language of tam-tams as well as in the language of the elders, the message is not overtly said but is to be found out from what is said. The language of tam-tam demands the readers to draw on their imagination and intuition. The utterances are more elliptic and symbolic than literal or explicit.

Pacéré himself acknowledges the esoteric character of his poetry, as it is structured on the language of tam-tams: ‘the literature of the Moosé is a matter of specialists, and due to the fact that its basic expression originates from the drummed language, from the language of the instrument, specialisation should start first with the instrument.’<sup>464</sup> The sentence of the tam-tam is based on a juxtaposition of concepts called *zabyuya* (singular: *zabyuure*) or *soanda* (singular: *sondre*). Etymologically, the word ‘*zabyuure*’ is formed of two words: ‘*zubre*’ (war) and ‘*yuure*’ (name), literally, ‘name of war.’ However, the *zabyuure* is not simply a name of war because it is conferred on a newly appointed personality, on a newly erected administrative district and more generally to people at public events, therefore, outside times of war. The *zabyuya* are individual inventions that fell into collective ownership by society.<sup>465</sup> Each *zabyuure* has a specific meaning. For example, ‘elephant’ has different meanings in the following two *zabyuya*: ‘the elephant of Kié’ and ‘the elephant of Boussouma.’ In the first, elephant is symbolic of the occupation

<sup>464</sup> *Le langage*, p. 79. Original version : ‘La littérature des Mossé est une affaire de spécialistes, et parce que son expression fondamentale relève du language tambouriné, du language de l’instrument, la spécialisation se fera d’abord par rapport à l’instrument.’

<sup>465</sup> *Le langage*, p. 81.

of space whereas in the second it has the connotation of death.<sup>466</sup> In other words, the meaning of each of the two phrases is not a sum of their component words; each of the two phrases functions as a single word with one meaning. The language of tam-tam does not use words but phrases and mottos. These are some examples of *zabyuya*:

*Wagdog ra yaes beoogo, b bas ti beoog wa a tore* (Zabyuure of Ouagadougou)  
(Ouagadougou, do not be afraid of tomorrow, let tomorrow come itself)

*Pōor du koang, bi a puus a teend beoogo*  
(If the paralytic has climbed the ‘ronier’ tree let him thank his helper)

*Kata lagm koabg kō sirg tānga*  
(Hundreds of hyenas gathered cannot destroy the mountain)<sup>467</sup>

The literature of tam-tams uses the *zabyuya* without changing either their historical meaning or their internal structure. For example Pacéré’s *Saglego ou le poème du tam-tam pour le Sahel*, which develops the theme of preservation of man and the environment, is a juxtaposition of the *zabyuya* of the following circumscriptions and peoples: Ouagadougou, Vaagtenga, Guiê, Zida, Tenkodogo, Badnogo, Kouï, Manéga, Oubriyaoguin, Sisyargo, Naba Kouda, Konkistenga, Boalin, Souka, Naba Simbdo de Zitenga, Saponé, Tiguemtinga, Guiro, Boagin, Nameguian, Noguin, Mané, Naba Warga, Yatenga, Wêemba, blacksmith, hunters, temba, Nakomsé, Sonmdé and of Pacéré. Many of these names and places have more than one *zabyuure*. The combination of these *zabyuya* makes up the poem. The fixity of the codes or *zabyuya* facilitates the decoding of the message from a hundred kilometres away. Being a juxtaposition of *zabyuya*, the sentence of the tam-tam is a game of jig-saw or puzzle:

Thus the tam-tam expresses itself; its language is a game of puzzle, a complex work, out of reach of the common run of people. The sentence of the tam-tam is not an ordinary sentence, that is, subject—verb—complement; the literature of tam-tam is not a language, but a language of languages.<sup>468</sup>

The tam-tam uses ready-made sentences and phrases and because the language is drummed, not spoken or written, refrains are used to signal a new idea or paragraph.

<sup>466</sup> Cf. U. Amoa, *Poétique de la poésie des tambours*, p. 122.

<sup>467</sup> Cf. *Le langage*, pp. 18-21.

<sup>468</sup> Ibid., pp. 23-24. ‘Ainsi, s’exprime le tam-tam, le langage est un jeu de puzzle, un travail complex, non à la portée du commun des mortels. La phrase du tam-tam n’est pas une phrase ordinaire, c’est-à-dire, sujet—verbe—complément ; la littérature du tam-tam n’est pas un langage mais, un langage de langages.’

Pacéré compares the refrain in the literature of tam-tam to the return key in writing.<sup>469</sup> He also says that even if the *zabyuya* are not isosyllabic and metric, each of them, however, must be pronounced, repeated in an identical lapse of time, making the literature of tam-tam a rhythmic poem.<sup>470</sup>

The understanding of the language of tam-tam requires one to have three ears: one ear to ‘read’ what is written, one ear to ‘read’ what is not written and one ear to hear and understand what is not explicitly said, that is, the silences at the performance of the tam-tam. In the interview with Urbain Amoa, Pacéré explains, illustrating with an example, how the language of tam-tam works:

If the theme to develop is about building the nation or a theme relative to marriage, the tam-tam beater takes for instance the motto of Ouagadougou, completed with the motto of another town, enriched with that of a person, reinforced with a saying of X or Z, a famous historic figure.<sup>471</sup>

The knowledge of these mottos is essential to understanding the language based on them. The task of the reader even gets more difficult as sometimes the mottos are not quoted fully but only their first three or four words like ‘The lion of Manéga...’ for ‘The lion of Manéga set out for a race; do not incite hunting dogs to run after him.’ Therefore, in the phrase ‘the lion of Manéga’ one should not think of a real lion living in Manéga. The lion here is a symbol evoking a specific idea out of many secondary characteristics of the lion. Compared with the Western grammatical structure of language, the language of tam-tam becomes a juxtaposition of mottos, verbless phrases or phrases without subjects where no consideration of concordance of tenses really matters.

To protect Pacéré’s knowledge of this orature from alienation through his experience of the white man’s school, Pacéré was given a companion, Touba, appointed by the chief’s court with the responsibility of ensuring Pacéré a safe journey to Koudougou and back to Manéga. Pacéré’s life, Hortense L. Kaboré writes, ‘remains closely linked to that of TOUBA, guardian angel, companion of every moment, even by his absence in the school yard. (...) TOUBA is the opposite of austerity in the school. He

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<sup>469</sup> Cf. *Le langage*, p. 25.

<sup>470</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 25.

<sup>471</sup> U. Amoa, *Poétique de la poésie des tambours*, p. 315 : ‘si le thème à développer est la construction nationale ou un thème portant sur le mariage, le tambour prend par exemple la devise de Ouagadougou, complétée par la devise d’une autre ville, enrichie par celle d’une personne, renforcée par une sentence proférée par X ou Z ayant marqué l’histoire.’

represents joy, freedom, anti-school, plain, rural Africa, in short, happiness.<sup>472</sup> Touba helped to preserve the knowledge Pacéré acquired from listening to the *bendre* or griot who used to wake him up every morning, declaiming his genealogy and imparting a drum message full of wisdom enrobed in proverbial language.

However, in spite of Touba's protection against Pacéré's complete assimilation of French literature and traditions, during his secondary education in Ivory Coast, in a teacher training school known as *La Colline Verte* (the Green Hill), Pacéré wrote poetry in imitation of French romantic poets. In his self-evaluation of his writings, Pacéré says that the poems he wrote between 1961 and 1973, either in Burkina Faso or in France, bear the influence of Western poetry.<sup>473</sup> His biographer reports that in *La Colline Verte*, Pacéré developed a liking for reading aloud and liked above all French poetry, especially the pre-romantic and the romantic. When he started writing poetry, the models for him were the romantic poets he read. Unfortunately, few of the poems he wrote at that stage survived. But from the few left, one can notice resemblances with the poems of the Romantics. For example, Pacéré's early poems, written between 1960 and 1964 when Pacéré was a teenager, to wit: 'Evocation', 'Lettre à Falinga', 'Message d'un soir à Manéga' and some poems of the collection *Refrains sous le Sahel*, are marked with the stamp of romanticism studied in school; they deal with love, emotional life. 'Invocation' and 'Message d'un soir à Manéga', written respectively in 1962 and in 1964, exhibit formal romantic influences in terms of rhymes.<sup>474</sup>

## Invocation

Pauvres hommes! Qu'avons-nous fait, Esprit Eclairé ?  
Tu m'arraches à un cœur aimé,  
En m'éloignant Bé-Néré ;  
Dieu de Bonté  
J'ai soif !

Aujourd'hui, dans la nature qui m'environne,  
Elle seule manque, et tout meurt ;  
Triste, j'entends le glas qui sonne  
A toute heure ;  
J'ai soif !

<sup>472</sup> H. Louquet Kaboré, *Maître Titenga Frédéric Pacéré*, p. 51.

<sup>473</sup> Cf. 'Exposé de la théorie', in *Annales de l'université de Ouagadougou* (décembre 1988), 139.

<sup>474</sup> No translation is provided for the following poem ('Invocation'), because the interest is on rhymes, Alexandrines and repetitions. The focus is on the form, not on the content.

(...)

M'as-tu laissé dans une vallée de larmes  
Pour rêver, mais toujours pleurer ?  
Reviens consoler cette âme,  
Ma Bé-Néré,  
Reviens !<sup>475</sup>

This poem displays Pacéré's mastery of Western patterns of writing poetry with meter, fixed decreasing feet, and embraced rhymes. In this well-written poem, one can sense the influence of Alphonse de Lamartine (1790-1869) in his poem, 'L'isolement': 'Un seul être vous manque et tout est dépeuplé.' The same sentence would later be used by the dramatist Jean Giraudoux (1882-1944) in his play *La guerre de Troie n'aura pas lieu*. Pacéré's interest in drama and in romanticism may have brought him to read these works and to paraphrase this sentence in the stanza of the poem above: '*Elle seule manque, et tout meurt.*' Despite the influence of the Romantic, the impact of the Mooré language is also present through the use of refrains ('J'ai soif', 'reviens') and Moaaga words (Bé-Néré = Beauty). In the poem 'Voltacidé' too, the phrase 'une chèvre de Monsieur Seguin', Léon Yépri observes, recalls the short story of Alphonse Daudet 'La chèvre de Monsieur Seguin' which is also satiric.<sup>476</sup> 'Message d'un soir à Manega' shows some similarities with 'Nuits' by the romantic Alfred de Musset.

Pacéré was so impressed by romanticism that when in France, he went to discover places associated with Lamartine in Saint Malo, the tomb of Chateaubriand, Combourg Castle and other places associated with Romantics. His biographer suggests that Pacéré's eloquence as an advocate, his lyric and rhetoric style should be seen as resulting from his readings at that period.<sup>477</sup> Pacéré showed deeper interest in French poets but his sad experience of racism, during his studies in France, led him to put a question mark on what he had been taught. 'Our ancestors were the Gauls' was what young people were taught at school. In accordance with these lessons, Pacéré believed that the French people were his brothers. Once in France, he was disillusioned, as many other African writers were, and decided to go back to the culture of his own ancestors. This was the turning point towards the research he undertook on Burkinabe civilisation in order to deepen his knowledge of it

<sup>475</sup> H. Louguet Kaboré, *Maître Titinga Frédéric Pacéré*, pp. 101-102.

<sup>476</sup> Cf. L. Yépri, 'Une écriture de la mort : Voltacidé', in *Mélanges offerts*, p. 215.

<sup>477</sup> Cf. H. Louguet Kaboré, *Maître Titinga Frédéric Pacéré*, p. 100.

and to defend it by dissemination. Once back in his village after his studies in France, Pacéré interviewed the griots to learn about the literary form of their discourses. From his researches, he wrote *La bendrologie ou science du langage tambouriné*, later published as *Le langage des tam-tams et des masques en Afrique* (1992).

Another incident further explains Pacéré's return to the traditions of his forefathers. Early in life, Pacéré witnessed a sad event during colonisation: the humiliation of his father by white men. They humiliated him because he did not have money to pay his 'yonr yaodo' or 'tax of life'. Pacéré's father implored his predators to give him another day, the time to bring his goods for sale to the market. But they refused and stripped him naked, under the sun and before his women, children and all his visitors. The well-respected chief was thus dishonoured and defamed. Seeing his father in tears, Pacéré saw the assassination of all the Moosé he was representing. He would grow with this experience in mind, full of anger and ready to defend and take revenge if necessary to protect the culture and humanity of his people.<sup>478</sup> His essay, *Ainsi on a assassiné tous les Mossé* [sic] (1979), on the history and destruction of the Moogo Empire, resulted from this sad event and shows his patriotic concerns. Thus, critic A. S. Coulibaly views 'patriotism' as the 'theme which dominates the poetical works of Pacéré,'<sup>479</sup> as Pacéré patriotically fights to safeguard the values inherited from his ancestors. Pacéré himself calls this fight 'the second war' ('La deuxième guerre').<sup>480</sup> The reference to a second war implies that there has been a first one (colonisation). Pacéré launches a second war and hopes for victory so as to retrieve the former status quo, the state in which things were prior to the first war. To encourage people to commit themselves to this war, Pacéré's poetry is, observes Joseph Paré in his analysis of the logico-semantic structure of Pacéré's poetical discourse, a warning and an invitation to a communal reflection in order to look into the past and into the present for ways that would lead to happiness.<sup>481</sup>

While contributing to the knowledge of a the traditional world with its specific traits, the poetry of Pacéré expresses the obsession with an ontological hurt narrated in *Ainsi on a assassiné tous les Mossé* [sic]. Talking of himself at the open days dedicated to

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<sup>478</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 20.

<sup>479</sup> A. S. Coulibaly, 'Refrains sous le Sahel', *Ça tire sous le Sahel : Deux œuvres poétiques de Frédéric Titinga Pacéré*, in *Mélanges offerts*, pp. 307-308.

<sup>480</sup> *Ça tire*, pp. 62-63.

<sup>481</sup> J. Paré, 'La structure logico-sémantique du discours poétique dans *Ça tire sous le Sahel*', in *Mélanges offerts*, p. 226.

his writings, Pacéré does not hide his hybridity, referring to his uncomfortable seating on two chairs but with an unshakeable faith that the culture of his ancestors is the equal of other cultures and should not be destroyed in any way.<sup>482</sup> In fact, born during the first war against his civilisation, having lived through sad experiences and now living in a new world, Pacéré is indeed sitting between two chairs, torn between conservatism and liberalism. Yet, he refuses to be a cultural half-caste,<sup>483</sup> in the sense that this is an imposition. It is rather that Pacéré makes himself so freely in order to remain faithful to his ancestors while taking part in the building of the Universal Civilisation. This accounts for the originality of his poetry, which aims at both local and foreign audiences.

Pacéré's knowledge of both oral and print cultures was to be used in and expressed on stage, as Pacéré, like Carleton, showed great interest in theatrical performances and started his literary career with drama. He wrote his first play during his primary schooling at Koudougou in 1956, then directed theatre troupes in Koudougou, La Colline Verte, Dakar and in France, and initiated collective recitals and wrote poems to be declaimed on stage by at least ten actors. 'Héros d'Ebène', 'La Termitière', 'Les Anciens Combattus' and 'Demain le Passé' of the collection *Refrains sous le Sahel* and 'Le Serpent inaugure son Marché', 'L'Appel du Tambour' published in the collection *Ça tire sous le Sahel* were written for the stage. In his own description of his poetical works Pacéré makes explicit that his poetical works belong to the literary form of orature, without using the word 'orature'. Talking about his first collection, *Refrains sous le Sahel*, he wrote:

It is a collection of childhood poems which are written for the stage; 'Héros d'Ebène' for instance dates back to my fifth form; in 'La Termitière' which was performed in France, we have:

'Filent

Trame

Filent

Trame

Or 'Roule', 'Roucoule'; each actor was trained to make some specific sounds to echo a choir of instruments in a court where some drums have a high tone, others bass tones, etc.'

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<sup>482</sup> Université de Ouagadougou, ed., *Annales*, numéro spécial (décembre 1988), p. 151.

<sup>483</sup> Cf. *Ainsi*, p. 14.

The poems (several dozen) were already staged at Ouagadougou, Bobo and in many other towns, especially in foreign countries; in 1967, following a crisis I now see as insignificant, I threw all my writings of the time in the fire; what was left were some I kept or some which were retrieved by she who was to become my future spouse and some rare ones published in the press following their performance by a local cultural troupe.<sup>484</sup>

The fact that he cared more for the performance of his plays than for their publication in book form is significant. All the plays he wrote are now lost. Once performed in the sphere of spoken literature, the written material loses its primary importance and can be easily neglected unless future performances of the same play are planned.

These surveys of the biographies of Pacéré and Carleton clearly show the hybridity of both writers and their involvements in the two traditions of orality and print, by using one to record or preserve the other. A description of the contents of some of their works will also reveal that they took much of their subject matter from the tradition of spoken literature.

Pacéré's *Ça tire sous le Sahel* (1967) is a satirical poetry that deals with the culture of inter-ethnic jokes in Burkina Faso and criticises the policies of the government. *Quand s'envolent les grues couronnées* too draws from the Moaaga culture, especially the philosophy of death in this culture and the title refers to a funeral song, 'Bulvāogo' (crane) which Pacéré heard at his father's and Timini's funerals.<sup>485</sup> He also drew the material (the literary texts) for his two collections *La poésie des griots* (winner of Grand Prix Littéraire de l'Afrique Noire, 1982) and *Du lait pour une tombe* (1984) from oral performers, singers and public entertainers, such as Nongbzanga, Poussi, Yamba, Nabi-Noaga, Zambendé, Patoem, Manegdé.<sup>486</sup> *Saglego ou le poème du tam-tam pour le Sahel* (1994), a bilingual (Mooré-French) collection, gives some advice moulded in the esoteric language

<sup>484</sup> 'Exposé de la théorie', in Université de Ouagadougou, ed., *Annales*, numéro spécial (décembre 1988), pp. 138-139 : 'C'est un recueil de poèmes d'enfance et faits pour la scène ; 'Héros d'Ebène' par exemple date de ma Première ; dans la 'La Termitière' joué en France on a : 'Filent/ Trame/ Filent/ Trame' ou bien 'Roule', 'Roucoule' ; chaque acteur était spécialisé relativement aux sons, comme un jeu d'instruments d'une cour, ou certains tambours on un timbre clair, d'autres lourds etc.'

Les poèmes (plusieurs dizaines) furent interprétés déjà à Ouagadougou, Bobo et dans plusieurs villes notamment de l'extérieur ; en 1967 à la suite d'un drame que je juge maintenant banal, je mis au feu tous mes écrits du moment ; il n'est resté que quelques-uns gardés ou récupérés par celle qui allait être ma conjointe et quelques rares parus dans la presse en raison de son interprétation par un ensemble culturel de la place.'

<sup>485</sup> Cf. *Le langage*, p. 231.

<sup>486</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 151.

of tam-tams and deals with life in the Sahel. His poetry *Bendr N Gomde* in three volumes (not published) is written in Mooré and these volumes are a transcription of the literature of tam-tams. These and all the other works Pacéré wrote to promote the culture of his country earned him the *Mélanges offerts* of the University of Ouagadougou, which highlight his contribution to the Burkinabé culture.<sup>487</sup> In acknowledgement of this contribution, after reading Pacéré's first collections, Senghor expressed his admiration at the originality and creative power of Pacéré's poetry:

Your collections of poems, in particular, are of an original craftsmanship, and the force of your word in which the creative power of our African land is expressed, charmed me. I notice your use of the fundamental rhythm of our tam-tams, especially in the collection entitled 'Ça tire sous le Sahel.'<sup>488</sup>

Senghor praised Pacéré for rooting his poetry in African spoken literature, following the rhythm of the *bendre*, and thus returning to the origins advocated by the Négritude movement of which Senghor was one of the leaders. Pacéré's revolt against the culture of the coloniser and his return to the traditions of his ancestors link his poetry with Négritude<sup>489</sup> as Carleton's search for Irishness and for the promotion of Irish culture and values links his writings with celticism.<sup>490</sup> Celticism is known as a late nineteenth-century movement, but it can be traced back to Carleton, as Barbara Hayley did when she said that 'Carleton was a product and also an agent of that [Irish literary] revival'.<sup>491</sup>

Similarly to Pacéré, Carleton, in all his stories and other works, dealt with one subject, the stories of his youth and the world in which he had lived them. This is the subject which haunted him and to which he remained faithful. He drew on the vivid memory both of his youth and of the books he read, and poured forth a memorable series of portraits of hedge-schoolmasters, faction fighters, 'poor scholars', dancing-masters, weddings, fiddlers, the Church, pilgrimages, stations, Ribbonism, rackrenting, evictions,

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<sup>487</sup> Cf. Discours d'ouverture prononcé par le Camarade Recteur de l'Université de Ouagadougou, in *Mélanges offerts*, p. 21.

<sup>488</sup> L. S. Senghor, Lettre no 1734/PR/Sg/AC.1., Dakar-Sénégal, 1<sup>er</sup> Octobre 1976, in H. Louguet Kaboré, *Maître Titinga Frédéric Pacéré, Origine d'une vie* (Paris : L'Harmattan, 2001), p. 12. Original French version : 'Vos recueils de poèmes, en particulier, sont d'une facture originale, et la force de votre verbe, où se manifeste la puissance créatrice de notre terre africaine, m'a séduit. Je note l'usage que vous faites du rythme fondamental de nos tam-tams, particulièrement dans le recueil intitulé 'Ça tire sous le Sahel'.

<sup>489</sup> Cf. L. Yépri, *Titinga Frédéric Pacéré : Le tambour de l'Afrique poétique* (Paris : L'Harmattan, 1999), pp 189-211.

<sup>490</sup> Celticism and Négritude have much in common as Declan Kiberd reveals in his article: 'White Skins, Black Masks?: Celticism and Négritude', in *Eire-Ireland*, vol. xxxi, 1&2 (Spring-Summer 1996), 163-175.

<sup>491</sup> B. Hayley, *Carleton's Traits and Stories*, p. 363.

and a whole gallery of the characters he recalled from his early days in Tyrone or had met on his travels about the country. For example, ‘Shane Fadh’s Wedding’ is based on his recollections of the marriage of his brother John.<sup>492</sup> ‘The Party Fight and Funeral’, is a sketch of actual faction fighting Carleton experienced in his youth.<sup>493</sup> The sectarian violence in ‘Wildgoose Lodge’ is Carleton’s retelling of ‘the facts with which [he] was made perfectly acquainted during [his] residence in the parish of Killaney, where the awful tragedy was enacted’ and where he saw the horrific remains of the gibbeted Paddy Devaun hanging as a warning near the site of their crime.<sup>494</sup> Carleton’s own detestation of violence is partly linked with his brief involvement in the Ribbonist movement and with his bitter memory of the intrusion of Orangemen in his parents’ abode in a search for arms when he was young.

Carleton’s works are, as Harmon puts it, ‘a record of the actual and the concrete,’<sup>495</sup> his almost unique source being his childhood experience in Tyrone, as a glimpse at his topics in *Traits and Stories* shows: he deals with marriage in ‘Shane Fadh’s Wedding’ and ‘Phelim O’Toole’s Courtship’, with death in ‘Larry M’Farland’s Wake’ and ‘The Party Fight and Funeral’, with education in ‘The Hedge School’ and ‘The Poor Scholar’, with religion in ‘The Donagh’ and ‘The Lianhan Shee’, with the secret societies in ‘Wildgoose Lodge’.

Carleton’s and Pacéré’s works are as hybrid in their contents and subject matter as their writers are in their multilingualism and knowledge of spoken and written literatures. This hybridity was foretold in the will of Pacéré’s father: ‘the only way for the preservation of our civilisation, of our cultural patrimony, is that you have two weapons: that of the culture of our milieu, but first of all that of the enemy, that is, the weapon of colonisation’ or print culture.<sup>496</sup> These words are reminiscent of the motto of An tAthair Ó Laoghaire, the prominent writer of the Irish language revival: ‘an dá arm aigne’—‘the two weapons of the mind’, referring to the Irish and English languages. The call to hybridity that underlies his father’s will is given effect in Pacéré and is well summed up by the

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<sup>492</sup> Cf. *Life*, vol. 1, p. 122.

<sup>493</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 26.

<sup>494</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 131.

<sup>495</sup> M. Harmon, ‘Aspects of the Peasantry in Anglo-Irish Literature from 1800 to 1916’, in *Studia Hibernica*, 15 (1975), 108.

<sup>496</sup> H. Louguet Kaboré, *Maître Titenga Frédéric Pacéré*, p. 76 : ‘la seule voie pour la préservation de la civilisation, du patrimoine culturel, c’est que tu aies deux armes : celle de la culture du milieu, mais avant tout, celle de l’adversaire, c’est-à-dire l’arme de la colonisation.’

motto-name by which the griots call Pacéré: ‘La femme a bu du prunier sauvage, là où elle se dirige est une saison pluvieuse.’ (A woman has drunk a drink made of a wild plum tree; anywhere she goes will be a rainy season.) The drinking of this liqueur, which is unusually made from a plum tree instead of sorghum, makes one pass water abundantly. They call Pacéré by this name because they compare his attendance at the coloniser’s school and at the school of the ancestors with drinking this peculiar drink. Having drunk from the wisdom of the ancestors and from the Western literary traditions, anything Pacéré says or writes would be an ‘abundant culture’, a hybrid form of literature, orature, a mixture of performance genres and of spoken and written literatures.

Three observations can be made of this survey of orature in the Irish and Burkinabe cultures. Firstly, it can be said that the cultures of nineteenth-century Ireland and Burkina Faso were community centred with an important place given to communal evening entertainments and were also cultures of orature and hybridity in the interaction of spoken and written traditions and the mixture of performance genres. Secondly, both writers had a first-hand knowledge of oral and print cultures and used print to promote spoken literature; even the terms ‘Anglo-Irish literature’ and ‘*littérature africaine francophone*,’ which are usually used while referring to their works, evoke hybridity or multilingualism, as two languages, at least, are used in both Carleton’s and Pacéré’s writings: Irish and English, Mooré and French. Thirdly, the consequence of this hybridity for readers is that the reader of Carleton’s stories can notice a sometimes uneasy mixture of subject matter and target audience. When Carleton is relying on his memory of his father’s stories and upon his own creative power he is compelling, but when he voices religious opinion and propaganda, drawing from other sources, he is more likely to be shrill and monotonous.<sup>497</sup> As Bob Barton puts it, though each of us has the potential to tell a story convincingly, ‘when we are telling the stories of our lives, we muster the deepest feelings and interesting details we can to grip our listeners.’<sup>498</sup> The mingling of personal accounts with other propagandist voices is evident in Carleton’s works. The situation is different in Pacéré’s poetry of tam-tam which emerges from his experiences of drum

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<sup>497</sup> Cf. R. MacHugh, ‘William Carleton: A Portrait of the Artist as Propagandist’, in *Studies*, 52; B. Kiely, *Poor Scholar*, p. 88.

<sup>498</sup> B. Barton, *Tell me Another* (Ontario: Pembroke Publishers Limited, 1986), p. 8.

literature and addresses specific readers or audiences; consequently, the reader who is unaware of the language of tam-tam may find Pacéré's poetry hermetic.

## II.2.B) Orature and the Audiences of Carleton and Pacéré

The approach adopted in this section draws on the works of Barthes and Foucault on the author and on Fish's work on interpretative communities, as already announced in the second chapter of the preceding part (I.2.B.). All these theorists see, as an obstacle to the appreciation of literary works, the consideration in recent centuries of authors as indefinite sources of significations that fill their works. 'The author does not precede the works', Foucault observes, 'he is a certain functional principle by which, in our culture, one limits, excludes, and chooses; in short, by which one impedes the free circulation, the free manipulation, the free composition, decomposition, and recomposition of fiction.'<sup>499</sup> The theories of literary criticism of Barthes and Foucault envisage the individual author as dead, while Fish integrates the author within an interpretive community.<sup>500</sup> The author prevents the text from being written here and now by performers because if the text is performed or re-written, then confusion of authorship will emerge. The opinions of Carleton and Pacéré (as interpreters or audience) upon their works will be considered as the appreciation of the authors as members belonging to an interpretive community. 'Interpretive communities' Fish explains, 'are made up of those who share interpretive strategies not for reading (in the conventional sense) but for writing texts, for constituting their properties and assigning their intentions. In other words, these strategies exist prior to the act of reading and therefore determine the shape of what is read rather than, as is usually assumed, the other way around.'<sup>501</sup> Different interpretive communities, with different strategies of assessment of works of art, can recognise different genres in the works of Carleton and Pacéré. However, the concept of interpretive communities can be reductive if it does not recognise writers' role in the process of changes that are shaped by an ambition to retain an oral quality. Carleton, for example, aimed at phonetic transcriptions that would not allow interpretive communities to pronounce his written words freely. Thus, as his style of writing, pronunciations or accents are not primarily

<sup>499</sup> M. Foucault, 'What is an author?', in D. Lodge, ed., *Modern Criticism and Theory*, p. 209.

<sup>500</sup> Cf. R. Barthes, 'The Death of the Author'; Michel Foucault, 'What is an author?' and S. Fish, 'Interpreting the *Variorum*', in D. Lodge, ed., *Modern Criticism and Theory*.

<sup>501</sup> S. Fish, 'Interpreting the *Variorum*', p. 327.

determined by a targeted audience, a distinction between stylistics and contents must be maintained while discussing the influences of audiences or interpretive communities. With this distinction in mind, this chapter will show the possible influences of audiences and critics on the contents (not on the style) of the works of Carleton and Pacéré, by firstly identifying these audiences and secondly by showing their contribution to the works of Carleton and Pacéré.

### II.2.B.i) The Targeted Audiences of Pacéré

Unlike any other spoken literature, the literature of tam-tam, we have already said earlier, does not use the mouth as channel for communication; it refuses to use the mouth so as to keep the message limited to an élite.<sup>502</sup> By using this literature, Pacéré addresses the scope of his poetry to a native audience of elites, but by selling his printed literature in the Mooré language he makes it available to literate people who speak this language, and by translating it into French he addresses another wider audience of yesterday, today and tomorrow. His audiences cannot alone explain the style and techniques Pacéré used in his poetry, though Pacéré was targeting each of these audiences as different elements in his poetry show.

References to local history and the use of the structure of the tam-tam literature restrict the full understanding of Pacéré's poetry to native elites. For example, only Burkinabe people or at least people with a historical knowledge of politics in Burkina Faso can grasp the point in the following lines of Pacéré's poetry, 'Voltacidé':

Night!	Nuit !
It is still night!	C'est toujours la nuit!
Nothing more inside!	Plus rien à l'intérieur !
A whole government	Tout un gouvernement
All complete,	Au grand complet,
A Black Minister	Un Ministre Noir
It is my ami Zanna	C'est mon ami Zanna,
A White Counsellor	Un Conseiller Blanc,
It is Mr Delaye the mixer	C'est lui qui délaye,

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<sup>502</sup> Cf. *Le langage*, p. 83.

A red Cardinal,  
It is he who blesses.'

Un Cardinal rouge,  
C'est lui qui bénit.'

The phrase 'ami Zanna' refers to the General Lamizanna, a former president of Burkina Faso. In Mooré 'Zanna' also means 'twins'. Lamizana is presented as the twin brother of Mr Delaye, French Ambassador to Upper Volta at that period. The red Cardinal calls to memory the first native Cardinal of the country in 1965. The colours associated with these three characters, black minister, white counsellor and red cardinal, evoke the colours of the flag of the country in this period. All of these put together form 'a whole government'. The title of the poem, 'Voltacidé' prefigures the downfall this government will bring to the country, 'Volta'. A reader who is not familiar with the context is likely to miss the point of this poem. This hermetic poetry aims at a specific audience and an initiation is needed to grasp it. In an interview with Bernard Magnier, Pacéré went further to say that the language of poetry of tam-tam is not a language of mere initiated people but a language of masters of that poetry.<sup>503</sup> In other words, the fact of living in the milieu or the fact of speaking the Mooré language is not sufficient to understand this language; initiation is necessary. This assertion entails two things: firstly, that Pacéré's poetry like the spoken literature of the *bendre* addresses specific audiences; secondly, that anybody who approaches the poetry of Pacéré needs to master the rules of cultural expression of tam-tams in order to be able to make the most of it. Though Pacéré's poetry has a universal reach, some of it is nonetheless esoteric, as can be seen in the following poem, taken from *Poésie des Griots*:

My father	Mon père
Taught me	M'a appris
How to count;	A compter ;
And I was counting	Et je comptais
The toes' tips;	Les bouts des orteils ;
I was pouring	J'y versais
Before they had gone into the ground,	Avant qu'ils n'ailent en terre,
The sacred water	L'eau sacrée

<sup>503</sup> Cf. B. Magnier, 'Entretiens avec Frédéric Pacéré Titenga', in *Notre librairie* 79 (avril-juin 1985), 25 : '... pas un language entre initiés, c'est un langage entre maîtres.'

Which guides the steps	Qui guide les pas
To the other world.	Dans l'au-delà.
I was eleven;	J'avais onze ans ;
And I still count	Et je compte encore
On my fingertips:	Au bout de mes doigts :
ONE,	UN,
TWO,	DEUX,
FOUR,	QUATRE,
FIVE!	Cinq !
Son of my fathers,	Fils de mes pères,
A child	Il manque,
Is missing	Il manque
Is missing	Un enfant
In the house! <sup>504</sup>	Dans la maison !

'One, two, four, five' is repeated in the whole poem like a refrain. An uninitiated reader is likely to miss the meaning of this rich poetry which deals with death in terms of somebody missing. In a note, Pacéré explains that the dead person is a man because in the counting of the numbers, the missing number is 3, symbolic of male in the Moaaga culture, 4 symbolising a female.<sup>505</sup> The deceased man is 'Noaaga' translated in the poem as 'poule' in French ('hen' in English), Pacéré's cultural counsellor. This poem is hermetic to a foreign reader who can read the words (in Mooré, French or English) without knowing the cultures they contain. Pacéré's annotations in this volume, *Poésie des griots*, as well as his explanation of some of the recurrent symbols and techniques (cf. II.2) of the literature of tam-tams which are used in his own poetry,<sup>506</sup> are expressive of his desire to target a wider audience than the few elites of initiated people.

For example, he explains the following symbols which he used in his poetry: (1) the lion and the baobab, as symbols of greatness, power and protection, (2) the toad, scorpion, basilica, locust and owl as symbolising pain and misery, (3) the bat, the prick-

<sup>504</sup> *Poésie*, pp. 64-65.

<sup>505</sup> Cf. *Poésie*, p. 101.

<sup>506</sup> Cf. F. T. Pacéré, 'Littérature instrumentale? Gestuelle? Culturelle?', in *Notre librairie* 101(avril-juin, 1990), 28; U. Amoa, *Poétique de la poésie des tambours*, pp. 137-157.

beef<sup>507</sup> and the raven as symbols of incomprehension, injustice and liberty. The symbol of the 'lion' is used in the following lines:

Tibo,	Tibo,
The lion is more harmless	Le lion est plus inoffensif
Than you and I	Que toi et moi
Who kill the short-lived insects! <sup>508</sup>	Qui tuons les éphémères !

The inoffensive lion referred to in this poem symbolises the chief (Naba) who, though he has power to destroy his people, uses this power to protect it. This symbol of the lion is sometimes similar to that of the baobab (e.g. 'Tibo will be there/ Tall and mature/ Like the baobab of the Sahara'<sup>509</sup>) which, more powerful than all the other trees of the forest, is a symbol of a protective power, as under the shade of the baobab, animals and human beings find protection against the heat. Like the lion and the baobab, the Naba and anybody in authority are called to use their power to protect their subjects, not to oppress them. Readers who have never seen a baobab or monkey bread tree can read Pacéré at a superficial level similar to a Burkinabe reading a poem about daffodils. Why does Pacéré use these symbols if he addresses French-speaking audiences and not replace them by equivalent symbols in French language? By using a literature reserved for a class of initiated people, Pacéré is addressing his poetry to them because they possess the key to it. But the fact that Pacéré wrote his poetry in French also points to his wish to reach a foreign international audience without changing Moaaga poetical conventions and style for those of his addressees.

Generally speaking, the use of a foreign language to express one's own literature shows a desire to address the people who speak this foreign language. Nora-Alexandra Kazi-Tani and many other African critics perceive in the use of a foreign language (French) by African writers, and also in their provision for explanatory notes, their wish to offer their cultural wealth to a foreign readership.<sup>510</sup> Pacéré is no exception. Aiming at a foreign audience (both outside and inside Burkina Faso) which is uninitiated into the

<sup>507</sup> A parasitical insect on cattle.

<sup>508</sup> *Quand*, pp. 21-22.

<sup>509</sup> *Angola*, p. 106. 'Tibo sera là/ Grand et mûr/Comme le baobab du Sahel'

<sup>510</sup> Cf. *Roman africain de langue française*, p. 312. See the views of other critics on African literature and its audience in R. Bishop, *African Literature, African Critics* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1988), pp. 47-58.

meta-language he uses in his poetry, Pacéré also provides some keys for them in notes. In *Poème pour Koryo*, for instance, Pacéré explains the symbolic phrases he uses. The initiation requires one to memorise a certain number of the ‘zabyuya’ or mottos. The abundance of notes in *Poésie des griots* and in *Saglego ou le poème du tam-tam pour le Sahel* fulfils the same function. In the latter collection, he provides a warning for the French version in which he draws the attention of the reader to the fact that ‘the original of the poem is the text written in Mooré, a national language of Burkina Faso,’ (for a Moaaga audience) and that to help the readers of the translation into French he felt necessary to add explanatory notes (for a foreign audience).<sup>511</sup> Altogether 121 notes are supplied to make the translation clearer to a foreign audience, a device also used by Carleton. But while Carleton used footnotes to signal a different linguistic tradition, to explain Irish customs and Irish dialect, Pacéré’s notes mainly revolve around a syntactic and structural explanation of Mooré terms and the origins of the *zabyuya*. Rarely does one find in Pacéré’s poetry an explanation of local customs in the way Carleton does in the notes of *Traits and Stories*. The first three collections of Pacéré appeared without notes whereas Carleton adjoined notes in his stories right from the start of his career. It would appear that it is in answer to the request of the audience who found his poetry hermetic that Pacéré annotated them. The influence of the audience on Pacéré’s writing is evident in this sense.

The desire to address a double audience also accounts for the superposition of two languages and two codes in Pacéré’s poetry: a linguistic code imposed by the French language he uses to convey his message to a broader environment, and a code belonging to the Moaaga culture in which the poet was brought up. Though in many of his poems the language of expression is French, the symbols used are Moaaga. His poetry is at the same time opened to universality and authentically particular. Pacéré refuses to follow the traditional Western literary conventions in order to preserve his originality: ‘I do not make a point of imposing on myself some guiding rules decreed from somewhere else other than from my milieu.’<sup>512</sup> Thus, Pacéré categorically rejects cultural assimilation. Pacéré

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<sup>511</sup> Cf. *Saglego*, p. 15.

<sup>512</sup> F.T. Pacéré in *Fraternité Matin* (30 décembre 1980). Original French version : ‘la poésie me paraît un genre enfermé dans un certain carcan avec des règles assez précises qu’il faut respecter. La poésie entendue comme telle ne tient pas compte des exceptions culturelles qui surgissent quand on quitte une région pour une autre (...).

Je n’ai pas à cœur de m’imposer des règles de conduite édictées ailleurs que dans mon milieu (...) s’il se faisait que par pur hasard des choses mon milieu n’obéissait pas aux mêmes règles figées dans l’entendement commun sur la définition de la poésie...’

appears, in Léon Yépri's analysis of *Quand s'envolent les grues couronnées*, as an unconditional poet, a rebel against the Western traditional methods of writing poetry; he develops his own idiolect. Léon Yépri considers this collection as an anti-poem, a poetical and lyrical anti-writing, in short a work of subversion made up of a compilation of fragments.<sup>513</sup> In this poem and in the other collections as well, the French language becomes a voice-carrier of Moaaga cultural tradition, using for example French words such as 'lion' and 'baobab' but with the meanings and symbolisms they have in the Moaaga culture. Léon Yépri also observes that 'the violence or rape that Titanga Pacéré does to the French language and to its creativity is, first of all enrichment, an act of "de-alienation" and of liberation.'<sup>514</sup> Contrary to traditional Western poetic traditions, *Quand s'envolent les grues couronnées* is a juxtaposition of fragments, the key of which is announced in the following refrain:

Timini,	Timini,
In front of this tomb	Devant cette tombe
Closed on	Fermée sur
A Thousand tears	Mille larmes
and	et
A thousand thoughts,	Mille pensées,
Some <b>fragments</b>	Quelques <b>fragments</b>
Come one after another	Se succèdent
And do not complement each other.	Et ne se complètent pas.
(Emphasis mine)	(Emphasis mine)

This refrain, which is repeated five times,<sup>515</sup> in the whole collection, appears like a guide to access the whole poetry, inviting the reader to consider it as a superposition of fragments. This collection is also at the same time history, epic, poetry, drama, philosophic treaty on death and essay on literary poetic writing; in short, it is a whole literary form of orature reminiscent of traditional Moaaga stories told at evenings in community gatherings.

<sup>513</sup> Cf. L. Yépri, 'Titanga Pacéré : Un poète dégénéré', in *Mélanges offerts*, pp. 231-247.

<sup>514</sup> Cf. Ibid., p. 246.

<sup>515</sup> Cf. *Quand*, pp. 8, 16, 22, 30, 37.

There is yet another way of identifying the audiences of Pacéré's poetry. As we will argue below in relation to Carleton, one can learn from the publishers of Pacéré the audiences whom he targeted. His first three collections were published in Paris by P. J. Oswald. This publisher, who is curiously not mentioned in Chevrier's repertoire of African publishers,<sup>516</sup> had a particular interest for writers who could not get published for being 'unconventional' or for political reasons. For example, as publishers in France and in Africa refused to publish *Ainsi on a assassiné tous les Mossé* (1979), Pacéré published it in Québec by Naaman. It was rejected by French and African publishers because the historical arguments developed in it were judged as counter-current.<sup>517</sup> This case makes one wonder why Pacéré's first three collections were not published by Présence Africaine, founded in 1947, or L'Harmattan, founded in 1975, as both publishers were promoting African literature. L'Harmattan later published Pacéré's *Le langage des tam-tams et des masques en Afrique* (1992) and the collection *Des entrailles de la terre* (2000) but one wonders if it is not the pressure of the international recognition of the style of Pacéré that led L'Harmattan to accept publishing his poetry. Following P. J. Oswald, Silex is another international publisher who agreed to publish Pacéré's poetry, namely *Poème pour l'Angola* (1982), *La poésie des griots* (1982), and *Du lait pour une tombe* (1984). Silex was founded in 1980 by the Cameroonian poet Paul Dakeyo in order to foster the expression of poetical talents.<sup>518</sup> By publishing his poetry in international publishing companies, though with some initial difficulty, Pacéré expresses his intention of aiming at an international audience through the medium of the French language.

Carleton's choice of publishers and his interaction with them to impose his own distinctive style will be discussed below. Accepting to publish Pacéré was to endorse his style, something which not all publishers were ready to do, as we have seen with the publication of *Ainsi on a assassiné tous les Mossé*. But, as a novice writer, Pacéré was influenced by his school experience of the format of French collections of poetry he read at school. So he submitted to Oswald his first three collections, two of which are apparently in the French format, that is, different individual poems forming a collection, whereas the third one is constituted of one long poem like *bendre* literature, which is

<sup>516</sup> Cf. J. Chevrier, *Littérature nègre*, pp. 215-220.

<sup>517</sup> F.T. Pacéré, 'La bendrologie en question', in Université de Ouagadougou, ed., *Annales* (décembre 1998), 172.

<sup>518</sup> Cf. J. Chevrier, *Littérature nègre*, pp. 216.

always in the format of one long poem. After subscribing to this format in appearance for his first two works, Pacéré gave it up in order to produce truly and intensely *bendre* poems, that is, a long poem for a collection.

In an interview given to Amoa, Pacéré asserts that his initial plan for the poems contained in *Poèmes pour l'Angola* was to make three separate collections in different books with the three poems ('Poèmes pour l'Angola', 'Les eaux boueuses du Kadiogo' and 'Reflets de New York') which are contained in this collection, but the publisher of Silex editions decided otherwise and amalgamated all three together into one book.<sup>519</sup> In this one book, 'Les eaux boueuses du Kadiogo' and 'Reflets de New York' have their own forewords or 'avant propos', as an expression of their constituting autonomous entities within the book which is then a collection of Pacéré's three poetical collections. In this case the publisher made no other change but to comprise three books in one, but this was not the case for the first two collections, *Refrains sous le Sahel* and *Ça tire sous le Sahel*, which follow Western conventions of poetical collections in terms of format (cf. III.1.b). Making each collection consist of one long poem reflects the structure and flow of the literature of tam-tam, which is constituted of one poem per session, though many subjects may be juxtaposed sometimes without any direct link between them. This attests to Pacéré's poetry as truly and intensely *Moaaga* poetry, similar to Carleton's first collection of stories as we will show below. However, their later careers show a significant divergence: Pacéré goes from assimilation to authenticity whereas Carleton moves from authenticity with *Traits and Stories* to a relative assimilation with his other works.

Carleton started publishing in Ireland and later abroad, whereas Pacéré began publishing abroad and then with Burkinabe publishing companies, two processes which resulted in their two different positions in relation to assimilation or globalisation of literature. By publishing locally in Burkina Faso, Pacéré also aimed at a native audience. La Maison Pousga, a Burkinabe publisher, published *Poème pour Koryo* (1986), *Des entrailles de la terre* (1990) which was later republished by L'Harmattan. He also set up his own publishing house, 'Fondation Pacéré', where he republished his first three (Oswald) collections in 1993 and *Saglego ou le poème du tam-tam pour le Sahel* (1994). In shifting between international and local publishers, Pacéré aims at reaching a double audience by making his poetry available to both.

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<sup>519</sup> Cf. U. Amoa, *Poétique de la poésie des tambours*, p. 331.

Pacéré, unlike Carleton as we will see, did not publish his early works in magazines but his poetry was widely advertised by many magazines (in Burkina Faso, in West Africa, in Europe and America) as Hortense Kaboré evidenced by giving a detailed repertoire.<sup>520</sup> Though Pacéré's name is widely known, the active audience of Pacéré's poetry and of Burkinabe poetry in general is very limited as Valentin Traoré demonstrates in his article on poetry and its public in Burkina Faso. He concludes his article with the recommendation that the only way Burkinabe poetry will gain a greater audience is through sessions of poetical declamations or reading of poems on television, in other words through performance.<sup>521</sup> In other words, orature is still a relevant issue for Pacéré's audience.

#### II.2.B.ii). The Audiences of *Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry*

Summarizing Barbara Hayley's work on *Traits and Stories*, Jackie Turton emphasizes Hayley's attribution of the changes in Carleton's texts to his audiences:

The critic Barbara Hayley has given a thorough account of Carleton's reworking of *Traits and Stories* through the various editions which appeared between 1830 and the final revision of 1842-44, noting word changes, and detailing the author's shift from a preoccupation with an accurate representation of the 'sound' of peasant speech to a representation of it in print acceptable to a wide readership.<sup>522</sup>

The second half of this assertion is the expression of a partial reading or even a wrong interpretation in that Turton overestimates what Hayley has suggested. For example, studying the dialect in the first series, Hayley made three suggestions concerning the change in Carleton's representation of sound: firstly, that 'it is very likely that [Carleton's] own way of speech changed as he developed from half-educated peasant to famous literary figure'; secondly, that Carleton 'must have found it difficult to render sounds into letters which would mean to an English reader what he [Carleton] wished them to mean'; and finally, that there is 'no apparent logical pattern' in Carleton's representation of

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<sup>520</sup> Cf. H. Kaboré, 'Maître Titinga Pacéré dans la presse (Répertoire)', in *Mélanges offerts*, pp. 34-79.

<sup>521</sup> V. Traoré, 'Poésie et Public au Burkina Faso', in Université de Ouagadougou, ed., *Annales* (décembre 1998), 311.

<sup>522</sup> J. Turton, 'Making it National; or, the Art of the Tale', in *Irish Studies Review*, vol. 13, 2(2005), 176.

sound.<sup>523</sup> The second hypothesis here does not imply a process of revision dictated by what was acceptable to the English reader or wider audiences, but instead changes primarily determined by Carleton although meant for the English reader. Carleton does not want to let his readers read his written words in their own ways but wants to compel them to read his stories as he himself reads them. He is influencing his readers rather than following them. His changes aimed at finding an exact correspondence between sound and its representation in print, unlike usual writing which can take on many dialectical accents. Ironically, his inconsistent transcriptions aimed at being recordings which remain static. In the conclusion of her book, Hayley pointed out, as his 'most serious' weakness, Carleton's 'slipshod willingness to allow his book to appear with an uneven degree of correction and *inconsistent dialect*' (emphasis mine).<sup>524</sup> Thus, contrary to Turton's statement, Hayley saw no *consistency* in Carleton's representation of sounds, neither did she make a wider readership responsible for Carleton's stylistics, but sought the reasons of Carleton's changes in the author himself. Similarly, the critic Declan Kiberd looked at the issue of Carleton and his audiences in terms of a dilemma within Carleton himself:

Caught between his peasant material and his educated readership, he is in a cleft stick. If he keeps his eye on the audience, he risks betraying the material; but if he keeps his gaze fixed on the material, he risks losing the audience. (...) Carleton was rather unusual in trying to do both at once.<sup>525</sup>

Carleton is seen here as an unusual middleman trying to do two things at the same time. Hayley's study traces Carleton's attempts to reproduce sounds (of peasant material) in print in such a way that the performance of the printed sounds would, regardless of the reader's idiolect, match the original that has been transcribed. However, the assessment of this work of orature solely from the perspective of silent reading (understood as soundless) would belittle or ignore Carleton's painstaking transcriptions; hence, our argument for reading aloud.

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<sup>523</sup> B. Hayley, *Carleton's Traits and Stories*, p. 27. All quotes are taken from the same page. Other hypotheses made by Hayley include: 'the text of the Second Series undergoes very little change for its second edition' and 'the reason for this relatively small degree of change is probably that Carleton had become a more controlled writer', Hayley hypothesized (p. 258). 'The changes sometimes seem arbitrary; part of a phrase may be corrected, another broadened' (p. 23). 'His representation of even the commonest words was never constant' (p. 26).

<sup>524</sup> B. Hayley, *Carleton's Traits and Stories*, p. 394.

<sup>525</sup> D. Kiberd, *Irish Classics* (London: Granta Books, 2000), p. 273.

The study of readership in this section aims at showing the complexity of Carleton's audiences and how some of his immediate audiences who lived in oral-print cultures of Britain and Ireland used his transcriptions in conformity to his plan. The issue of Carleton and his audiences is complex, and this is mainly due to the intricacy of Carleton as an 'unstable' writer. Declan Kiberd justifies this instability by linking it to the fact that 'he [Carleton] is never quite sure who exactly his audience might be.'<sup>526</sup> We seek to deal with the issue in a broad sense of national and foreign audiences, though we are aware that the terms 'national audience' and 'foreign audience' do not refer to homogeneous but to multi-audiences, including Irish and British people living in Ireland and Irish people living overseas, to literate and illiterate everywhere, to the people of Carleton's time as well as today's readers. Carleton transcribed Irish customs, which were 'in a transition [sic] state,'<sup>527</sup> primarily for future generations.

The place of publication of Carleton's *Traits and Stories* indicates that many portions of Carleton's immediate, targeted audiences were living in Ireland, and were composed of native Irish and English settlers, poor and rich, illiterate and educated people. In his 'General Introduction' (1842) where he gives an account of Ireland's literary publishing history and his views on Irish society, Carleton said that by publishing his 1830 work in Ireland, in Curry's press, he was not expecting it to be read in England or Scotland:

The two first volumes of the "The Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry" were given to the public by the house of Messrs. Curry and Co., of Sackville-street. Before they appeared, their author, in consequence of their originating from an Irish press, entertained no expectation that they would be read, or excite any interest whatever in either England or Scotland.<sup>528</sup>

It is difficult for one to take these words at face value, as earlier in the same essay Carleton told us that the objective of his introduction was

to prepare the minds of his readers—especially those of the English and Scotch—for understanding more clearly [Irish peasantry's] general character, habits of thought, and modes of feeling, as they exist and are depicted in the subsequent volumes.<sup>529</sup>

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<sup>526</sup> Ibid., p. 272.

<sup>527</sup> *T.&S. I*, 'General Introduction', p. ii.

<sup>528</sup> *T.&S. I*, 'General Introduction', p. vi.

<sup>529</sup> Ibid., p. i.

However, there is no contradiction between these two statements. By using the term 'especially' in the second quote, Carleton shows that the English and Scotch constitute one portion among others of his targeted readership. The first quote shows that initially, in 1830, Carleton was not expecting to find a readership in Britain and the reason for this was his Irish publisher whose prospective market, one can deduce from Carleton's statement, was not extended to Britain. Unexpectedly, however, Carleton's work reached England and Scotland and was reviewed by many journals, including the *Edinburgh Literary Journal*, *Glasgow Courier* and *Blackwood's Magazine* in which the Ettrick Shepherd and Christopher North made the following comments on *Traits and Stories*:

Shepherd: What sort o' volls, sir, are the Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry published by Curry in Dublin?

North: Truly, intensely, Irish. The whole book has the brogue—never were the outrageous whimsicalities of that strange, wild, imaginative people so characteristically displayed; nor, in the midst of all the fun, frolic, and folly, is there any dearth of poetry, pathos, and passion. The author's a jewel...

Shepherd: The Eerishers are marchin' in leeterature, pawri pashu.<sup>530</sup>

The appreciation of *Traits and Stories* as 'truly, intensely, Irish' contrasts it with previous works by Irish writers (e.g. Maria Edgeworth), an observation which led the critics to see the original, new work as a 'march in literature.' Following this unexpectedly positive reception of his works in England and Scotland, Carleton felt obliged to name English and Scottish readers as part of his targeted readership. He also extended his selling market to Britain. The second edition of the first series (1832) was published by Curry in Dublin, by Simpkin and Marshall in London, and by Oliver and Boyd in Edinburgh. The third edition of the same series (1834) was published by William Frederick Wakeman in Dublin, and in London by W. Simpkin, R. Marshall and R. Groombridge. Wakeman also published the fourth edition of the first series (1835) and the first edition of the second series (1833), which was 'sold in London' by Simpkin, Marshall and Groombridge. The second series of *Traits and Stories* (1833-44) was republished in America where Carey and Hart of Philadelphia and Baltimore split the collection into two volumes of five and six stories. The second edition of the second series was published by Wakeman in Dublin and sold in London by W. Simpkin and R. Marshall, and by R. Groombridge. The same publishers

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<sup>530</sup> *Blackwood's Magazine*, vol. 27, 166 (May 1830), 808. Cf. also *Edinburgh Literary Journal*, vol. 3, 79 (15 May 1830) and other critics, in Hayley, *Carleton's Traits and Stories*, p. 370.

and the same distributors in London also dealt with the third edition of the second series. Wakeman with Baldwin and Cradock in London published the first collected edition of the two series (1836). The complete edition of the two series (1843-44) was published in Dublin and London by Curry and Orr. The precise audiences of each of these publishers are hard to identify, except in broad terms as Irish, British and American audiences of different historical periods.

From one point of view, whether Carleton was targeting readers in both Ireland and Britain at the start of his career, or whether he was addressing audiences living in Ireland first and only later included readerships in Britain, is not a matter of importance, since none of these audiences was primarily responsible for his ‘truly, intensely, Irish’ stories. Yet, the choice of a Dublin publisher was significant, because, unlike Pacéré in France, by publishing in Ireland Carleton was initially free from pressure and constraints regarding conformity to British literary conventions and publishers’ likes and dislikes. As already pointed out, Carleton’s career followed the path from a distinctive Irishness to a relative assimilation to foreign conventions, whereas Pacéré’s career has been described as going from assimilation to authenticity to *bendre* literature.

On the other hand, unlike Pacéré, Carleton’s early contributions to print culture (both periodical and book forms) through anonymity and pseudonymity bore the marks of ‘unknown’ or collective authorship which is, among many reasons, an influence from oral tradition, as a brief historical review of his publications will reveal. Carleton’s early contributions to *The Christian Examiner* included the ‘Pilgrimage to Patrick’s Purgatory,’ (April-May 1828) under the pseudonym ‘W.’, ‘The Broken Oath’ (June 1828) under the pseudonym ‘Wilton’, and the first, third and fourth series of ‘Father Butler’ (August-December 1828) anonymously, without name or pseudonym. Thus, within a six month-period and within the same magazine, Carleton hid his authorship under two pseudonyms (‘W.’ and ‘Wilton’) and total anonymity.

The following year, in the same periodical, he used the pseudonym ‘Wilton’ for ‘The Station’ (January-June 1829) and for ‘Death of a Devotee’ (October 1829), while he anonymously issued a book edition of *Father Butler, the Lough Dearn Pilgrim, Being Sketches of Irish Manners* (1829). Then in 1830, he continued publishing in *The Christian Examiner* with the pseudonym ‘Wilton’ for ‘The Priest’s Funeral’ (January-February 1830) and ‘The Lianhan Shee-An Irish Superstition’ (November 1830), though at the end

of this year ‘The Donagh- or the Horse-Stealers’ was published anonymously (unsigned) in *The National Magazine* (December 1830). Then in September 1831, he published ‘Denis O’Shaughnessy Going to Maynooth’ in *The Christian Examiner* under a new pseudonym, ‘S. M.’. The first four editions (1830, 1832, 1833, 1834) of the first series and the first edition (1833) of the second series of *Traits and Stories* were also published anonymously. Barbara Hayley, in her bibliography of Carleton’s writings, noted that ‘the author’s name used for the first time for *Traits and Stories*, or any other work’ was not until the fourth edition (1835) of *Traits and Stories*.<sup>531</sup>

Different reasons may explain Carleton’s change of pseudonyms and/or his hiding himself anonymously. Judging from the other contributors to *The Christian Examiner*, one can assume that it was a trend for writers to use pseudonyms; however, the change of pseudonyms by the same writer was uncommon, as by doing so writers risked losing their readerships who were not supposed to know that stories by ‘W.’, ‘Wilton’, ‘S. M.’, ‘William Carleton’ or unsigned, necessarily referred to the same writer William Carleton. One possible reason why Carleton sought anonymity is fear of the audience, especially his Catholic audience, concerning the contents of his submissions. For example, he most likely substituted the pseudonym ‘S. M.’ for ‘Wilton’ because of his publication a year earlier of the first edition of the first series of *Traits and Stories* (1830, also published anonymously) which contained stories (e.g. ‘The Station’) that were published in the same periodical (*The Christian Examiner*) under the pseudonym ‘Wilton’, which by then was likely to have become familiar to readers as a compound of and for William Carleton. Therefore, in order to continue hiding his identity, especially because his contribution was critical towards the Catholic Church, Carleton adopted the misleading pseudonym ‘S. M.’, as the following words from the editor, Caesar Otway, at the beginning of Carleton’s article suggest:

The following sketch is given (as supplied to us by a well-known correspondent) of an aspirant from amongst the ranks of the Irish peasantry to the enviable office of a Priest. The smart aptitude for controversy—the overweening self-sufficiency—the bloated pharisaical superciliousness that but too often marks the Romish sacerdotal character in Ireland, are here exhibited in their germs. Assured of the intimate

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<sup>531</sup> B. Hayley, *A Bibliography of the Writings of William Carleton*, p. 25.

knowledge of the writer in matters of this nature, we venture to present the picture though it bears the semblance of, and perhaps is—a caricature.—Ed.<sup>532</sup>

These words of the editor show that Carleton, ‘a well-known correspondent’, resorted to anonymity in order to protect himself from possible public attacks.

However, Carleton’s reading public is not solely responsible for his anonymity. Another source of explanation, in the perspective of orature, is called into consideration when one takes into account the fact that Carleton, in spite of his ambition of becoming the Irish National Writer, maintained his authorship unknown even when his book, *Traits and Stories*, publicly met with success, going through different editions. A possible explanation is that Carleton’s authorship is like storytellers’ ‘authorship’ of a tale they tell, for Carleton was telling stories, not orally, but in print form. Performers are usually remembered by their performances; this was also the case for Carleton whose later ‘performative’ writings (cf. bibliography) were attributed to ‘the author of “Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry”’, that is, to the performer who told Irish stories in printed form. His authorship as performer was made known orally first before appearing in his books for the first time in 1835, that is, seven years from the beginning of his literary career. This is an expression of the fact that oral tradition or orature alone could disseminate one’s good performance more efficiently than written tradition on its own, as Carleton, in our day, appears as an unknown or less popular writer to much of the Irish public, outside the circle of students of nineteenth-century Irish literature.

Though the audiences are not solely responsible for Carleton’s orature, Carleton refers to them within his texts or in annotations, and these references can help us identify Carleton’s audiences. Many passages in *Traits and Stories* refer to an audience living in Ireland. In ‘The Midnight Mass’ for example, there is a reference to Irish readers: ‘The Midnight Mass is, no doubt, a phrase familiar to our Irish readers.’<sup>533</sup> On the other hand, the many notes which accompany Carleton’s writings are also the expressions of his desire to reach a non-Irish audience living either in Ireland or elsewhere. Carleton’s footnotes can be subdivided into three categories: (1) footnotes explaining Irish language terms, and therefore intended for an audience of non-Irish speakers, both outside and inside Ireland; (2) footnotes explaining Irish customs to a non-Irish audience; (3) explanations of dialect

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<sup>532</sup> S. M. ‘Denis O’Shaughnessy Going to Maynooth’, in *The Christian Examiner*, vol. 11, 75 (Sept. 1831), 686.

<sup>533</sup> *T. & S. 1*, p. 345.

in order to preserve, in the perspective of orature, the oral quality of the written materials so that even the ‘foreign’ audience may be able to properly ‘hear’ the stories in the way they were originally told in the fireside setting.

Taking ‘Ned M’Keown’ as a case study to illustrate this usage of footnotes, the following examples are relevant. Carleton inserts a note at ‘*gone a shaughran*’ to explain it as ‘gone astray’ (from Irish). He also adjoins a note at the end of ‘“Jist,” replied Nancy “mixin’ the smallest taste in the world of holy water with the whiskey, and if he drinks *that*, you know he can be nothing that’s bad.”’ In his note, he explains the efficacy of the Irish custom of using blessed water. Finally, he explains the dialectical expression ‘it’s ill my common’ as ‘it’s ill becoming—or it ill becomes me, to overlook his conduct.’<sup>534</sup> He prefers using the dialect, as people would speak it, instead of a standard English that reflects no locality at all, as he wants to perpetuate the story in its orality and as a work of orature. From one edition to the next, Carleton added new notes to his stories. For example, Barbara Hayley, in her minute study of the changes made in *Traits and Stories* from the first publication of the individual stories in magazines to the complete edition of the collection, pointed out that in the second edition of ‘Ned M’Keown’, ‘the ten new footnotes are mostly straightforward renderings of Irish, like “doodeen”, “a short pipe” (...). A few expressions are painstakingly explained – “bodaghs”, “a person vulgar but rich, ...”<sup>535</sup> Then, in the ‘new edition’ (1843-44), some new notes in ‘Ned M’Keown’ are mainly brief explanations,<sup>536</sup> for example, ‘salt and water consecrated by a particular form is Holy Water’. The main footnotes have to do with Irish habits or linguistic expressions. From the perspective of orature, one can welcome Barbara Hayley’s suggestion that in inserting some new notes Carleton aims at convincing his foreign audience as to the real life existence of his storytellers,<sup>537</sup> as some of the footnotes describe the characters as ‘still living’, and his transcriptions aim at keeping this still spoken dialect alive in print form. In other words, he wants to convince his audiences that what he transcribes is not the dialect of a forgotten past or an imaginary one but a truly Irish dialect that is still spoken.

However, in order to tell these orally ‘living’ stories in periodicals, Carleton was to compromise some aspects of his oral style, especially those concerning length, an

<sup>534</sup> *T. & S. 1*, pp. 4-5, 17 and 7 respectively.

<sup>535</sup> B. Hayley, *Carleton’s Traits and Stories*, p. 39.

<sup>536</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 283.

<sup>537</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*, pp. 277, 281.

important characteristic of spoken literature (cf. I.1.C), in order to comply with his editors' publishing conditions. The loquacity of the storyteller in him was restricted in his contributions to magazines by constraints of space which led editors to shorten his contributions. For example, the editor of the *Christian Examiner* wrote this apology to justify his cutting down Carleton's contribution, 'Denis O'Shaughnessy Going to Maynooth' (1831):

We are sorry that want of space has obliged us to contract this narrative, and do violence to the manuscript, and perhaps the author's desires; but the necessity is imposed on us to close with the concluding number of the year, an article which has occupied so many of the pages of this volume; perhaps S. M. may publish the story at length, in another shape.<sup>538</sup>

Even though the contractions were done against Carleton's desires, it was likely that Carleton agreed with the contracted form before its publication. Supposing that what was republished in the first edition of the second series (1833) was the original manuscript that was submitted to the *Christian Examiner*, one can say that the contraction was done by leaving out large sections or blocks, corresponding to fifty-six pages of the format of the first edition (1833) or to twenty-two pages in the 1844 edition format. As such, the editor did not change the words or typography used by Carleton in cutting down his text. So, moving from the periodicals to book editions where he could master the length, Carleton restored his stories to their original storytelling lengths.

By contributing to every one of the periodicals or 'publication projected purely for the advancement of literature in his own country',<sup>539</sup> Carleton appealed to and reached as many audiences as possible. So we are called to look for the reasons of the changes he made in his stories in the strategy adopted by the author himself rather than in individual audiences or publishers. The following example from 'An Essay on Irish Swearing' is an illustrative case study in this respect.

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<sup>538</sup> S. M. 'Denis O'Shaughnessy Going to Maynooth', in *The Christian Examiner*, vol. 11, 78 (Dec. 1831), 945.

<sup>539</sup> T. & S. 1, 'General Introduction', p. vii. Here are examples of periodicals in which he published: *The Christian Examiner*, *The Dublin Literary Gazette*, *The National Magazine*, *The Dublin Monthly Magazine*, *The Dublin University Review*, *The Dublin University Magazine*, *The Nation*, *The Irish Tribune*, *The Shamrock*; *Duffy's Hibernian Magazine*; *The Illustrated Dublin Journal* and *Duffy's Hibernian Sixpenny Magazine*. Cf. T. & S. 1, 'General Introduction', p. vii. and B. Hayley, *A Bibliography of the Writings of William Carleton*, p. 147-166.

‘An Essay on Irish Swearing’ in the first volume of the first edition of the second series was first published in Dublin in 1833, by Wakeman, and sold in London by Simpkin, Marshall and Groombridge. Judging from the market of Wakeman, one can say that Carleton was addressing an audience inside and outside Ireland, especially a British audience. However, in the second edition of the second series (1834), which was published by the same publisher in the same place and distributed to the same market as the first edition, Carleton considerably altered his text by the omission of some oaths. The immediate explanation to this alteration is that by doing so Carleton was responding to the ten reviewers<sup>540</sup> of the first edition of the second series who may have drawn his attention to the complaints of British audience in relation to some oaths. For example, while expressing gratitude to Carleton for the adulation of political or religious trends in his ‘second series’, comparatively to the first series, and by recognising swearing oaths as ‘one of our greatest national faults’, the reviewer of the *University Review and Quarterly Magazine* expressed his discontentment as regards especially ‘An Essay on Irish Swearing’:

We confess we are rather disappointed with our Author’s specimen of an Essay; and if, as we have remarked before, he is more happy in his Traits than in his Stories, we deem him much more successful in either than in an Essay; and we must say that we think what he calls his Essay on Irish Swearing, might have been contained in one fourth of the words and oaths he has expended on it.<sup>541</sup>

It may be in response to this criticism that Carleton tried to shorten this story by removing some parts. Barbara Hayley suggested this possible interpretation when she said that Carleton, at the risk of rendering his story vaguer and linguistically less informative, removed from ‘An Essay on Irish Swearing’ many passages that were possibly of offence to Irish people, to Catholics, to English readers or to those of no particular allegiance.<sup>542</sup> For example, the following straightforward criticisms of Irish and English coarseness were omitted:

The Englishman, it has been often observed, only damns the eyes and limbs; but the Irishman immediately consigns the soul itself to the bottomless pit.<sup>543</sup>

<sup>540</sup> Cf. B. Hayley *A Bibliography of the Writings of William Carleton*, p. 197.

<sup>541</sup> *The University Review and Quarterly Magazine*, vol. 1, 1 (January 1833), 51.

<sup>542</sup> Hayley, *Carleton’s Traits and Stories*, pp. 266-271.

<sup>543</sup> *Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry*, second series, vol. 1 (Dublin and London: Wakeman, second edition, 1833), p. 289.

Two remarkable distinctions exist in the character of English and Irish oaths, which, when compared, reflect great credit upon Paddy, and well-merited disgrace upon John Bull. The English rabble who utter them, are restrained by no sense of decency, or respect for the presence of females; so far from it, that a mail-coach driver or guard will give expression to them, even while assisting a lady into the coach. Now, although Paddy's oaths are varied and bitter, yet there is scarcely such a thing to be heard in Ireland as a gross or indelicate oath, and never, under any circumstances, within hearing of a female ear.<sup>544</sup>

However, the argument that these oaths were omitted in response to possible complaint by targeted audiences loses its efficacy because in the third edition of the same work by the same publisher in the same place and sold in the same market in 1835, the omissions made the previous year reappear completely. This is not attributable to the criticism of the one reviewer of the second edition, because the observation he made on the coarser sketches was similar to the 1833 remark of the *University Review and Quarterly Magazine*. The critic (Samuel Ferguson) in *The Dublin University Magazine* (1834) wrote following Carleton's second edition (1834) of the same story: 'we have now to express our regret on account of the many blemishes that deform his coarser sketches. It will not be a sufficient excuse to plead in their vindication, that such passages are true to nature.'<sup>545</sup> The same criticisms were made twice to Carleton and his two responses had been contradictory: he omitted the coarser passages in his second edition, he republished them in his third edition with the excuse that they are true to nature and he could not leave them out for fear of making his stories less 'intensely Irish'. Consequently, some of his new notes in the subsequent editions of his works described his stories as real and his characters as still living, in other words, as 'true to nature'. Carleton follows his own objective of orature instead of following his reviewers and their recommendations. Thus, Carleton again made changes in the same story, in the fourth edition of the second series in 1836 by Wakeman in Dublin and by Baldwin and Cradock in London, by combining 'An Essay on Irish Swearing' and 'The Geography of an Irish Oath' into one story. He did likewise for the 'new edition' of the complete *Traits and Stories* in 1843-44 by shortening

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<sup>544</sup> Ibid., pp. 301-2.

<sup>545</sup> S. Ferguson, 'Irish Storyists—Lover and Carleton', in *The Dublin University Magazine, A Literary and Political Journal*, 4 (September 1834), 311.

‘An Essay on Irish Swearing’ to use it as an introduction to ‘The Geography of an Irish Oath’.

The conclusion one can draw from this case-study and previous observations is that the changes in Carleton’s texts cannot be simply attributed to a changing readership. One direct factor influencing the stylistic changes in Carleton’s stories was Carleton’s attempt to represent sounds in such way as to leave no possibility to his readers to pronounce them in any other manner than that suggested by the printed transcription of the oral original. Some of the contents certainly bore influences from different sources, but the style, not the contents of the stories, is our subject in this analysis. Carleton’s style is his own and is primarily the expression of himself and of the aspirations to being a good scribe who tries to preserve oral stories in print form. The spellings in Carleton’s stories illustrate our demonstration in Part One Chapter One that texts in spoken and written literatures are to a certain extent independent from the author and the audience and, as such, preserve their contents intact by constraining the reader or performer. Carleton transcribed his stories in such a way that all different interpretive communities may potentially perpetuate the same dialects he artistically transposed in print form. Instead of Carleton’s multifaceted audiences determining his style, it is his style of writing, a consequence of influences on Carleton of the historical and cultural situation of Ireland in a transitional period, that seeks to determine the ebb and flow of his readers’ voices.

His style of writing reproduces the stories as they were originally told in a collective setting, sustained with miming and accompanied by poetry or music, as Thomas Davis pointed out in his tribute to Carleton:

Carleton is the historian of the peasantry (...). The fiddler and piper, the seanachie and seer, the matchmaker and dancing master, and a hundred characters beside, are here brought before you, moving, acting, playing, plotting and gossiping. (...) You hear the honey brogue of the maiden, and the downy voice of the child, the managed accents of flattery or traffic, the shrill tones of woman’s fretting, and the troubled gush of men’s anger.<sup>546</sup>

Thus, Carleton’s style of orature, in its mixture of genres, potentially appeals to interpretive communities of historians, storytellers, musicians, dancers and playwrights, or more generally to audiences according to the hobby or amusements they liked the most.

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<sup>546</sup> T. Davis, ‘The Irish Peasantry: Review of *Tales and Sketches Illustrating the Irish Peasantry*’, in *The Nation* (12 July 1845), 650.

For example, while this study considers Carleton and Pacéré as literary artists, Yeats<sup>547</sup> and historians J. R. R. Adams, Niall Ó Ciosáin and James H. Murphy (as members of an interpretive community) see William Carleton as a great folk historian of Irish life and rely on him for certain historic information. Pacéré too is a historian not only by perpetuating the literature of tam-tam in his works, but also by his pioneering book in defence of the history of the Moogo: *Ainsi on a assassiné tous les Mossé*. Suffice it to recall that the *seanachaidh* in Ireland and the *bendre* in Burkina Faso were historians or genealogists attached to the household of a king or chief.

Carleton and Pacéré are aware of addressing different audiences (of various arts) with their works of orature. A somewhat different issue is the ‘reader(s)’ to whom Carleton refers on many occasions in his narratives. The identification of the reader(s) whom Carleton refers to in his narratives may reveal the audiences he is aware of addressing. The term ‘reader’ can be misleading in the context of orature. In the context of printed literary works, the reader is without contest the solitary person who peruses the work, but in the context of a work meant to be read aloud or to be heard, the term ‘reader’ can be awkward, as it can designate the performer, the reader-aloud or the listener. In this sense, we can see Carleton’s use of the singular ‘reader’ and the plural ‘readers’ as referring to the performer who reads aloud for others. A further investigation of the different contours around which the word ‘reader’ is used shows that Carleton uses the term ‘reader’ while referring to (1) the spectator of the illustrations in his stories, (2) to the listener of his narration, or (3) to the audience he invites to participate in his drama, as the following examples reveal.

In his ‘General Introduction’, talking of the knowledge of the ‘seven languages’ Carleton writes: ‘The reader will find an illustration of this in the sketch of ‘Denis O’Shaughnessy going to Maynooth.’<sup>548</sup> In ‘Going to Maynooth’, there is a sketch illustrating Denis’ knowledge of the ‘seven languages’, teaching decorum and practising ‘fulosophy’.<sup>549</sup> Then, in a note explaining ‘*cruicht*’, he says: ‘The hump, which constitutes a round-shouldered man. If the reader has ever seen Hogarth’s Illustrations of Hudibras, and remembers the redoubtable hero as he sits on horseback, he will be at no loss in

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<sup>547</sup> W. B. Yeats, ‘Introduction’ to *Stories from Carleton* (London: Walter Scott, ca 1889), p. xvi.

<sup>548</sup> *T.&S. 1*, p. xv.

<sup>549</sup> *T.&S. 2*, pp. 109-110.

comprehending what a *cruicht* means.<sup>550</sup> In these two instances, by ‘reader’ is meant somebody who can ‘read’ an illustration. What use can an illustration have if one cannot ‘read’ it? The spectator or ‘seer’ of sketchy illustrations or drawings can thus be referred to as ‘reader’. Carleton took care of the illustrations to his stories out of respect for this category of ‘readers’ who are dealing with symbols different from the letters of the alphabet. Thus, specific ‘readers’ of pictorial strips are part of Carleton’s targeted audiences in *Traits and Stories*.

Next, for an interpretive community which assesses *Traits and Stories* as belonging to the short story genre, the ‘reader’ is the listener of the narration. For example, describing ‘Poor Rose O’Hallaghan’ for this readership, Carleton writes: ‘In order to *insense* the reader better into her character, I will commence a small sub-narration, which will afterwards emerge into the parent stream of the story.’<sup>551</sup> Carleton’s targeted audiences here are reminiscent of the crowds for storytelling, as he is aware of telling a story to listeners and uses procedures to capture their attention.

Finally, by reader is meant the audience of a soirée of drama, dance, poetry and music. Carleton invites such readers to participate in the drama, saying: ‘Reader, is that a black-thorn you carry—tut, where is my imagination bound for?—to meet the other, I say.’<sup>552</sup> He talks to the reader or audience as to a peer actor on stage, transforming the story into a theatrical dialogue, more extensive and substantive examples of which will be given in the following part.

Thus, these examples show how complex the term ‘reader’ is, as it applies to ‘looking’ audience, listening audience and to both at the same time; all of these categories of readers constitute Carleton’s targeted audiences. Pacéré too is addressing this host of readerships when he says that his poetry is also drama, dance and music and addresses both the living and the dead (the ancestors)<sup>553</sup> and that out of respect to the Elders, he ought to remain faithful in his transcription of this literature which they passed on to us. Pacéré and Carleton targeted different and complex audiences of past and present, of natives and foreigners, of literate and illiterate, of musicians, poets, playwrights and storytellers, and appealed to each of these through their transcription of a holistic

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<sup>550</sup> *T.&S. I*, ‘Shane Fadh’s Wedding’, p. 64.

<sup>551</sup> *T.&S. I*, ‘The Battle of the Factions’, p. 121.

<sup>552</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 136.

<sup>553</sup> Cf. *Poésie*, p. 111.

literature, but also imposed on their readers unique ways of reading that follow their typographic transcriptions.

## Conclusion

Early nineteenth-century Ireland was in a transitional period in which, as Riana O'Dwyer observed, 'a relationship of mediation existed between the original oral material, its transmitter to the printed page, and its audience'.<sup>554</sup> Carleton and Pacéré interacted with both oral and print literatures; they knew the original oral material from their parents, and, with pen and paper, they tried to be the transmitters of these spoken literatures to the printed page which was later performed for audiences, literate and illiterate alike. They had a huge interest in the spoken literature which they had experienced in their childhood. It was this combination of intimacy with the unwritten tradition, together with literacy acquired by education, which made possible for Carleton and Pacéré the project of writing down the stories which they had heard being told around them in order to save these unwritten materials from oblivion. In this sense, the cultures and periods in which the two writers lived marked their individual characters and writings with hybridity, as their works testify to the transitional character of these historical periods when oral and literary procedures overlapped. Pacéré did not hide his hybridity, and critics, such as David Krause and Timothy Webb have underlined Carleton's hybridity in their presentation of him as a Celtic Demiurge<sup>555</sup> or 'a remarkable example of cultural schizophrenia',<sup>556</sup> in his being peasant and gentleman, town-dweller and countryman, Catholic and Protestant, Ulsterman and Dubliner, speaker of Gaelic and English. Carleton's mingling in his works of rich oral traditions with literary ones, 'the sacred with the profane', 'the serious and the comic', was successful to the extent that Yeats saw in him 'a creator of a new imaginative world, the demiurge of a new tradition',<sup>557</sup> which we call orature, as it mediates between print and spoken literatures.

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<sup>554</sup> R. O'Dwyer, 'Legends of the Supernatural in Anglo-Irish Literature', in *Béaloideas*, 60-61 (1992-3), 151.

<sup>555</sup> D. Krause, 'William Carleton, Demiurge of Irish Carnival: Fardorougha the Miser, 1839', in *Éire-Ireland*, vol. 29, 4 (1994), 25.

<sup>556</sup> T. Webb, "Introduction" to W. Carleton, *The Black Prophet: A Tale of Irish Famine* (Shannon: Irish University Press, 1972), pp. vii-viii. See also N. Vance, *Irish Literature since 1800* (London: Pearson Education Ltd, 2002), p. 137.

<sup>557</sup> W. B. Yeats, *The Bookman* (Marsh, 1896), cited by D. Krause, 'William Carleton, Demiurge of Irish Carnival', 29.

Carleton's transcribed materials were used to the end for which he wrote, as they were performed for audiences to hear. The social organisation of people in early nineteenth-century Ireland and Burkina Faso in collectivities or closed neighbourhoods sustained communal performances in which orality and literacy complemented each other. Reading-aloud assured this relationship between the printed page and the audience. The proof of the existence of sessions of reading aloud in both Ireland and Britain and America and of theatre-forum in Ireland is of special importance to explain the place of performance in Carleton's *Traits and Stories* and of Carleton as writer of a performative art. Carleton's and Pacéré's interest in drama and oral performances influenced styles of writing that targeted a complexity of native and foreign audiences, some of which were used to attending performance arts or to listening to printed stories read aloud for them. They used writing as a means of and support to oral performance, by mingling oral and written traditions, and developed a particular style of writing that culminates into performance; they were addressing audiences for many of whom literature was a group or communal, rather than an individual, experience. The aural qualities of their transcriptions require special 'loudness' even in eye-reading, as the following textual study will reveal.

### Part Three:

#### The Theory of Orature Applied to the Works of Carleton and Pacéré

The hypothesis that *Traits and Stories* and Pacéré's poetical collections belong to the literary form of orature would be unconvincing if our arguments remained focused solely on the cultural traditions in which Carleton and Pacéré grew up and the way literature was transmitted and received in these cultures. The objective of this third part is to show textual evidence of elements of orature, such as mixture of spoken and print literatures and mixture of performance genres within Carleton's *Traits and Stories* and Pacéré's poetry. Concerning the mixture of spoken and print modes, we shall content ourselves with showing the presence of 'spoken literature' in the printed books. Pacéré's poetry and Carleton's stories exist and are accessible in printed book form. We are dealing with these works as preserved in the print medium, not as preserved in tapes, compact discs or in a digital medium. Our task now is to show that this 'dead' literature in printed form is destined for and facilitates its resurrection into the world of 'spoken literature' through performance. In evidencing the mixing of 'spoken literature' in the print literature, emphasis will be laid on aurality, wordpower and typography, which have already been defined in the first part. So far in this research, these terms have been occluded in favour of the word 'performance' with which they are closely linked. Aurality and wordpower are qualities denoting potential for performance. A work can be performed if it has qualities of aurality and wordpower. The signs of identification of 'spoken literature' in the print form are twofold: firstly, changes around a fixed kernel, and secondly, the use of typographical devices, such as quotation marks, capital letters, italics and indentation which denote transfer of spoken language and audience participation.

The second chapter of this part will evidence the mixture of genres, such as storytelling, play, poetry, song and drawing in the works of Pacéré and Carleton. Critics of African writers' works have revealed how mixture is a characteristic element in 'African literatures' that are written in European (French, English, Portuguese, etc.) as well as in African (Mooré, Jula, Swahili, etc.) languages.<sup>558</sup> In fact, short story, fable, poetry, song and play, which constitute different and separate genres in the West (only since the Middle

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<sup>558</sup> See the views of critics, on African literature as mixture of genres and of languages, in *Notre Librairie*, 84 : *Littératures Nationales 2, Langues et frontières* (Juillet-septembre 1986) ; 85 : *Littératures nationales 3, Histoire et identité* (octobre-décembre 1986) ; 102 : *Théâtre Théâtres* (Juillet-Août 1990).

Ages or later), each having its own aesthetic style and canons, constitute one literary form, which I call orature, in African literary criticism. For example, in narrative genres such as novels and short stories in Africa and Europe, there is a combination of songs, poetry and drama. Mérimée's *Mateo Falcone* (1829)<sup>559</sup> and Werewere Liking's *Orphée Dafric* (1981) are examples. *Orphée Dafric* is a novel that has been interpreted as a play by Hourantier under the title *Orphée d'Afrique*. Poetry is also adaptation of narrative, song and drama. This is the case with the Ugandan Okot p'Bitek's *Song of Lawino* (1966). First written in Acoli, it was declaimed or sung, accompanied by music before being translated into English. It has the form of a play with two actors, a man and woman. Similarly Werewere Liking's other works, such as *On ne raisonne pas le venin* (1977) and *A la rencontre de...* (1980), are works of orature. *On ne raisonne pas le venin* was first written as poetry; then it was reworked as musical show. Liking said she wrote it inspired by the art of painting in which she was making her début. Thus, *On ne raisonne pas le venin* is poetry, music and painting. When she was asked which of the different literary genres was her favourite, she answered that she never liked the division of genres:

I do not agree with the systematic division of genres. Negro-African textual aesthetics is characterised, by the way, by a mixture of genres. It appears to me that it is only by mixing genres that one can reach different registers of language, different qualities of emotions and approach different levels of consciousness where one can express everything... In my last publication but one, *Elle sera de jaspe et de corail* [1984], all the genres are mixed: poetry, novel, theatre...<sup>560</sup>

The transgeneric aspect of orature reveals itself in performance when the different genres intersect and inform one another in order to become a collective literature that is communally appreciated. Transgeneric literary texts, like those referred to above, testify to authors' desire to cross literary borders by deconstructing and re-constructing the different genres. As these works of orature meld various genres into hybrid works for performance,

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<sup>559</sup> Cf. A. Kaboré, 'Hybridity and Orature: The Cases of Mérimée and Carleton', in M. Murphy and O. Clarke, eds., *NUI Maynooth Postgraduate Research Record: Proceedings of the Colloquium 2005*, pp. 125-132.

<sup>560</sup> B. Magnier, 'A la rencontre de Werewere Liking', in *Notre Librairie*, 79 (avril-juin 1985), 18 : 'Je n'adhère pas à la scission systématique des genres. L'esthétique textuelle négro-africaine est d'ailleurs caractérisée, entre autres, par le mélange des genres. Et ce n'est qu'en mélangeant différents genres qu'il me semble possible d'atteindre différents niveaux de langues, différentes qualités d'émotions et d'approcher différents plans de conscience d'où l'on peut tout exprimer... Dans mon avant-dernière publication *Elle sera de jaspe et de corail*, tous les genres se rencontrent : poésie, roman, théâtre...'"

audiences or readers are called to change their approach of these works, by adopting the conventions of orature, if an understanding of these works is to be achieved.

In drama also there are acts of transfer of other genres. Commenting on the performance of the play, *La Révolution* (1981) written by a theatrical ensemble, Jean-Claude Ki gives his impressions by describing it as ‘a spectacle of holistic theatre where chants—dances, recitals—monologues and dialogued discourse come one after another to bring each its particularity to the treatment of the plot’.<sup>561</sup> This play was performed with music as a permanent element to accompany songs and dances and to give rhythm to the cadences of recitals and monologues.

All these examples testify that in performative literature no genre stands alone in West African literature: music, poetry, story, theatre, novel and life in African literatures and in Western literatures before English empiricism and French rationalism are/were intertwined.<sup>562</sup> Studying the existence of critical activity in traditional African societies, N’Guessan Kotchy and H. Memel-Fote observed: ‘There was no division in such societies between the artist and the public, the creator and the spectator, and between the various arts, dancing, singing, playing being all intermingled.’<sup>563</sup> Burkinabe traditional theatre and early Western drama are comprehensive genres that include narrative, poetry, masks, dance and music. Early English drama, for example, included music, poetry and dance. Jean-Pierre Guingané, who conducted research on theatre in Burkina Faso, ascribes the lengthy narratives in Burkinabe plays to their inspiration from the storytelling genre of the griot or *bendre*, a holistic art.<sup>564</sup> A good example of drama in Burkinabe style is the play, *Le fou* (1982), where Guingané mixes different genres. He included poetry and music in the staging of the play, transforming his actors into musicians and putting musical rhythm in the voice of the actors. Facing the audience, the actors say: ‘We are going to tell you a story with a tragic ending.’ At the end, they sing and tell the audience: ‘Do not believe that we are dead. We have done but tell you a story. If it touched you, maybe it is

<sup>561</sup> J-C. Ki, ‘Dix ans de théâtre 1979-1989’, in *Notre Librairie*, 101 (avril-juin 1990), 73-74: ‘Un spectacle de théâtre total où chants—dances, récitals—monologues et propos dialogués se relayaient pour apporter chacun sa particularité au traitement de l’intrigue.’

<sup>562</sup> Cf. R. Barthes, ‘The Death of the Author’ and M. Foucault, ‘What is an Author’, in D. Lodge, ed., *Modern Criticism and Theory: A Reader* (London and New York: 1988), p. 168 and p. 203.

<sup>563</sup> N. Kotchy and H. Memel-Fote ‘Criticism in Traditional Africa’, in Society of African Culture, *The African Critic and His People as Producers of Civilization*, Yaoundé Colloquium, April 16-20, 1973 (Paris : Présence Africaine, 1977), p. 154.

<sup>564</sup> Cf. J. P. D. Guingané, *Le théâtre en Haute-Volta : structure-production-diffusion-public*, doctoral thesis, tome 1 (Université de Bordeaux III, 1977), pp. 187-189.

somewhat true.<sup>565</sup> This kind of theatre is a complex mixture of genres. In this context, one can understand Pacéré's observation that though he entitled his *Poésie des griots* 'poetry' because he was obliged to (as it has the appearance of a poetic form), he demands that the word 'poetry' be put between inverted commas, because, in fact, it does not cover poetical reality, particularly in the Western sense.<sup>566</sup> Indeed, tam-tam literature is more than 'poetry' understood as literature in metrical form or verse. It is poetry in the orature style, which is a mixture of many genres and literary modes. Likewise, Zimmerman reveals the mixture of genres in Carleton's early writings when he says that Carleton's texts mix 'games, singing, music and dancing—and narrative activities of all kinds'.<sup>567</sup> These examples show that individual genres are interdependent or self-complementary in African and some European literatures, particularly in Pacéré's poetry and in Carleton's stories.

The brief biographies of Carleton and Pacéré revealed that both writers tried their hands at many genres: drama, short story, novel, and poetry. From the perspective of orature as a literary theory, it would be more consistent to say that Carleton and Pacéré produced works of orature which came to be categorised into different genres. Carleton's complete works have been divided into short stories, poems, play and novels. However, some of his short stories, 'Wildgoose Lodge' for example, are sometimes referred to as short novels or novellas and treated as such by critics, while some of his novels, *Fardorrougha the Miser* for instance, are sometimes called tales. In other words, none of his works belongs to a unique genre. Each work is labelled into a specific genre according to strategies of different interpretive communities. It is likewise for Pacéré's poetry, sometimes referred to as songs, sometimes as plays and sometimes as poetry. Talented writers, poets and playwrights, Carleton and Pacéré wrote works in which spoken and print literatures as well as different genres are mixed.

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<sup>565</sup> W. Zimmer, 'Jean-Pierre Guingané, un "fou" de théâtre au Burkina Faso', in *Notre Librairie*, 102 (Juillet-Août 1990), 53.

<sup>566</sup> *La poésie*, p. 110 : 'Constraint en la cause, il nous apparaîtra souvent (et c'est le cas ici) que l'œuvre produite ou transcrise par nous aura l'apparence de la forme poétique ; nous l'intitulerons si exigence s'impose "Poésie" ; mais nous tenons à ce que ce mot soit entre guillemets ; en effet ce mot peut ne pas recouvrir dans le fond produit, la réalité poétique dans l'acception occidentale notamment.'

<sup>567</sup> G. D. Zimmerman, *The Irish Storyteller* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2001), p. 258.

## Chapter One:

### Elements of ‘Spoken Literature’ Within the Print Literatures of Pacérē and Carleton

Using different devices to come to term with their task as scribes, Carleton and Pacérē produced printed literary works that lie between transcription and composition.<sup>568</sup> Transcription means the transfer ‘from oral mode to written mode’, copying, drawing, transcription from one piece of written material to another. Composition refers to the use of personal techniques in order to present many features of ‘spoken literature’. Writers of orature have their own techniques of combining transcription and composition in the process of creating artistic works of *orature*. In the same line of thought, Toni Morrison, when explaining the rootedness of her style of writing in Black art, said that one of ‘the major characteristics of Black art, wherever it is’, is ‘the ability to be both print and oral literature: to combine those two aspects’ in such a way that ‘one should be able to hear [the stories].’<sup>569</sup> There is no colour or racist connotation in the term ‘Black art’. Morrison later explained that, by ‘characteristics of Black art’, she was not suggesting that some of these devices have not been used before and elsewhere. One of the objectives of this research is to prove this by presenting Carleton as an example of a non-Black writer who combines ‘both print and oral literature,’ the term ‘oral literature’ being comprised in the broader term ‘spoken literature’. Carleton and Pacérē mixed both print and ‘spoken’ literatures in their works. Having at their ‘disposal only the letters of the alphabet and punctuation’,<sup>570</sup> in Toni Morrison’s words, they resorted, on the one hand, to graphic devices of spacing and other techniques to provide space for the audience to participate. On the other hand, they undertook working on language to make language speak without the author, in the paradigm of Barthes, so that their texts acquired a performative or verbal form in linguistic terms.<sup>571</sup> In the process, Carleton and Pacérē followed new ‘literary grammars’.

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<sup>568</sup> Brian Earls, ‘Legends of the Supernatural in Anglo-Irish Literature’, in *Béaloideas*, 60-61 (1992-3) 95, described Irish literary legend as lying ‘between transcription and composition.’

<sup>569</sup> T. Morrison, ‘Rootedness: The Ancestor as Foundation’, in M. Evans, ed., *Black Women Writers* (London: Plato Press, 1985), p. 341 and p. 342.

<sup>570</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 341.

<sup>571</sup> Cf. R. Barthes, ‘The Death of the Author’, in D. Lodge, ed., *op. cit.*, pp. 168-170.

### III.1.a) Carleton and Pacéré's 'Literary Grammars'

Language is both a means of communication and a carrier of culture. A culture is attached to the words we use. For example, 'men' in Greek and 'luna' in Latin, Cassirer explains, do not mean the same thing. He says that they 'do not express the same intention or concept'.<sup>572</sup> The word 'men' lays emphasis on the function of the moon as measuring time, while the Latin 'luna' denotes the brightness of the moon. In the same way, 'saamba' in Mooré and 'père' in French are not identical in meaning. While the French word is restricted to the 'father' the Mooré word includes all the uncles of the same generation as the father. Hence, Pacéré put a note after he translated 'Saam damba' by 'nos pères' to draw attention to the difference between the two terms.<sup>573</sup> Under these conditions, to transcribe one's culture into the language of another culture is not an easy task, as showed while dealing with transfer of language (cf. I.1.C). In a special issue of *Notre Librairie* on national literatures and in a special issue of *Eire-Ireland* on translation, African and Irish writers and critics express their uneasiness and dilemma concerning transfer of language.<sup>574</sup> Carleton and Pacéré found their own ways of translating, not only from one language to another, but also from a spoken language to a written one.

Carleton stated explicitly, in many instances in his stories, that his stories find their source in the Irish oral tradition. For example, in 'Going to Maynooth' (1831, 1844) he wrote: 'I have often *said* to my friends, and I now repeat it in *print*.' (italics mine).<sup>575</sup> Through the narrator, he also explained that 'The Battle of the Factions' (1830, 1843) is an oral narrative with 'unadulterated Ciceronian eloquence'. He also highlights the role of the printed narrative as a prompt to memory, saying: 'I am not bright, however, at oral relation.—I have accordingly composed into a [printed] narrative the following tale, which is appelleated "The Battle of the Factions".'<sup>576</sup> By these assertions, Carleton shows that his

<sup>572</sup> Cassirer, *Essay on Man* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1944), p. 134.

<sup>573</sup> Cf. *Saglego*, note 2, pp. 93-95.

<sup>574</sup> Cf. *Notre Librairie*, 84 (juillet-septembre 1986), 6-20; *Eire-Ireland*, special issue (2000), and also G. Denvir, 'Decolonizing the Mind: Language and Literature in Ireland', in *New Hibernia Review*, vol. 1, 1 (Spring 1997), 44-68). Chinua Achebe and Senghor, for example, opt for the use of European languages in an African manner, other writers and critics (cf. R. Bishop, *African Literature, African Critics* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1988, pp. 27-45) are against it because the use of European languages by African writers, or English by Irish writers, contributes to promote the culture of these languages. Thus, the Kenyan writer and critic Ngugi and the Irish poet Nuala Ní Dhomhnaill (*Selected Essays*, 2005, pp. 10-24) choose to write in their mother-tongues, Kikuyu and Irish respectively.

<sup>575</sup> *T. & S. I*, p. 132.

<sup>576</sup> *T. & S. I*, p. 116.

stories stem from Irish oral tradition. Pacéré too stated that his poetry is not poetry of the Western type but a transcription in print form of the spoken poetry of *bendre*.<sup>577</sup> For example, *Quand s'envolent les grues couronnées* finds its source in 'Bulvāogo', a song he heard at funerals,<sup>578</sup> while *La poésie des griots* and *Du lait pour une tombe* are transcriptions of materials from oral performers, singers and public entertainers such as Nongbzanga, Poussi, Yamba, Nabi-Noaga, Zambendé, Patoem, Manegdé.<sup>579</sup> All these poetical collections follow the pattern of drum poetry. Pacéré saw himself in them as the translator or 'Barthesian scriptor' rather than the author:

I have therefore transcribed this text that is not mine. It is rather the work of the griots of my village. I have been but a mere translator. On reflection, I wonder whether the Literary Award of Black Africa that I obtained later, whether this honorific distinction can even be awarded to the griots of my village as they themselves have done [nothing] but use a form of expression that is not theirs. It is a form of expression belonging to the heritage of the Moose.<sup>580</sup>

These statements from both authors show that Carleton's stories and Pacéré's poetical collections are mixtures of literatures from two media: print and 'spoken' but also that from one point of view they are not authors of these works but scribes. They gave a printed form to an already existing literature.

Critics have also identified and highlighted these particularities in the works of the two writers. Joseph Paré warned the average French reader that the idiosyncratic semantics and syntax in Pacéré's poetry might pose serious problems of understanding, as it is 'spoken literature' under the guise of ordinary French words.<sup>581</sup> Likewise, Éilís Ní Dhuibhne, in her response to Brian Earls' paper on legends of the supernatural, observed that 'the connection between the work of Carleton, at one end of the spectrum, and oral tradition is immediate and obvious: he used the conventions of oral narrative style and its contents, but already, as Brian shows, was beginning to adapt them to a literary

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<sup>577</sup> Cf. *Poésie*, p. 110.

<sup>578</sup> Cf. *Le langage*, p. 231.

<sup>579</sup> Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 151.

<sup>580</sup> U. Amoa, *Poétique de la poésie des tambours* (Paris : L'Harmattan, 2002), p. 327 : 'J'ai donc transcrit ce texte qui n'est pas de moi. C'est plutôt l'œuvre des griots de mon village. Moi je n'ai été qu'un simple traducteur. Réflexion faite, je me demande si le Prix Littéraire d'Afrique Noire que j'ai obtenu plus tard, cette distinction honorifique peut même revenir aux griots de mon village puisqu'eux-mêmes n'ont fait qu'utiliser une forme d'expression appartenant au patrimoine des mossé.'

<sup>581</sup> Cf. J. Paré, 'Le locuteur francophone "moyen" devant la poésie de Titinga Pacéré: le problème des interférences', in *Mélanges Offerts*, pp. 179-187.

“grammar”.<sup>582</sup> The literary ‘grammars’ of Carleton and Pacéré are thus a mixture of oral and print, vocabularies and rules of many languages.

Before settling—if they ever did—on their ‘literary grammars’, Carleton and Pacéré went through long journeys. In his task as a phonographer, Carleton faced some problems, especially when trying to transcribe ordinary English words pronounced in an Irish way. Part of the problem is due to the fact that there are no sounds in Gaelic like [ð] (thin, there). ‘Irish has the broad, blade stopped sounds [T] and [D] (tá, dá)’, Barbara Hayley observes, which the Irish speaker of English often substitutes for the English ones, and for [t] and [d] which do not exist in Irish either.’ [T] in Irish represents both [t] and [ð] in English. Under these conditions, the representation in print of Irish sounds substituted for English consonants can look odd, as Carleton’s ‘thruth’ for ‘truth’, ‘throth’ for ‘troth’ and ‘throat’. ‘Th’ here does not stand for the English [ð] but for [t] in Irish, a phonetic representation which may create confusion for the English speaker. Vowel sounds, Hayley continues, also ‘generally broadened via the Irish broad e [Θ] so that “decent” would be pronounced [dΘ’cnt] and could be spelt “dacent” ’.<sup>583</sup> Overall, Carleton’s phonetic spellings illustrate our definition of writing both as representation of the spoken word and as demanding a complementary act of reading (cf. I.1.A and I.1.B.ii). That Carleton painstakingly tried to represent the spoken word of his kinsfolk as accurately as possible proves that he did not believe in such a thing as ‘silent reading’ that would be devoid of intonation and sound effects. ‘Thruth’ and ‘truth’ do not have the same sound in the minds of solitary eye-readers.

The difficulty in the representation of sounds is also due to the instability of language itself. This instability partly explains Carleton’s representation of ‘you’ progressively as ‘you’, ‘ye’ ‘yous’, ‘yees’ and ‘yez’, expression of a diachronic evolution in dialects across Ireland or evolution in his own use of language. Indeed, the variation may well be explained by the natural process of human growth from ‘poor scholar’ to being the ‘national writer’, or from childhood to adulthood as shown in Tilling’s case study on age-group variation in speech.<sup>584</sup> The fact that Carleton started his literary career

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<sup>582</sup> É. Ní Dhuibhne, ‘Legends of the Supernatural in Anglo-Irish Literature: First Response’, in *Béaloïdeas*, 60-61 (1992-3), p. 149.

<sup>583</sup> B. Hayley, *Carleton’s Traits and Stories*, p. 27.

<sup>584</sup> Cf. P. M. Tilling, ‘Age-Group variation in the Speech of Kinlough, Co. Leitrim’, in M. V. Barry, ed., *Aspects of English Dialects in Ireland. Vol. 1: Papers arising from the Tape-recorded Survey of Hiberno-English Speech* (Belfast: The Institute of Irish Studies, 1981), pp. 96-105. By their choice of three age-

in Dublin, the heart of Fingal, a city within which different varieties of Irish dialects interacted, might also have resulted in the several forms of language represented in his writings. Carleton's language reflects, among others, the dialect of Fingal whose main three characteristics Alan Bliss describes as 'rare words ... postponed stress in polysyllabic words, and a high proportion of Irish words and phrases'.<sup>585</sup> Carleton's varying phonetic transcriptions of the same word represent a struggle as he researches for the rules of his 'literary grammar' to represent evolution in or varieties of dialects.

The literary 'grammars' of Carleton and Pacéré resulted from the influences of many factors: parents, schoolmasters and popular printed books. Carleton's stories are a transfer to print form of the stories he heard from his father who was at ease with English and Irish, of the songs he heard from his mother who excelled in Irish<sup>586</sup> and of the linguistic style of his schoolmasters who 'knew Irish well, and did their best—generally with success—to master English. This they did partly from their neighbours, but in a large measure from books, including dictionaries'.<sup>587</sup> Carleton too acquired much of his English from reading classics (cf. II.2.A, pp. 139 ff). All this leads to a linguistic and literary hybridity, aspects of which are present in *Traits and Stories*.

Overall, the impact of the hedge schoolmasters especially on Carleton can be seen in three ways. Firstly, to show their erudition, the schoolmasters used long or Latinate words. Like them, Carleton used long words in his stories to impress his audiences. In 'The Hedge School' (1830, 1843) for example, Mat, the Master, says to his pupils: 'I'll castigate any boy guilty of *misty manners* on my retrogadation thither;—*ergo momentote, cave ne titubes mandataque frangas.*'<sup>588</sup>

Secondly, Carleton's syntax and phonetics were influenced by the schoolmasters. Irish learners of the English language in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Diarmuid O' Muirithe says, had to 'rely on Irish teachers, whose own English differed greatly from Standard English, and was greatly influenced by Irish'. The hedge schoolmasters, he explains, would have been partly autodidacts, which 'explains an important feature of modern Irish English, a tendency to stress a different syllable from the one found in

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groups (9-12 years; 35-45 years, 65-75 years) the directors of the Tape-Recorded survey of Hiberno-English Speech showed to what extent and in what way local speech varies between generations within a network of speech communities throughout the whole of Ireland.

<sup>585</sup> A. Bliss, *Spoken English In Ireland 1600-1700* (Dublin: The Dolmen Press, 1979), p. 319.

<sup>586</sup> Cf. *T. & S. I*, p. ix.

<sup>587</sup> P. W. Joyce, *English as We Speak it in Ireland* (Dublin: Wolfhound Press, 1988), p. 78.

standard English: we say *discipline*, *lamentable*, *architecture*, for example.<sup>589</sup> Similar syntactic structures recur in *Traits and Stories*, as Carleton was so interested in language, especially in reading and spelling skills, which were given prominence in the hedge school curriculum.<sup>590</sup> He was head of his class for spelling lessons<sup>591</sup> and was able to transcribe precisely Irish dialects of English following Irish syntactic structures as in the following representation of Ned's dialect in 'Ned M'Keown' (1830, 1843):

Why, thin, is it thinkin' to venthur out sich a night as it's comin' on yer Reverence would be? and it plashin' as if it came out of methers! Sure the life would be dhrownded out of both of ye, and yees might *catch* a faver into the bargain.<sup>592</sup>

In this passage, the additional 'h' on 't's' (venthur, methers) and 'd's' (dhrownded), the substitution of 'e' and 'u' by 'i' (thin, sich), the representation of 'you' by 'ye' and 'yees', the dropping of final 'g' and the use of Irish colloquial words (*catch*) and Irish syntactic structure ('and it plashin') are samples of Carleton's ways of translating Irish ways of speaking English.

Thirdly, the hedge schoolmaster, Julie Henigan reports, was 'at the very centre of community life, frequently acting as general scribe, lawyer, religious instructor, political organiser, and repository of tradition'.<sup>593</sup> Like the schoolmaster, Carleton acted as a 'general scribe' in undertaking to transcribe the repository of a tradition that was changing. He was well equipped to be a good 'Barthesian scriptor' or scribe who is meant to 'reach that point where only language acts, "performs", and not "me" [the author]'.<sup>594</sup> The phonetic language of Carleton 'performs itself', leaving no choice to the reader who is bound to pronounce the language the way it is written.

Pacéré is also scribe, lawyer, religious instructor, political organiser, and repository of the Moaaga tradition. He was head of his class and excelled at reading aloud and recitation.<sup>595</sup> He also went to the school of his ancestors where he was initiated into the 'spoken literature' of tam-tams. The time for initiation or *bango* was a time of

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<sup>588</sup> *T.&S. I*, p. 309.

<sup>589</sup> D. Ó Muirithe, *Irish Words and Phrases* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 2002), p. 10.

<sup>590</sup> J. R. R. Adams, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

<sup>591</sup> B. Kiely, *Poor Scholar: A Study of the Works and Days of William Carleton* (Dublin: Wolfhound, [1948], 1997), p. 28.

<sup>592</sup> *T.&S. I*, p. 22.

<sup>593</sup> J. Henigan, 'For Want of Education: The Origins of the Hedge Schoolmaster Songs', in [http://www.mustard.org.uk/articles/hedg\\_sch.htm](http://www.mustard.org.uk/articles/hedg_sch.htm) (Accessed on 8 March 2006).

<sup>594</sup> R. Barthes, 'The Death of the Author', in D. Lodge, ed., *op. cit.*, p. 168.

intellectual, artistic and religious training. In initiation camps, children were taught songs, dances, fables, stories and the *zabyuya* (mottos) and legends of their villages.<sup>596</sup> This mixture of genres is learned together and is the beginning of orature.

All these factors explain that the syntax and rules of the ‘literary grammars’ used by Carleton and Pacéré to transcribe faithfully the ‘spoken’ literatures of their respective nations sometimes follow the rules of their mother tongues (Gaelic, *Bendre* language and Mooré) and sometimes those of foreign languages (English and French). In Carleton’s semantics, English, Latin and Irish are combined. Carleton the ‘logothete’ was, at his best, able to transcribe Irish speech in English words, often by word-order and implied intonation, giving English spellings to Irish words (e.g. ‘a chree’ for ‘a chrói’, ‘avick’ for ‘A mhic’, ‘a villish’ for ‘a mhilis’, ‘ahagur’ for ‘a théagair’ ‘banshee’ for ‘*bean sí*’)<sup>597</sup> and explaining them in notes for his audiences. Hayley and Ó Háinle gave examples of Irish idiomatic expressions literally translated into English: ‘I’m all *through other*’ [*trína chéile*, confused]; ‘It’s *proud* our hearts are *out of you*’ [*bródúil asat*, proud of you]; ‘set in case he was cured’ [*cuir I gcás*, suppose]; ‘It’s *beyant belief*, *clane out*’ ['clean out,' *glan amach*, utterly, completely]; ‘A bare half-acre’s but a poor *look-up*’ [*féachaint suas*, a prospect]; ‘This won’t put between us’ [*ní chuirfidh sé seo eadrainn*, this won’t come between us]. They also show that other formations that echo the Irish are used: ‘id’s yourself that wouldn’t raise your hand over us if we were in the last gasp, for all that, without getting the silver’ (*Is tusa nach lagagh an lamh orainn ... gan an tairgead a ghabart*’); ‘salvation to me’ (*sláinte liom*).<sup>598</sup> Recurrent phrases in Carleton’s literary ‘grammar’, such as ‘and I coming’, ‘and it plashing down’, ‘peace at you’, follow Irish syntax rather than English. Carleton thus applies the structure and grammar of Irish language construction to English in his ‘literary grammar’. For example, where the Gaelic language presents no equivalence for English, Carleton creates one. This is the case with the present perfect tense which is absent in Irish, except by paraphrase. Boué shows that Carleton translates it by using the present (e.g. ‘she is dead going on a year’), the past (e.g. ‘I rode eighteen miles since I dined’), the form ‘to have + object + past particle’ (e.g. ‘If

<sup>595</sup> Cf. H. Louguet Kaboré, *Maître Titinga Frédéric Pacéré, origine d'une vie* (Paris : L’Harmattan, 2001), pp. 209-213.

<sup>596</sup> Cf. A. Badini, *Naître et grandir chez les Mossé traditionnels* (Paris : L’Harmattan, 1994), p. 164.

<sup>597</sup> Cf. D. Ó Muirithe, *Irish Words and Phrases*, pp. 11-20.

<sup>598</sup> Cf. B. Hayley, *Carleton’s Traits and Stories*, p. 28; C. Ó Háinle, ‘The Gaelic Background of Carleton’s *Traits and Stories*’, in *Éire-Ireland*, vol. 18, 1 (1983), 8-9.

you don't have it finished before dusk') and frequently by 'to be + after + verbal noun'.<sup>599</sup> For example, 'surely your Reverence can't be long after bein' ordained, I'm thinking'<sup>600</sup> stands for 'surely it is not long since your Reverence is ordained, I think.' 'He's after bringing in his bed and making it' for 'He has just brought in his bed and made it.'

'To have' having no equivalent in Irish, 'I have' is translated par *tá agam*, literally, 'there is to me'.<sup>601</sup> Carleton also created, or heard it used, a syntactic form to translate the Irish verb '*bidhim*', which means to be in the sense of habitual state, by contrast to *tá*, the normal verb 'to be'. Carleton rendered '*bidhim*' into English as 'do be' or 'does be' as in the following example: 'I'll be tellin' father Finnerty that you do be spakin' up to the girls.'<sup>602</sup> In such ways, one is frequently told in Carleton's stories that the characters speak Irish or Irish English. Dialogues are indeed strewn with Irish words, phrases, sentences and syntactic structure. Carleton showed care in the transcription of spoken Irish English to keep it as intact as the Irish spoke it, because, as Michael Barry pointed out in his description of a regional standard pronunciation of English in Ulster, 'even the better educated [in Ireland] scarcely ever use anything like Received Pronunciation, or even might be termed a modified RP'.<sup>603</sup> The situation was not different in Carleton's time. Thomas Sheridan (1719-1788), well before Carleton, was amused by the Irishman's pronunciation of meat, sea, tea and please as *mate*, *say*, *tay* and *plase*, pronunciations, which, according to Diarmaid Ó Muirithe, are still heard in places in rural Ireland to this day.<sup>604</sup>

Both Carleton and Pacéré are dealing with two different linguistic traditions: Carleton with the Irish language and Irish English, and Pacéré with the Mooré language and drum language. Unlike Carleton, Pacéré shows little interest in phonetic spellings or pronunciations; however, like Carleton's in many ways, Pacéré's 'literary grammar' is characterized by 'dressing Mooré in French,' using Mooré words with notes or instant translation within the poems and by the use of the general structure of drum literature.

<sup>599</sup> Cf. A. Boué, *William Carleton, Romancier Irlandais* (Paris : Publications de la Sorbonne, 1978), pp. 240-246.

<sup>600</sup> T&S.1, 'The Lough Derg Pilgrim', p. 247.

<sup>601</sup> Cf. A. Boué, *op. cit.*, pp. 240-246.

<sup>602</sup> T.&S. 2, 'Going to Maynooth' p. 109.

<sup>603</sup> M. V. Barry, 'Towards a Description of a Regional Standard Pronunciation of English in Ulster', in M. V. Barry, ed. *Aspects of English Dialects in Ireland. Vol. 1: Papers arising from the Tape-recorded Survey of Hiberno-English Speech* (Belfast: The Institute of Irish Studies, 1981), p. 47.

<sup>604</sup> D. Ó Muirithe, *Irish Words and Phrases*, pp. 81-82; Thomas Sheridan, *Dictionary of the English Language* (1780), quoted by Ó Muirithe, *Irish Words and Phrases*, p. 82.

From drum literature to the print one, three main stages can be noticed. *Saglego* constitutes a good example to this effect: firstly, transfer from the ‘spoken literature’ of tam-tams to the Mooré language; secondly, transfer or transcription of this oral language into print; and thirdly, transfer from written Mooré into written French. *Saglego* was originally drummed, belonging thus to ‘spoken literature’. Then, it was translated into the oral Mooré language from which it was printed and later translated into French. In this last phase of translation, Pacéré, like many African writers,<sup>605</sup> started using French to ‘dress’ his mother tongue. In Pacéré’s first three collections there are examples of ‘Mooré dressed-up in French’, without a glossary. As a result, the readership finds Pacéré’s trilogy hermetic, since some of his verses are literal translations of proverbs, *zabyuya* and patronymic names. For example, ‘they will have the blessing of (...) / Of all the paralytics/ who have access to the summit of the rônier tree’<sup>606</sup> is a translation of the proverb ‘*Pôor sâ n dù koang, b'a ra yîm a tèend ye*’<sup>607</sup> which expresses the idea that the paralytic is grateful to those who helped him climb the tree. There are in Pacéré’s poetry some transpositions from Moaaga thought patterns. For example, when in his poetry, he writes ‘*La Gauche*’ (the left hand), ‘*Flamme*’ (fire), ‘*Il en reste chez le créateur*’ (there are some left in the Creator’s), ‘*La part reste chez le créateur*’ (the share remains in the Creator’s) to refer to personal names, respectively *Goabga*, his ancestor, *Bougoum*, his grand father, *Passawinde*, his father’s name at birth (Lion is his chief’s name), *Pouirkietta*, his younger brother. The following lines are also literal translations of Moaaga patronymic names, which appear in the third column:

All those	Tous ceux	
Who are <u>stallions</u>	Qui sont <u>étalons</u> ,	<u>Quedraogo</u>
<u>Occupy the bush</u>	<u>Occupent la brousse</u>	<u>Yamweogo</u>
<u>Add to greatness</u>	<u>S'ajoutent aux grandeurs</u>	<u>Paasre</u> (=Pacéré)
Or <u>hope</u>	<u>Ou espèrent</u>	
<u>For better tomorrows,</u> <sup>608</sup>	<u>En des lendemains meilleurs,</u>	<u>Tiendrebeogo</u>

<sup>605</sup> Cf. B. G. Bonou, ‘Un pionnier: Nazi Boni’, in *Notre Librairie*, 101 (avril-juin 1990), 56-57 ; B. Steichen ‘L’Ecriture narguée par la parole : entretien avec Massa Makan Diabaté’, in *Notre Librairie*, 84 (juillet-septembre 1986), 43-45.

<sup>606</sup> *Ca tire*, p. 56.

<sup>607</sup> F.X. Damiba et L. Naré, *Proverbes Mossi* (Abidjan, 1999), no. 718, p. 126.

The same process of literal translations of patronymic names is used in *Quand s'envolent les grues couronnées*:

That year then	Cette année là,	
Was born	Vint	
The <u>land of the fetish!</u>	La <u>Terre du Fétiche</u> !	<u>Titinga</u>
His mother	Sa mère	
Was an imported <u>Mask</u>	Fut un <u>Masque</u> importé	<u>Wango</u>
Of the land of the <i>Gnougnossé</i>	Du pays des <i>Gnougnossé</i> ,	
Those <i>Gnougnossé</i>	Ces <i>Gnougnossé</i>	
Whose kings had	Dont les Rois eurent	
For ancestors	Pour ancêtres	
<u>Hurricanes!</u> <sup>609</sup>	Des <u>ouragans</u> !	<u>Sawadogo</u>

The underlined words and phrases correspond to the words in the third column. One can gauge from these examples that Pacéré's poetry remains hermetic when the reader/listener—even a Moaaga reader/listener—is not used to his literary 'grammar'. The structure of Pacéré's poems is indebted to the Moaaga 'spoken literature', which is made up of a weaving of *zabyuya*, circumlocutions, proverbs and mottos. The reading of *La bendrologie ou science du langage tambouriné*, later edited as *Le langage des tam-tams et des masques en Afrique* (1992) is helpful for understanding Pacéré's thought mechanism and literary 'grammar'. Equally, some of Carleton's notes explain how to pronounce his phonetic spelling, as it could be difficult or confusing to non-Irish performers. For example, in both the 1833 edition of the second series and in the 1843 edition of 'Phil Purcel, the Pig-Driver', Carleton inserts a note at 'I've got stiff wit the sittin' so lang' to explain that 'lang' 'is pronounced as in the first syllable of "Langolee,"—not like the Scotch "lang"'.<sup>610</sup> By notes like this, Carleton shows that he wants his written words to be performed out loud in a way that respects Irish dialects so that on hearing the performance listeners may be able to distinguish Irish literature from other literatures, Scottish literature for instance. The note is helpful in clearing up the confusion of pronunciation, at least for those who know how to pronounce the first

<sup>608</sup> *Ça tire*, p. 20.

<sup>609</sup> *Quand*, pp. 12-13. The underlining is mine to show the Moaaga names from which they were translated.

syllable of ‘Langolee’, and one can suppose that Carleton has chosen this comparison because it was familiar to his addressees.

Carleton’s spellings of ‘philosophy’ (without explanatory notes) as ‘feelosophy’ in 1833, and as ‘fulosophy’ in 1844, have different connotations to non-Irish speakers. In ‘Denis O’Shaughessy Going to Maynooth’ (1831, 1833) Denis justifies his action of touching Miss Norah’s cheek in these terms:

‘No, no, Miss Norah; I was only feeling your cheek as a philosophical experiment. Philosophers often do it, in order to make out an hypothesis. They call it in Scotland *feelosophy*.’<sup>611</sup>

To the French speaker who knows English, ‘fulosophy’ evokes madness (fou = mad) and ‘feelosophy’ the sense of touch (feel-osophy) as in the illustration of this sequence in the 1844 edition. However, though in this edition Carleton, for whatever reason, removed the sentence—‘they call it in Scotland feelosophy’—and the word ‘feelosophy’ with it, the illustration was still kept with the title ‘Denis teaching Morality and practising “fulosophy”’, whereas one would have preferred the spelling ‘feelosophy’ as it expresses the illustration appropriately. In addition, the editor of the 1990 facsimile of the 1844 edition regrouped the illustrations together at the beginning of the book and preceded them by a table of the illustrative etchings in which the standard spelling of philosophy is used (‘Denis practising philosophy... p. 109’), which is misleading, as the play on words on which the story is constructed is missing. This example shows that, like Pacéré’s language, Carleton’s language can be either difficult to understand, or linguistically connotative to foreign audiences when compared to their own languages, as in the example in the play on the word ‘philosophy’.

There is a general progression in Pacéré’s and Carleton’s handling of their mother tongues. In *Ça tire sous le Sahel* and in *Quand s’envolent les grues couronnées*, Pacéré used a direct French translation of names in Mooré without any note to inform the reader. Carleton also expressed himself at times in direct English translation of Irish or in Irish without translation (e.g. ‘*Millia failte ghud, Barny!*’ ‘*Cead millia failte ghud, Barny!*’<sup>612</sup>). Both writers subsequently used words and phrases in their mother tongues with translation

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<sup>610</sup> *T.&S. 1*, p. 422, and in the 1833 edition of second series, p. 252.

<sup>611</sup> W. Carleton, *Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry*, second series, 3 vols., vol. 3 (Dublin: Wakeman, 1833), pp. 50-51, compared to the version in *T.&S. 2*, p. 109. This section is an addition, when compared to the story in *The Christian Examiner*, vol. 11 (Sept.-Dec. 1831), 75-78.

in notes. In ‘Les eaux boueuses du Kadiogo’, Pacéré used Mooré names (Tibo, Tênné, Kadiogo, etc.) and entire sentences with translation in notes. Carleton also used Irish words and phrases throughout his stories with translations in notes (e.g. *alannah*, my child). Next, they used their mother tongues followed by simultaneous translation within the text. Pacéré used Moaaga names with simultaneous translation within the poetry (examples will be given later). Carleton too resorted to simultaneous translation (e.g. *eeh arran agus bee laudher*, Barny, *ate bread and be strong*<sup>613</sup>). Finally, Pacéré decided to write his poetry wholly in Mooré language with a parallel French translation aiming at a foreign audience. There is no evidence that Carleton produced works wholly in the Irish language, even though an Irish translation of some his works exists.<sup>614</sup> The two writers differ at that point. Carleton knew Irish, his mother tongue, and used the syntax, phonology, words, and sentences of the Irish language in his narratives, though he did not write a narrative entirely in Irish, whereas Pacéré did in Mooré, his mother tongue. Despite this difference, the various common procedures Pacéré and Carleton used to translate their mother tongues in their works show how much they were attached to their native languages.

Dermot Healy, the Irish novelist, poet and playwright also displays particular interest in his mother tongue especially in his novel *A Goat’s Song*, which Mary Finn reviewed in *RTE Guide* as a ‘long novel shot through with the work of poetry—making language both be, and tell the story’.<sup>615</sup> One chapter of this novel bears the title *As Gaelige* and is immediately followed by *O’Muichin and the Cléirseach* in which chapter Healy says through O’Muichin, one of the characters, that ‘a language is for thinking in’:

The original images are sometimes in Irish [or Mooré we may add], he said, and the English [or French we may add] occurs only by way of explanation. Sometimes, with concepts, the opposite is true. The new language is merely the learning of an old and well-tried discipline, he said, for which our senses—tired of the language we usually express ourselves in—cry out. A language will return to its source, even in a

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<sup>612</sup> ‘The Midnight Mass’ *T. & S. I*, p. 330 and in the 1833 edition of the second series, p. 16.

<sup>613</sup> ‘The Midnight Mass’ *T. & S. I*, p. 331 and in the 1833 edition of the second series, p. 20, except that ‘ate bread and be strong’ was not italicised in that edition.

<sup>614</sup> Cf. S. O Ceallaig, trans. *An Fáidh*, original title: *The Black Prophet: A Tale of Irish Famine* (Dublin, 1940).

<sup>615</sup> M. Finn, *RTE Guide*, quoted in D. Healy, *A Goat’s Song* (London: Flamingo, An Imprint of HarperCollins Publishers, 1994).

stranger's head. The great joy is selecting from various languages what best expresses the content of the mind.<sup>616</sup>

Carleton and Pacéré's original thoughts are sometimes in Irish, Mooré or drum language and they use English or French to explain these ideas to a wider public.

The selection of languages to correspond to a character's attitude of mind is particularly relevant to Carleton's use of Irish. Usually Carleton's characters use the English language with Irish accents. But when they are tired of expressing themselves in English, they cry out in Irish. Hence, the majority of Irish words used, mostly terms of endearment, are usually used in moments of intense emotion.<sup>617</sup> As Benedict Kiely puts it, 'in moments of strong passion or deep sorrow the people of [Carleton's] stories turn instinctively to the language in which [Carleton's] mother preferred to sing.'<sup>618</sup> For example, in 'Tubber Derg' (1831, 1844), the peasants' speech is heartily Irish. In the most moving moments in the story, namely at Owen's cry on hearing of Alley's death, Irish language is used. Another example of use of Irish as a suitable language for strong feelings can be found in 'The Poor Scholar' (1833, 1844) when Jemmy, though speaking English as result of his education, would revert to his boyhood mother tongue in moments of great emotion:

'I will speak to her,' said Jemmy, 'in Irish, it will go directly to her heart':—*Mhair, avourneen, tha ma, lath, anish!*—Mother, my darling, I am with you at last.'

'*Shamus, aroon, vick mackree, wuil thu lhum? Wuil thu—wuil thu lhum?*'—Jemmy, my beloved, son of my heart, are you with me? Are you—are you with me?

'*Ish maheen a tha in, a vair dheelish machree.*'—It is I who am with you, beloved mother of my heart!'

She smiled again—but only for a moment. She looked at him, laid his head upon her bosom, bedewed his face with her tears, and muttered out, in a kind of sweet, musical cadence, the Irish cry of joy.<sup>619</sup>

<sup>616</sup> D. Healy, *A Goat's Song*, p. 178.

<sup>617</sup> Cf. C. Ó Háinle, 'The Gaelic Background of Carleton's *Traits and Stories*', in *Éire-Ireland*, vol. 18, 1 (1983), 7-8: Ó Háinle lists the used Irish terms with their standard spellings: 'aroon' [*a rún*, darling], 'grá machree' [*ghrá mo chroí*, love of my heart], 'avourneen' [*a mhuirnín*, beloved], 'acushla' [*a chuisle*, darling], 'abouchal' [*a bhuachaill*, boy], 'Wurrah dheelish' [*a Mhuire dhílis*, dear Mary], 'Vick na hoia' [*a Mhic na hóighe*, Son of the Virgin], 'Hanim un dioul' [*d'anam don diabhal*, may the devil take your soul], 'ma chorp an diouol' [*mo chorp don diabhal*, may the devil take my body], 'chrosh orrin' [*(an) chros orainn or cros (Chríost) orainn*, may the cross (of Christ) protect us].

<sup>618</sup> B. Kiely, *Poor Scholar: A Study of the Works and Days of William Carleton* (Dublin: Wolfhound, 1948, 1997), p. 17.

<sup>619</sup> T. & S. 2, 'The Poor Scholar', p. 348. It is the same text as in the 1833 edition of the second series, p. 297.

Here Carleton moves from Irish to gestural language corresponding to two depths of emotions, one expressible in words and accurately so only in Irish, and the other inexpressible in words, hence the description of the body language—looking, laying head upon bosom, tears—and the Irish cry of joy. He ends his description with this cry of joy in which both oral (cry) and body language (smile, attitude of joy) are simultaneously used because he cannot find any other form of language (other than mixture of oral language and gestures) that is capable of describing the scene further.

Carleton shows tremendous skills in the use of language for characterization. Barry Sloan refers to this talent when he points out Carleton's 'ear for individual uses of language, idiom or gesture which are usually taken as facets of Dickens' enormous creativity'.<sup>620</sup> Carleton is led into this use of language for characterization by the methods of allusiveness, mimesis or showing<sup>621</sup> he employs in telling his stories. Allusiveness is a technique in Carleton's development of plot and character, especially in the fireside narratives, in which the character of the tellers had to be built up through their own speeches. For example, in the 'Donagh' (1830, 1844) the story is developed largely through conversation; the characters of the Meehans are revealed almost entirely through their own words—directly overheard, without commentary from the 'scriptor'. The story is constructed with allusions and snatches of conversation. The same technique is apparent in the telling of 'The Midnight Mass' (1833, 1844). By contrast to the other stories in the second series, the narrator appears far less in evidence in 'The Midnight Mass' than in the other stories. In 'The Midnight Mass', Carleton carries to a high level the art of telling his tale through the characters' own words. The personalities of the speakers are revealed through this process, which also enables Carleton to let the story unfold bit by bit, not all at once. The plot is laid down in conversations between the servant Rody and Frank; the plan to abduct Peggy is unfolded in direct speech. We hear the outcome of the plan through a conversation between Darby More and Mike Reillaghan. Characters are identifiable through the language or dialect they use, as an actor's speech in performance can be indicative of a trait or traits through its content and form.

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<sup>620</sup> B. Sloan, *The Pioneers of Anglo-Irish Fiction 1800-1850* (Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe, 1986), p. 172.

<sup>621</sup> Cf. M. H. Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971), pp. 21-22; S. Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics* (London and New York: Methuen, 1983), p. 107.

Speech is commonly used as means of characterisation indicating the origin, nationality, gender, age group, social class, or profession of a character. Carleton uses language in this function in three different ways. Firstly, changes within the language of the same character denote change of mood and feelings. A good example can be found in ‘Denis O’Shaughnessy Going to Maynooth’, where Denis’s language is Denis.<sup>622</sup> Denis is different from the other characters in his arrogance, in his use of ‘tall’, pompous English, and in his pedantry, as one can see in this dialogue with his father:

“Throth, Dinny, I b’lieve you’re right, avick; and— —”

“Vick me no longer, father—that’s another thing I forgot. It’s full time that I should be *sirred*; and if my own relations won’t call me *Sir* instead of Dinny, it’s hardly to be expected that strangers will do it. I wish to goodness you had never stigmatised me wid so vulgar an epithet as Dinny. The proper word is Dionysius; and, in future, I’ll expect to be called Mister Dionysius.”<sup>623</sup>

The emphases are Carleton’s; they show Denis taking distance from Irish (avick) for English (Sir). He wants to get rid of his Irishness, as one gets rid of vulgar stigmas, in order to be ‘sirred’. However, as the saying goes, ‘what is bred in the bone will come out in the flesh’. Thus, Denis’s language becomes natural when he is moved: at the height of his emotion during his serious interview with Susan, Denis ‘now forgot his learning; his polysyllables were laid aside, and his pedantry utterly abandoned’.<sup>624</sup> Denis’ change of humour is noticeable through the language he uses; in this way, language is explored as gauge of character and mood.

In Pacéré’s poetry too, especially in *Quand s’envolent les grues couronnées*, the fluctuation in the poet’s moods from the joys at Manéga to the sad experiences abroad, especially in France, can be noticed. For example, when deeply moved, the poet is short of words and repeats the name ‘Timini’ to express his deep emotions. ‘Timini’ brings him back to his childhood emotive experience with this woman who reared him according to social precepts. For example, at the racist insult of the white man who refused to let him use his telephone to call the doctor for a child who is sick, the poet responded with the evocation of ‘Timini’:

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<sup>622</sup> In her study of *Traits and Stories*, B. Hayley devotes a whole chapter to the study of the language of Denis, pp. 109-122.

<sup>623</sup> *T. & S.* 2, p. 114.

Negro,	Nègre,
But really!	Mais enfin !
Look at yourself	Regardez-vous
Before walking up the steps of the palace!	Avant de gravir les marches du Palais !
It is to men,	C'est aux hommes,
That men use the wire!	Que les hommes servent le fil ! [sic]
Not to face-tattooed creatures!	Non aux créatures qui portent la balafre !
Timini,	Timini,
Timini	Timini
Was her name!	Etait son nom ! <sup>625</sup>

In these lines and in Pacéré's poetry in general, Timini appears as the very symbol for Pacéré of Moaaga traditional society in which people love and care for each other, and also the symbol of the mysterious world, the occult sciences, since she was the daughter of a '*baga*', a soothsayer. It is with her eyes that Pacéré sees society. In such cases, Pacéré uses language to express mood and emotions in a manner comparable to that of Carleton.

Secondly, both writers use language to express belonging to a social class or age group. Pacéré uses proverbs and image-based language as means of characterisation in this way. Proverbs are usually used by adult and old people in Burkina Faso. Augustin-Sondé Coulibaly affirms this when he invites the young people who find Pacéré's poetry hermetic to learn the poetical art of the ancestors and old people: 'Our ancestors, the old people, and still many of our old people today, expressed themselves essentially with proverbs, to such an extent that in some ethnic groups there are languages of initiation, called language of the gods.'<sup>626</sup> Insofar as God is separated from humans, so is his language too. To say that the language of tam-tam is divine is to say that it is different from everyday language.

The language of tam-tam, which Pacéré translates, is a symbolic and imaginative language. In addition to the problem of linguistic interferences, what contributes to make Pacéré's poetry difficult to understand is the use of what J. Cauvin, in his study of oral

<sup>624</sup> *T.&S.* 2, p. 172.

<sup>625</sup> *Quand*, p. 33.

<sup>626</sup> A.S. Coulibaly, '*Refrains sous le Sahel, Ça tire sous le Sahel* : Deux œuvres poétiques de Frédéric Titinga Pacéré', in *Mélanges offerts*, p. 307: 'Nos ancêtres les âgés, et encore aujourd'hui beaucoup de nos vieux, s'exprimaient essentiellement en proverbes à telles enseignes que dans certaines ethnies il y a des langues d'initiations, dites langues des dieux.'

poetry, called ‘imaginal thought’ by which the speaker and the receiver who grew together in the same environment communicate without using explicit language.<sup>627</sup> Proverbs, symbols, images, myths, riddles, mottos or *zabyuya* operate on this basis of ‘imaginal thought’. Some of the recurrent symbols in Pacéré’s poetry include the crowned crane, lion, baobab, toad, scorpion, basilica, locust, owl, bat, prick-beef and the raven. Pacéré himself explains some of the symbols in his notes.<sup>628</sup> The *zabyuya* themselves, expressions of imaginal thought, function as symbols and images. For example, this *zabyuure*, which is at the same time the full form of a surname, is to be understood symbolically, not literally:

If the branch wants to bud	Si la branche veut fleurir	Wil dat tobre
Let it implore its roots.	Qu’elle implore ses racines	B’a belem yêgre

The idea or image expressed in this *zabyuure* is that of dependence. There is a relation of dependency between the branch and its roots. In order to grow up, to flourish, that is, to attempt at greatness, the branch cannot ignore the support of its roots. This *zabyuure* is usually used by the person who provides for the other, for example, by the people to the leaders in government, by the employees to their employer, etc., as a reminder or warning not to forget that their fame or prosperity depend on them. It is like an invitation to a conditional dialogue or a reminder not to forget about the social contract.

The use of proverbial language usually identifies the speaker as an old person. An old person is first of all a wise person, as wisdom, not age, defines an old person; and one gets wiser through initiation and acquired knowledge. The proverbial language of Pacéré’s poetry identifies its speakers as the ‘old’ people, those who have been initiated in the art of the *bendre*.

As a faithful scribe, Pacéré also respects Moaaga use of language to express gender difference. In the poem *Saglego*, for example, the actors are known as men by their use of number ‘three’, by repeating their greetings three times.<sup>629</sup> Similarly, in *La Poésie*

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<sup>627</sup> Cf. J. Cauvin, *La parole traditionnelle* (Issy les Moulineaux : Ed. St Paul, 1980).

<sup>628</sup> Cf. *Angola*, notes 8, 9, 10 and 17, pp. 139-141.

<sup>629</sup> *Saglego*, note 36, p. 102.

*des griots*, the repetition of ‘Rakiya’ four times shows that the actor who is playing the role of the ‘Rakiya’ is a woman.<sup>630</sup>

Unlike Pacéré, Carleton does not use language to differentiate between age groups or gender. Though his fireside stories are told by old or older people, language used effectively to show membership of an age group is hardly apparent. Instead, he uses language to show belonging to a particular social class or status. In *Traits and Stories* in general, priests and schoolmasters are usually recognisable by their use of ‘tall’ English and the peasantry by the use of dialects of English. For example, Cornelius O’Flaherty, the hedge schoolmaster in ‘The Geography of an Irish Oath’, the hedge priest and Jemmy the hedge schoolmaster whose speech is dotted with Masoretic, Greek, Latin, and anecdotes about the ‘Prowost of Thrinity College’ in ‘The Poor scholar’, Denis O’Shaughnessy, as well as Dick and the ‘learned’ stranger in ‘Ned M’Keown’, all differentiate themselves from the other characters, namely the peasantry, by using long words, bog Latin, idiomatic and highly-coloured language. Language is used as a tag of identification of a particular social class or to differentiate the educated from the uneducated. Carleton uses Denis’s pedantic character as a stereotype to paint the situation of education in Ireland of his time. ‘Denny’s character,’ he writes, ‘is a very common one in the remote parts of Ireland where knowledge is novelty, and where the slightest tinge of learning is looked upon with such reverence and admiration.’<sup>631</sup> Denis’s language is different from the others, a sign that he belongs to the social class of the learned and that he can teach uneducated people of lower classes some lessons on language, for example how to pronounce ‘rejected’: ‘ “Not rejected! – not rejecet! – not rejeckset! – not raxjaxet!” they all exclaimed, attempting to pronounce the word as well as they could.’<sup>632</sup>

In ‘The Lianhan Shee’ too, Mary Sullivan’s speech differs from that of the educated (the priest and nun), as highlighted in the following dialogue:

‘About this woman, and the Lianhan Shee?’ said the priest, … ‘Pray what do you precisely understand by a Lianhan Shee?’

‘Why, Sir,’ replied Mary, ‘some sstrange bein’ from the good people, or fairies, that sticks to some persons. There’s a bargain, Sir, your Reverence, made atween

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<sup>630</sup> *Poésie*, p. 50, see also notes 108, 109 and 112.

<sup>631</sup> *T.&S.* 2, p. 104.

<sup>632</sup> *T.&S.* 2, pp. 153-154

thim; an' the devil, Sir, that is, the ould boy—the saints about us!—has a hand in it.<sup>633</sup>

The priest uses ‘standard’ English whereas Mary uses dialect. Overall, the use of language for characterization in this story makes it more effective dramatically.

Thirdly, language is used as means of identification of people in terms of their nationalities or the geographic areas they come from. Carleton skilfully uses dialects to identify people of different localities or social classes by the language they speak. Phil Purcel is a very good example in this regard. Two unusual dialects are used in ‘Phil Purcel’: the dialect of Connaught and that of Yorkshire. Phil himself is from Connaught (‘Never *trust* a Connaught-man’) and speaks in a tongue obviously different from the Northern Irish dialects with which Carleton is familiar. One of the young English ladies described Phil’s language as ‘the Negrus language (...) Irish and English mixed’.<sup>634</sup> The dealer to whom Phil first sells his pigs speaks with his servant in a Yorkshire dialect. The following two excerpts evidence Carleton’s attempt at showing his readers the varieties of dialects in Ireland and also his ability to use dialect for characterisation and for signalling differences of social status:

The Landlord was astonished at seeing the animal enter the best room in the house, and could not help expressing his surprise to old Purcel:

“Why, Purcel, is your pig in the habit of treating himself to the comfort of your best room?”

“The pig is it, the creathur? Why, your haner,” said Purcel, after a little hesitation, “it sometimes goes up of a mornin’ to waken the childhre, particularly when the buckwhist happens to be late. It doesn’t like to be waitin’; and sure none of us likes to be kept from the male’s mate, your haner, when we want it, no more than it, the crathur!”

[Landlord:] “But I wonder your wife permits so filthy an animal to have access to her rooms in this manner.”

“Filthy!” replied Mrs Purcel, who felt herself called upon to defend the character of the pig, as well as her own, “why, one would think, sir, that any crathur that’s among Christyen childhre, like one o’ themselves, couldn’t be filthy.”<sup>635</sup>

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<sup>633</sup> *T.&S.* 2, pp. 89-90 is the same as in the first edition of the second series, 1833, pp. 39-40.

<sup>634</sup> *T.&S.* 1, p. 419.

<sup>635</sup> *T.&S.* 1, p. 412. The text is identical to that of the 1833 edition of the second series, pp. 226-227.

The people from Yorkshire (the master and his servant) speak a regional dialect different from the dialect of the landlord and that of the poor Purcel and his wife quoted above:

The Yorkshireman looked with great contempt upon what he considered a miserable essay to take him in.

“What a fule this Hirishmun bea;” said he, “to think to teake me in! Had he said that them there Hirish swoine were *badly* feade; I’d ha’ thought it fairish enough on un; but to seay that they was oll weal feeade on *tip-top* feadin’! Nea, Nea! I knows zeal enough that they was noat feade on nothin’ at oll, which meakes them loak so poorish! Howsomever, I shall fatten them, I’se warrant – I’se warrant I shall!”

(...)

“Measter,” said the man who had seen them fed, “them there Hirish pigs ha’ not teasted nout for a moont yet: they feade like nout I never seed o’ my laife!!”

“Ay! Ay!” replied the master, “I’se warrant they’ll soon often—I’se warrant they shall, Hodge—they be prame feeders—I’se warrant they shall; and then, Hodge, we’ve bit the soft Hirishmun.<sup>636</sup>

Carleton’s representation of the dialect here bears marks of authenticity as it is similar to what Joseph Wright describes in *An English Dialect Grammar*: Carleton’s “seay” (for “say”), Hayley observes, could correspond with Wright’s seθ, se, sae or siθ, “teake” and “teaste” (for “take” and “taste”) with his tiθk, tiak and teθst; “feade” and “feadin’ ” (for “fed” and “feeding”) with his fiθdn.<sup>637</sup>

Transcribing the dialect of Connaught, Carleton makes full use of the reputed difficulty of ‘wh’ and ‘f’ for Connaught speakers whose first language is Irish, (e.g. ‘Fwhy it isn’t whor sale, my lady’ = why it isn’t for sale) and he makes several of Phil’s vowels very much broader than they are in any other character’s speech in *Traits and Stories*. ‘When’, ‘why’, ‘what’, ‘where’ are presented by ‘fwhin’, ‘fwhy’, ‘fwhat’ and ‘fwhere’, and Carleton contrives to make these words occur very often in Phil’s speech. He treats initial ‘f’ in three ways, converting it to ‘fw’, ‘fwh’ or ‘wh’. ‘For’, ‘fore’, ‘forced’, ‘fight’ and ‘failing’ are represented as ‘fwor’, ‘fwore’, ‘fworced’ and ‘fwailin’. There is also the distortion of ‘w’ for ‘v’ and for final ‘f’, and the representation of ‘s’ by ‘sh’. ‘Conversation is ‘conwershaton’, ‘above’, ‘abow’, and ‘over’ – ‘ower’, ‘skin’—‘shkin’,

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<sup>636</sup> *T. & S. I*, pp. 414-415.

<sup>637</sup> B. Hayley, *Carleton’s Traits and Stories*, p. 411.

‘sin’—‘shin’. The speech of the ladies and gentlemen is not distorted in spellings, the reason being that the ridicule lies in what they say, not in the way they say it.

Carleton’s representation of Connaught dialect shows similarity with and signals possible influence from the spellings used in some plays, as ‘f, ph [was] universally given for wh in the plays’ (e.g. Farquhar’s *Twin Rivals*, 1703),<sup>638</sup> observed J. J. Hogan in his study on the levelling off of ‘f’ and ‘wh’ in Irish-speaking regions. He gives examples of faad for ‘what’, ‘fat’, ‘fen’ and ‘fither’ for ‘what, when, and whither’, ‘phiot’ for ‘white’, ‘phich’ and ‘phair’ for ‘which’ and ‘where’. He also gives a general Anglo-Irish incidence for the shortened ‘o’, which Carleton uses for Phil’s speech, e.g. ‘gad’ for ‘God’, ‘shat’ for ‘shot’.<sup>639</sup>

Another similar interesting piece of characterization through speech is to be found in ‘The Poor Scholar’, especially in the language of the Presbyterian and in Yallow Sam’s trial. Carleton uses ‘A’ for ‘I’, ‘aa’ for long ‘a’, ‘u’ for ‘i’ as in ‘suts’ and ‘e’ for ‘a’ as in ‘hes’, ‘tek’ for ‘take’, ‘wur’ for ‘were’, ‘dono’ for ‘don’t know’. In a footnote Carleton draws the reader’s attention to the presence of a local dialect in the language of the Presbyterian:

“She’s one o’the baker’s dozen o’ them, plase your honour,” observed a humorous little Presbyterian, with a sarcastic face, and sharp northern accent – “for feth, Sir, for my part, A think he hes one on every hill head.”

“A say, Sam,” said the Presbyterian, “bring your son-in-laa wuth you.”

“An’ A say that too,” exclaimed the drunken ruffian—“A say that; A do. A’m married to his daughter; an’ A say stull, that d— – my blood, bit A’ll stick to my father-in-laa! That’s the point!” –and again he nodded his head, and looked round him with a drunken swagger: –“A’ll stick to my father-in-laa! A’ll do that; feth, A wull!”<sup>640</sup>

Thus, speech in ‘the poor Scholar’ indicates class, religion and, most measurably, education. Like Denis, Jemmy shifts from his educated voice to his mother tongue

<sup>638</sup> J. J. Hogan, *The English Language in Ireland* (Dublin: Education Co. of Ireland, 1927), p. 74. The reversing of certain letters such as ‘c’ and ‘s’ (e.g. Mass thou shalt sartinly hear), ‘u’ and ‘i’ (e.g. ‘sich’ for ‘such’), ‘e’ and ‘i’ (e.g. ‘min’ for ‘men’), which is common in *Traits and Stories*, is acknowledged by Joyce, *English as We Speak it in Ireland* (Dublin: Wolfhound Press, 1988), as characteristic of Irish way of speaking English: ‘Such words as *old*, *cold*, *hold* are pronounced by the Irish people *ould*, *cowld*, *hould* (or *howlt*); *gold* is sounded *goold* and *ford* *foord*.'

<sup>639</sup> Cf. *T. & S. 1*, pp. 416-425.

<sup>640</sup> *T. & S. 2*, p. 331 and p. 333.

depending on circumstances. These examples illustrate Krans's observation that 'Carleton is accurate as a phonograph in the use of dialect'.<sup>641</sup>

This effective use of linguistic transcriptions to represent idiolects and local dialects leads one to try to unriddle the apparent contradiction in Carleton's assertion when, in his preface to the first edition of *Traits and Stories* in 1830, he writes of his language, referring to himself in the third person:

In the language and expressions of the northern peasantry he has studiously avoided local idiom, and that intolerable Scoto-Hibernic jargon ... but he has preserved every thing Irish, and generalized the phraseology, so that the book, wherever it may go, will exhibit a truly Hibernian spirit.<sup>642</sup>

The examples above show that he respected local idioms, jargon and dialects. Obviously, 'every thing Irish' would not have been preserved if local idioms and dialects have been avoided, and yet Carleton says he has avoided local idiom. This is the apparent contradiction one can see in this quote. But the contradiction disappears when one tries to understand the meaning of what Carleton means by 'local idiom'.

The 'local idiom' that has been avoided is Northern Ireland dialect, the speech of Carleton's Belfast mother-in-law, a dialect which, according to Vance, was influenced by Scots.<sup>643</sup> Carleton resented this local dialect or 'Scoto-Hibernic jargon' which he knew well, because in Carleton's mind this regional dialect (mixture of Scottish and Irish) cannot represent the whole of Ireland in the same way he himself wants to be seen as the Irish national writer. One can also agree with Vance that 'the dialect speech of the stories is not quite the language Carleton grew up with',<sup>644</sup> as Carleton's move from County Tyrone, in Ulster, to Dublin, in Leinster, was accompanied by a linguistic change so that, at the beginning of his writing career, he was writing with Hibernian dialects of Leinster at hand while being geographically detached from Ulster dialects which still survived in his mind as childhood memories. With this distance in time and space and with genius, he was able to create a standard national Irish dialect to serve as background against which the other regional dialects (e.g. of Connaught, Yorkshire, Northern Ireland) of his

<sup>641</sup> Cf. B. Sloan, *The Pioneers of Anglo-Irish Fiction 1800-1850* (Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe, 1986), p. 171; H. S. Krans, *Irish Life in Irish Fiction* (New York: A.M.S. Press, 1903), p. 321.

<sup>642</sup> W. Carleton, *Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry*, first series, 2 vols., vol. 1 (Dublin: William Curry, 1830), preface.

<sup>643</sup> Cf. N. Vance, *Irish Literature: A Social History: Tradition, Identity and Difference* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd, 1990), pp. 144-145.

<sup>644</sup> Ibid., p. 145.

characters can find expression in such a way that his work exhibits ‘a truly Hibernian spirit’ to the external world by representing Ireland as nationally constituted by regional dialects. He avoided generalising a regional dialect to the status of national dialect and yet strove to preserve everything (including national dialects) Irish, to the point of reproducing how fast Irish people speak English, as in the contractions ‘bleeve’ for ‘believe’, ‘comedher’ for ‘come hither’, ‘cotillon’ for ‘cut along’. Through his creativity in special spellings, Carleton is able to represent not only idiolects, local dialects and professional or educational dialects but also the diction of Irish spoken language.

Such different ways of using language for characterization are very fit for performance in the context of reading aloud as it enables the reader to play the role of different characters, similar to Bellew’s virtuoso-acting. Thus, by following the dialects, age groups, genders, social classes and moods of characters in their transcription of ‘spoken literature’, Carleton and Pacéré reached that point where, according to Roland Barthes, ‘language acts, “performs”, and not [themselves]’ as authors. The literary ‘grammars’ of Carleton and Pacéré leave no room for the performers (reading is performance) to use their own dialects. They are bound to lend their voices to the transcribed language so that it may perform itself through them.

So far, we have seen how, through ‘literary grammars’, Carleton and Pacéré used the print medium to contribute to the survival of the ‘spoken literatures’ of their nations. Print medium usually kills the spoken word in order to preserve it, but Carleton and Pacéré were able, by using different devices, to write a print literature that potentially ‘performs’ itself. By so doing, Pacéré was responding to the will of his father who, we have already seen, asked him to use such weapons: that of the Moaaga culture (*bendre*) and that of the coloniser (print writing), for the preservation of the Moaaga civilisation and cultural patrimony (cf. II.2.A). Similarly, the Irish and English languages were the two weapons Carleton used in an attempt to preserve Irish culture. Both Carleton and Pacéré used two weapons and other typographic tools as part of the ‘literary grammars’ they deployed in order to preserve the spoken language and dialects of the ‘spoken literatures’ of their respective countries in their print literatures.

### III.1.b) Features of Typographic Orature Within *Traits and Stories* and Pacéré's Poetry

Transfer of language has pride of place in orature, which mixes 'spoken' and written modes into one literature. Transcription into print demands care because, as nineteenth-century folklorist Sir William Wilde remarked, 'nothing contributes more to uproot superstitious rites and forms than to print them'.<sup>645</sup> Printed writing, we have already pointed out, kills the spoken word in order to preserve it. It follows that to transfer 'the oral, spontaneous mode, with all its implications, to either a written or a still-oral medium,' as Robin Tolmach Lakoff explains in his study on the mingling of oral and literary strategies in writing, authors have to deal, in their own idiosyncratic ways, with 'the use of contractions, perhaps a few 'wells' here and there'.<sup>646</sup> In the cases of Carleton and Pacéré, they used particular 'literary grammars' and typographic devices such as: italics, capitalization, quotation marks, dashes, repetition, and layout on page. Such typographic elements emphasize the oral and aural qualities of their print literatures, giving more power to certain words; hence, the importance of the concepts of aurality and wordpower in this study.

Aurality, as defined in part one, means the capacity that a text has to be listened to, whereas special emphasis put on a word is referred to as wordpower. Explaining the effect of typographic devices on aurality and wordpower, Lakoff says that quotation marks enable writers to personalise their writing by bringing into it the emotional directness of oral speech. 'Italics', he says, 'because their use suggests the tonal and emotional range characteristic of oral discourse, can be used in writing to suggest something similar: the writing is made to seem fresher, more spontaneous, more emotionally open and direct.'<sup>647</sup> The aim of this section is to provide textual evidence of the presence of 'spoken literature' in the print literatures of Carleton and Pacéré through the use by the authors of phonetic transcriptions, italics, capitalization, quotation marks, dashes, repetition, and layout on page, all of which convey qualities of aurality, wordpower and performance.

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<sup>645</sup> W. R. Wilde, *Irish Popular Superstitions* [1852], quoted by C. Morash, *Writing the Irish Famine* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 161.

<sup>646</sup> R. T. Lakoff, 'Some of my favorite Writers are Literate: The Mingling of Oral and Literate strategies in Written Communication', in D. Tannen, ed., *Spoken and Written Language: Exploring Orality and Literacy*: vol. ix: *Advances in Discourse Processes* (Norwood: Ablex Publishing Corporation, 1982), p. 244.

<sup>647</sup> Ibid., p. 248.

### III. 1.b.i) Phonetic and Sound Transcription

There's the boy that can rattle off the high English, and the larned Latin, jist as if he was born wid an English dixonary in one cheek, a Latin Neksuggawn in the other, an' Doctor Gallagher's Irish Sarmons nately on the top of his tongue between the two.<sup>648</sup>

In these words, Old Denis praises the erudition of young Denis, a representative figure of Carleton, in 'Going to Maynooth' (1831, 1844). Like young Denis, Carleton's linguistic erudition partly comes from his acquaintance with classics and dictionaries; but though we know the classics he read, there is no evidence of the dictionaries he used. John M'Crea's *New Pronouncing Spelling-Book* was published in Dublin and reached its seventh edition by 1815, but there is no certainty that Carleton used it. As dictionaries do not vary much from one another, we will consider some of the eighteenth or early nineteenth-century dictionaries published in Dublin, London or elsewhere, and suppose that Carleton used these or similar books. His excelling cleverness at spelling classes suggests that he was acquainted with dictionaries and lexicons, as in the example of young Denis, and it is likely that he borrowed some of his spellings from these books or worked on them to coin new ones.

Spelling and pronouncing dictionaries provided for both orthography and pronunciation.<sup>649</sup> For example, Daniel Fenning's *Universal Spelling-Book* advised to 'let the Child be taught to pronounce *ce* the same as *se*, and *ci* the same as *si*',<sup>650</sup> making 'c' the equivalent of 's'. Since then, the reversing of certain letters such as 'c' and 's', which is common in *Traits and Stories*, became characteristic of the Irish way of speaking English as Joyce acknowledges:

'There is a curious tendency among [Irish people] to reverse the sounds of certain letters, as for instance *sh* and *ch*. 'When you're coming home to-morrow bring the

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<sup>648</sup> *T. & S.* 2, p. 99.

<sup>649</sup> Cf. J. M'Crea, *The New Pronouncing Spelling-Book, Upon the Principles Laid down by the late Ingenious Mr. Sheridan and Mr. Walker, Compiled for the Use of Schools*, 7<sup>th</sup> edition improved (Dublin: James Cumming and Co. Hibernia Press-Office, 1815), p. v. See also T. Dyche, *A Guide to the English Tongue* (London, 1707), a collection of facsimile reprints, selected and edited by R. C. Alston, n. 92 (Menston: The Scolar Press Limited, 1968); W. Johnston, *A Pronouncing and Spelling Dictionary, London: Ludgate-Street* (1764), a collection of facsimile reprints edited by R. C. Alston, no. 95 (Menston: The Scolar Press Limited, 1968). A. Bliss, *Spoken English In Ireland 1600-1700* (Dublin: The Dolmen Press, 1979), p. 313, also said that 'Stage Irish', which certainly influenced Carleton, was a 'written tradition, to which the actors gave spoken expression as best they could.'

<sup>650</sup> D. Fenning, *The Universal Spelling-Book; or, a New and easy Guide to the English Language*, 49<sup>th</sup> edition, revised, corrected and improved by the Rev. J. Malham (Brugis: Van Eeck and Fils, 1805), p. 2.

spade and *chovel*, and a pound of butter fresh from the *shurn*.' 'That *shimney* doesn't draw the smoke well.'<sup>651</sup>

Spelling books lay emphasis on the spoken word: 'word', as defined by Fenning, being 'any Thing that has an articulate Sound'.<sup>652</sup> Emphasis is not on orthography but on the sound, on the spoken word. An example is the word 'dshk' in 'The Poor Scholar'. A note at the end of 'Dshk, dshk, dshk – that's the larnin!' explains: 'this sound, which expresses wonder, is produced by striking the tip of the tongue against the palate'.<sup>653</sup> This is evidence that Carleton intended his written narratives to be 'converted' into sounds, and only into sounds that follow his phonetics or descriptions. The performer/reader is called to performance by such features of aurality that pervade the print literature.

In his phonetic transcriptions of sounds, Carleton tried to transcribe sounds in such a way as could convey to his readers what he wished them to mean. This might explain Carleton's wavering ceaselessly altering the phonetic spelling of words such as 'you' and 'your'. In 1830, he transcribed them as 'yes', 'ye', then as 'yees' in 1832, finally as 'yez' in 1842. Barbara Hayley makes the hypothesis that maybe Carleton in all these cases was looking for a way to represent the sound of a long neutral vowel [θ:], to make the word-sound [yθ:z]. Firstly, he tried 'yes', but may have found this awkward and confusing with the English affirmative 'yes'. Secondly, he tried 'yees' by adding an 'e' and kept it for two revised editions until it in turn was changed, possibly because the author, with a more acute feeling for English spelling and sound, became aware that an English reader could misinterpret 'yees' as [yi:z]. Finally, he settled for 'yez'. Hayley explains the settling for 'yez' as follows: this phonetic 'is acceptable to the English eye and ear and is a reasonable representation of a second person plural still common among ill-educated [sic] Hiberno-Irish speakers today, [yθz]'.<sup>654</sup> According to her, three norms guided Carleton's amendments of his spellings: visual, aural and audience-related factors. In other words, it can be said that Carleton revised his spelling in taking account of the norms of orature, which are visual and aural and culminate in performance for an audience.

However interesting and relevant this interpretation may be to orature, without rejecting Barbara Hayley's hypothesis, one can also suppose that, in his altering of 'yes',

<sup>651</sup> P. W. Joyce, *English as We Speak it in Ireland* (Dublin: Wolfhound Press, 1988), p. 98.

<sup>652</sup> D. Fenning, *op. cit.*, p. 5. It was common to capitalize nouns at that period.

<sup>653</sup> *T. & S. 2*, p. 265.

<sup>654</sup> Hayley, *Carleton's Traits and Stories*, p. 28.

to ‘yees’ and to ‘yez’, or in his phonetics ‘wud’, ‘wid’, ‘wit’ and ‘with’ for ‘with’; ‘wanst’, ‘oncet’ and ‘once’ for ‘once’; ‘id’ for ‘it’, ‘iv’ for ‘of’, ‘cud’ for ‘could’, ‘wud’ for ‘would’ or ‘with’, ‘diz’ for ‘does’ and ‘iz’ for ‘us’, ‘im’ for ‘him’, ‘th’ for ‘t’ and –in” for ‘-ing’, Carleton may have tried to represent diachronic evolution in dialects across Ireland or evolution in his own use of language. In moving from one place to another, he was certainly influenced by the dialects of these places, and then tried in his subsequent editions to reproduce, for his foreign audience (without being simply motivated by them), the way other Irish people pronounce ‘you’, ‘once’, ‘with’, etc. so that the audience could have a wider picture of the Irish character.

Hayley acknowledged that it is very likely that Carleton’s ‘own way of speech changed as he developed from half-educated peasant to famous literary figure, so that he would cease to accept as normal usage some of his own natural pronunciations and habits of speech; and his ear would detect as wrong, comic, or Irish, sounds which he had previously taken as standard.’<sup>655</sup> As we argued more fully in part two, chapter two, the variations have more to do with Carleton himself than with his targeted audience, since no critic made a negative observation in relation to his phonetic spellings. Other changes may be audience-related but not those concerning his phonetic variations in dialects which must be seen primarily in the large spectrum of his human growth in time and space.

Another argument in favour of my hypothesis is the fact that Carleton continually varies the dialects of the actors from one story to another. Hayley pointed out how Carleton showed concern about his actors’ speech in ‘treading a narrow line between locality and the Irish caricature which he deplored’<sup>656</sup> so that the variation in dialects is aimed at representing dialects of different Irish localities, as exemplified earlier. These are some reasons for seeing in Carleton’s change in phonetic transcriptions, from one edition to the next, an attempt to represent evolution in or varieties within dialects rather than accuracy in representing appropriately the same phonetic sound. Carleton comes to the fore in these transcriptions as a creator of language.

Like Carleton, Pacéré too transcribed sound systems but in a particular way and in a particular context. Pacéré’s transcriptions are not directly concerned with the human

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<sup>655</sup> Ibid., p. 27.

<sup>656</sup> Ibid., p. 35.

voice but primarily with the language of the *bendre* or tam-tam whereas Carleton's transcriptions are attempts at reproducing Irish dialects and Irish pronunciation of English.

The language of tam-tam is different from usual everyday language. It is 'a language of languages',<sup>657</sup> that is, a meta-language which Pacéré had to learn. An initiation is also needed to access this esoteric literature whether couched in print form or not. In his analysis of the logico-semantic structure of Pacéré's *Ça tire sous le Sahel*, Joseph Paré gives some guidance to this literature by inviting us to see in the uneven gap between stanzas a change of interlocutor or of tone, for

When drum 'A' communicates with the audience, drum 'B' dives—though still present—into a deep mediation as if to ask the ancestors (his fathers) to give him permission to transmit the knowledge to the people.<sup>658</sup>

The mechanism alluded to is better explained with a concrete example. The following poem, 'La Termitière', which was originally written for stage performance, is an illustration to this effect, as in it Pacéré uses two series of sounds to indicate the dialogue of the two drums:

Dans les CouRs du NoRd,  
Des hiboux roucouLent,  
RouLent, rouLent ;  
Des ânes rouges  
Brides abattues,  
VoLent  
Au secouRs de jouRs plus rouges !  
ILS MOURRONT TOUS !  
Les charognards,  
Les charognards,  
Les hiboux  
Les hiboux  
Les troubadouRs,  
Les troubadouRs,  
Les autouRs,

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<sup>657</sup> *Langage*, p. 17.

<sup>658</sup> U. Amoa, *Poétique de la poésie des tambours* (Paris : L'Harmattan, 2002), p. 153 : 'Lorsque le tambour 'A' communique avec l'assemblée, le tambour 'B' plonge—tout en étant présent—dans la médiation profonde comme pour demander aux ancêtres, (à ses pères) de l'autoriser à communiquer le savoir aux peuples.'

Les autoRs,  
Les vautoRs,  
Les vautoRs,  
Les basiLics.  
Tous les basiLics du NoRd,  
GrouiLLent,  
GrouiLLent,  
Chantent rouiLLe  
RouiLLe  
Pour conjurer  
Des orages hideux !  
ILS MOURRONT TOUS !  
ILS MOURRONT TOUS !  
Car,  
Sur les ruines de la Patrie  
Des termites ont construit une termitièRe.<sup>659</sup> (Emphasis mine.)

Aurality comes to the fore in poems like this one, which is a calque of drum poetry as explained in the quotation from Pacéré above. The avalanche of deep sounds underlined in the text (ou, u, o) echo the bass tones of the tam-tams (e.g. tam-tam A) and the assonances in italic 'i' the acute sound (e.g. tam-tam B). These two tones are usually lengthened, carried away into the air by the dental 'l' and 'r' highlighted in capital letters. The letters (s, d, e, ent,) that follow these two are phonetically nonexistent because not pronounced, making the words phonetically end with 'l' and 'r', which doubles the length of the vowel or diphthongs that immediately precede them. The passage from the deep sounds, prevalent at the beginning, to the sharp 'i', more recurrent at the end, produces in the middle a sudden guttural diphthong 'ouil' (combination of back vowel to front vowel). Two sharp 'i' prefigure this explosion as a warning to alleviate the shock about to happen with the mixture of these opposing sounds. The alliterations in 'r' in initial position of the sound 'ou' or 'o' echo the rolling of these sounds on the drum. The dental 'l' is used in initial position of eleven verses to express a firm attack of the hand on the drum when the drummer starts to recall all those who will die; he repeats everything twice to make sure the message is understood, because, as Pacéré says at the beginning of *La poésie des*

*griots*, ‘the drummers, even in wanting to remain themselves, must be understood and so must themselves provide help for the comprehension of their messages, above all if they intend that their drummed sounds resound on all eardrums.’<sup>660</sup> Aurality is then at the core of this poem and other literary works by Pacéré;<sup>661</sup> it has to be performed, to be acted out in order to be much better understood. In other poems, aurality is conveyed through the presentation on the page.

### III. 1.b.ii) Page Layout, Refrain and Dashes

Mooré, the mother tongue of Pacéré and basis of his poetry and of the literature of tam-tam, is a tonal language. In his manual of transcription of the Mooré language, Pierre Balima writes:

Mooré uses high and low pitches of the voice to differentiate and oppose words. In phonetics or pronunciation, one can distinguish a variety of sounds (...) the high pitch is conventionally represented by the acute accent (') which can be contrasted with the low tone represented by the grave accent (˘).<sup>662</sup>

He illustrates with examples (e.g. Kó = to till, and Kò = to crack) and notes that for pedagogical reasons these tonal accents are not orthographically represented. This means that only through reading aloud or declamation can one judge from the context the meanings of words, especially those words in which only the tone makes the difference. For example, ‘*Saglego*’, the title of one of Pacéré’s collections can mean ‘ságlego’ (the act of putting down something) or ‘sàglego’ (advice). It is this tonal structure characteristic of many West-African languages<sup>663</sup> that makes drum language possible. Lasebikan gave an

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<sup>659</sup> *Refrains*, pp. 74-75. No English translation is given because the focus is more on stylistic analysis than on content.

<sup>660</sup> *Poésie*, p. 1 : ‘Les tambours même en voulant rester eux-mêmes doivent être compris, et de ce fait doivent eux-mêmes aider à la compréhension de leurs messages surtout s’ils veulent que les sons proférés de leurs tam-tams, résonnent sur tous les tympans.’

<sup>661</sup> L. Yépri displays the aural aspects of *Quand s’envolent les grues couronnées* in *Mélanges offerts*, pp. 231-247.

<sup>662</sup> P. Balima, *Le Mooré s’écrit ou manuel de transcription de la langue Mooré* (Ouagadougou : Promo-Langues, 1997), pp. 42-43 : ‘Le Mooré utilise la hauteur de la voix pour différencier et opposer des mots. Sur le plan phonétique ou de la prononciation on peut distinguer une variété de tons (...) le ton haut représenté conventionnellement par l’accent aigu (') qu’on peut opposer au ton bas représenté par l’accent grave (˘). See also Michel Dieu, ‘A propos du système tonal du Moré’, in *Notes et Documents Voltaïques*, vol. 4, 1 (octobre-décembre 1970), 54-62.

<sup>663</sup> For examples, see C. Hagège, ‘La ponctuation dans certaines langues de l’oralité’, in *Mélanges linguistiques offerts à Emile Benveniste* (Louvain: Ed. Peeters, 1975), pp. 251-266 and F. T. Pacéré, *Causeries en langue Mooré du Burkina Faso*, audio-cassette, 2 vols.

example at the first international congress of black writers and artists (1956) when he accompanied his talk on ‘the tonal structure of Yoruba poetry’ with drumbeats. Taking a poem in Yoruba he explained how the drumming follows the tones of the words:

This is how this short poem sounds on the talking drum. Now the tone-pattern of ‘báta-báta’ sounds thus: (drum beats) and the tone-pattern of ‘bàtà-batá’ sounds thus: (drum beats). Now the two tone patterns heard in succession sounds thus: (drum beats). Hear the poem once more: Orally, then on the drum.<sup>664</sup>

The publisher of *Présence africaine*, the journal in which Lasebikan’s article was published, apologized to him and the readers for not having the technical printing resources to give due account of the part played by the instrument. What the publisher failed to express, some poets, Pacéré for instance, succeeded in conveying. Pacéré resorted to the use of left-hand and right-hand columns in page layout to signify among other things the dialogue between the drums (Cf. III.2.D) and used other typographic devices in order to represent tones and stresses on words, thus bringing out not only the tonal language at the basis of the poetry but also the different mnemonics characteristic of ‘spoken literature’. These have been delineated by Claude Hagège as: refrains, profusion of quasi-synonyms, assonances, rimes, alliterations and other phonic echoes, lexical and grammatical parallelism, oral and gestural rhythm, which contribute to transform the universe of writing into a universe of the voice.<sup>665</sup> Pacéré has recourse to these devices and graphic techniques in order to represent the rhythm of the tam-tam and its variation of tones. In his analysis of the logico-semantic structure of Pacéré’s *Ça tire sous le Sahel*, Joseph Paré further shows that the variation of unequal verses (ranging from two to eight feet in average) and stanzas (which vary from two verses a stanza to thirty-two verses a stanza) is a way of translating the cadences, the high and low tones, and the rhythm of tam-tams.<sup>666</sup> Such use of successive rhythmic repetitions, in Pacéré’s poetry, reflects the flow of tonal language.

Rhythm is one of the mnemonic techniques used to preserve texts in ‘spoken literature’. Writing about rhythm in Jula oral literature, Bakary Coulibaly says that rhythm

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<sup>664</sup> E. L. Lasebikan, ‘The Tonal Structure of Yoruba Poetry’, in *Présence Africaine*, no special 8-9-10 (juin-novembre 1956) 48.

<sup>665</sup> Cf. C. Hagège, *L’Homme de paroles* (Paris : Fayard, 1985), p. 85.

<sup>666</sup> J. Paré, ‘La structure logico-semantique du discours poétique dans *Ça tire sous le Sahel* de Pacéré’, in *Mélanges offerts*, p. 219.

is so important that one has the impression that it eclipses the content.<sup>667</sup> Rhythm and content are inseparable in Jula. So it is in the Mooré tam-tam literature on which Pacéré's poetry is structured. The succession of verses in 'Voltacidé,' for example, resembles the intonation of a voice reciting litanies rhythmically:

A corpse in Yalegdo Hospital	Un Cadavre de l'Hôpital Yalegdo
A sun,	Un soleil,
A star that turns pale at the Croix du Sud,	Une étoile qui pâlit à la Croix du Sud,
A moon	Une lune
A grilled chick at the Bar de la Jeunesse	Un poussin grillé au Bar de la Jeunesse,
A blond hair,	Un cheveu blond,
A Voltex loathed rag	Un chiffon exécré de Voltex,
A blue eyed person,	Un Z'yeux bleu,
A club that breaks all heads,	Un gourdin qui casse toutes les têtes,
A bludgeon, <sup>668</sup>	Une massue,

In this stanza, the systematic intercalation of long verses (9-12 syllables) with short verses (3-4 syllables) creates a rhythm similar to the high and low tones of the Mooré language reproduced in the drumming of tam-tams. The beginning of each line with the same word 'a' or 'one' ('un' in French) gives the impression of reciting a litany or a genealogy. Usually the stanzas end with short verses, repeated three or four times, and crowned with one longer verse in the manner of the rolling of tam-tams. Here are some examples from 'Les eaux boueuses du Kadiogo':

White	Blanche
Or	Ou
Yellow,	Jaune,
Think,	Pense,
Think,	Pense,
Think	Pense
Under the hovel!	Sous la masure !
(...)	(...)

<sup>667</sup> Cf. B. Coulibaly, 'En jula', in *Notre Librairie*, 101 (avril-juin 1990), 40.

<sup>668</sup> *Ça tire*, p. 50.

Afraid of not being able to speak,	De peur de ne pouvoir parler,
Weep	Pleure
Weep,	Pleure,
Weep	Pleure
Weep, under the hovel.	Pleure, sous la mesure
(...)	(...)
To drain the corpses	Pour drainer les corps
To	Vers,
To	Vers,
To	Vers,
THE MUDDY WATERS	LES EAUX BOUEUSES
OF KADIOGO. <sup>669</sup>	DU KADIOGO.

The triple repetition of ‘think’, ‘weep’ and ‘to’ which are preceded and followed by longer verses creates a particular rhythm. This rhythmic repetition expressive of the rolling of the tam-tam is an invitation to performance or declamation. Repetition in West-African culture finds its most characteristic shape in performance: rhythm in music, dance and language. Repetition of the same word allows ‘silent’ readers (as opposed to readers-aloud) to skip through the text; in this way, repetition is of little use for ‘silent’ eye-reading. Simultaneous repetitions of the kinds above or of the following passage taken from ‘Phelim O’Toole’s Courtship’, which shows Phelim teaching Mrs Doran, call for performance in order to resurrect either the rolling of tam-tams or the practice of teaching:

‘Take the book in your hand, shut one eye, and say the words afther me. Be the contints o’ this book.’

‘Be the contints o’ this book,’

‘I’ll be kind, an’ motherly, an’ boistherous.’

‘I’ll be kind, an’ motherly, an’ boistherous.’

‘To my my own childre,’

‘To my my own childre,’

‘An’ never bate or abuse thim,’

‘An’ never bate or abuse thim,’

‘Barrin’ whin they desarve it;’

‘Barrin’ whin they desarve it;’  
‘An’ this I swear,’  
‘An’ this I swear,’  
‘In the presence of St. Phelim.’  
‘In the presence of St. Phelim.’  
‘Amin!’  
‘Amin!’<sup>670</sup>

Pacéré further uses repetition, in the form of refrains, in place of the graphic full stop, whereas Carleton uses dashes for the same sign. The different devices translate different features of ‘spoken literature’. Carleton for example, uses dashes instead of full stops or simply empty spaces in his stories, examples of which follow:

“About the mon—about eh money—Pether—what do you intind—Oh! My blood—my blood’s a-fire!—Mother o’Heaven!—Oh! This pain—is takin’ me from all—ALL!—Rise me up!”

“Here, my darlin’—treasure o’ my heart—here—I’m puttin’ your head upon my breast—upon my breast, Ellish, ahagur. Marciful Virgin—Father dear,” said Peter, bursting into tears—<sup>671</sup>

A punctuation mark, the dash is usually used in place of a colon to indicate a grammatical anacoluthon, or in pairs to enclose a parenthetical remark. However, in the above quotation, in no case is the dash used in place of a sudden change of subject. The subject is the same throughout. The dash is used here in place of other punctuation marks (comma, exclamation mark, question mark, full stop) or blank space to express the natural flow of the voice of a suffering woman. In other instances, the dashes are used to characterise a character’s tirade or other emotions. The following dashes capture the emotive voice of Meehan’s daughter following the ordeal with the terrible relic, ‘The Donagh’, which is used to find out convicts:

“Father,” said she. “I deserve this—it’s only just: I had plotted with that devilish Martin to betray them all, except yourself, an’ to get the reward; an’ then we intended to go—an’—live at a distance—an’ in wickedness—where we—might not be known—he’s at our house—let him be—secured. Forgive me, father;—you said so

<sup>669</sup> *Poèmes*, pp. 100, 101 and 115 respectively. The same structure expressive of the rolling of the tam-tam is apparent in *Ça tire*, pp. 12, 20, 36, 46, 48; *Du lait*, pp. 12, 28, 30, 65, 66, 70, 90; *Saglego*, pp. 34, 40, 46-48, 66-68, 82-84; *Des entrailles*, pp. 18, 32, 33, 58 and in the other collections as well.

<sup>670</sup> *T.&S.* 2, ‘Phelim O’Toole’s Courtship’, p. 247.

<sup>671</sup> *T.&S.* 2, ‘The Geography of an Irish Oath’, p. 50, and in the 1833 edition of the second series, p. 410.

often that there was no thruth in religion—that I began to—think so. Oh!—God! Have mercy upon me!” And with these words she expired.<sup>672</sup>

Carleton’s stylistic extravagance bombards the eye with dashes. These dashes are a written representation of the flow of the human voice with its breaks, cadences and rhythm, the sobbing of Meehan’s daughter before she died. The use of such visual and aural devices require of the reader-aloud the skills to be able to change from one tonality of voice to another, from one character to another as at a theatrical performance. The solitary reader is also called to performance (in the special way explained before) with a sharper sight that can recognise differences between dashes and stops.

A comparison of the different editions of *Traits and Stories* reveals that Carleton tried different procedures to express in writing this flow of the human voice. Barbara Hayley mentioned some of the procedures (brackets and dashes) in her study, but only in the perspective of the reproduction of classroom commotion,<sup>673</sup> and not as an expression of the ebb and flow of the human voice as we undertake to demonstrate here. The following comparison of different editions of ‘The Hedge School’ (1830, 1843) and ‘The Donagh’ (1830, 1843) will illustrate the different devices Carleton tried in turns to represent the modulations in human voice. He used suspension points in his first edition of the story of ‘The Hedge School’ and replaced them by dashes in later editions of the same story, as displayed in the following two texts:

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<sup>672</sup> *T.&S. 1*, p. 401.

<sup>673</sup> Cf. B. Hayley, *Carleton’s Traits and Stories*, pp. 5-14. She overlooked the use of suspension points and paralleled bars, her general focus being on blocks of words (buz, ha! Which-wack) as auditory playthings.

"Come, boys, rehearse... (Buz, buz, buz...) I'll soon be after calling up the first spelling lesson—(buz, buz, buz)—then the mathematicians—book-keepers—Latinists, and Grecians, successfully. (Buz, buz, buz...) Silence, there below! your pens? Tim Casey, isn't this a purty hour o' the day for you to come in to school at; arrah, and what kept you, Tim? Walk up wid yourself here, till we have a confabulation together; you see I love to be talking to you..." "Sir, Larry Branigan; here, he's throwing spits at me out of his pen..." (Buz, buz, buz...) "By my sowl, Larry, there's a rod steeped for you."—"Fly away, Jack—fly away, Jill; come again, Jack—". . ." I had to go to Paddy Nowlan's for tobaccoy, Sir, for my father." (Weeping, with his hand knowingly across his face—one eye laughing at his comrades)... "You lie, it wasn't." "If you call me a liar again, I'll give you a dig in the mug." "It's not in your jacket." "Isn't it?" "Behave yourself; ha! there's the master looking at you—you'll get it now." "... None at all, Tim?—and she's not after sinding an excuse wid you?—what's that under your arm?" "My Gough, Sir." (Buz, buz, buz) "Silence, boys. And you blackguard Lilliputian, you, what kept you away till this?"—"One bird pickin'—two men thrashin'—wan bird pickin'—two men thrashin'—one bled pickin'—". . ."Sir, they're stickin' pins in me, here." "Who is? Beirney?" "I don't know, Sir, they're all at it." "Boys, I'll go down to you..." "I can't carry him, Sir, he'd be too

work—with all the machinery of the system in full operation.

"Come, boys, rehearse—(buz, buz, buz)—I'll soon be after calling up the first spelling lesson—(buz, buz, buz)—then the mathematicians—book-keepers—Latinists, and Grecians, successfully. (Buz, buz, buz...) Silence there below!—your pens! Tim Casey, isn't this a purty hour o' the day for you to come into school at; arrah, and what kept you, Tim? Walk up wid yourself here, till we have a confabulation together; you see I love to be talking to you..."

"Sir, Larry Branigan, here; he's throwing spits at me out of his pen." (Buz, buz, buz.)

"By my sowl, Larry, there's a rod in steep for you."

"Fly away, Jack—fly away, Jill; come again, Jack—".

"I had to go to Paddy Nowlan's for tobaccoy, Sir, for my father." (Weeping, with his hand knowingly across his face—one eye laughing at his comrades)—

"You lie, it wasn't."

"If you call me a liar agin, I'll give you a dig in the mug."

"It's not in your jacket."

"Isn't it?"

"Behave yourself; ha! there's the master looking at you—you'll get it now."

"None at all, Tim? And she's not after sinding an excuse wid you? What's that under your arm?"

"My Gough, Sir." (Buz, buz, buz.)

"Silence, boys. And, you blackguard Lilliputian, you, what kept you away till this?"

"One bird pickin', two men thrashin'; one bird pickin', two men thrashin'; one bird pickin'—".

"Sir, they're stickin' pins in me, here."

"Who is? Beirney?"

"I don't know, Sir, they're all at it."

'The Hedge School', in *Traits and Stories, First Series*, 1830.

'The Hedge School', in *T.&S. I.*, p. 302; and William Tegg's edition, 1869, p. 302.

Two main observations can be made in comparing these two texts. Firstly, suspension points, which are used in conjunction with dashes in the first edition of 'The Hedge School' in a way that is slightly reminiscent of the Morse writing system that combines dashes and dots, are replaced by dashes only in later editions. Suspension points and dashes can be used to indicate the omission of a word or words and are sometimes used in this way by Carleton (e.g. the town of M—, Rev. M'—, Rehearse...). However, sometimes Carleton used them to indicate more than mere omission, and this is the case in the two passages above where the abundant use of these devices expresses Carleton's acknowledgement of the impossibility of representing some effects of spoken theatrical features in writing and his sense of obligation to signal both the omission of aural effects (with ... or —) and their virtual presence, by putting them in parentheses. The noise omitted but potentially present is the 'Buz, buz, buz', which is surrounded by suspension points in the first edition and by dashes in the later editions. It is to be observed that though dashes and suspension points may both represent omission, they differ in their effects when they are abundantly used as in the cases above. In these cases, dashes

represent the effects of straggling or trailing of the human voice, whereas suspension points convey the sense of jerky or staccato sung or spoken voice.

Secondly, the replacement of the suspension points by dashes is accompanied by a difference in page layout, as the 1830 edition has one long and massive paragraph whereas the later editions divided the dialogues into paragraphs, giving the visual impression of cadence and rhythm that compensate for the replacement of the suspension points by dashes. These changes are hardly the work of the publishers, as both 1830 and 1843 editions were published in Dublin by the same publisher, William Curry, to whom William Orr was joined for the 1843 edition. Even if the changes were suggested by the publishers, judging from the demanding relationship Carleton had with his publishers (cf. III.2.c), one can say that it is likely that Carleton might have accepted the proposed changes and so made them his own. Carleton can thus be held responsible for the different stylistic changes in his stories, especially the typographical modifications, which can be seen as authorial design and not as mere consequence of printing design.

Whereas the above example concerns two book edition versions of the same story, the following example relates to two versions of ‘The Donagh’: one published in a prestigious magazine and the other in book edition. ‘The Donagh’ was first published (unsigned) in the *National Magazine*, the new form and name given to *The Dublin Literary Gazette* in July 1830. The foreword to the first issue of the *National Magazine* reveals the high status of this magazine and the expected talents from its contributors:

The proprietors of the Dublin Literary Gazette, in forwarding their publication in the new form of a National Magazine, trust that in its enlarged size, more varied matter and cheaper price, it will be found to merit a continuance of the favour and patronage it has already so flatteringly received. As the same Editor continues to conduct the work, and as a large accession of well established writers of acknowledged talent has been enlisted in the cause of the National Magazine, the proprietors trust that while their list of new subscribers is already rapidly extending, none of their former patrons will feel inclined to discontinue their support.<sup>674</sup>

Behind the flattering language that is used in this foreword for the sake of advertisement lies the fact that the *National Magazine*, which aimed at reaching a wider audience with its cheaper price, was intended to be a prestigious literary magazine in which only talented and well-established writers were welcome to contribute. Carleton’s place as a contributor

to this journal follows from the recognition of his talents as writer, which he showed in the publication the same year of the first series of *Traits and Stories*. ‘The Donagh’ was first published in the *National Magazine* in December 1830.<sup>675</sup> As this prestigious periodical was aimed at literary people, one would expect that Carleton’s publishing in it would have meant changing his style to correspond to the ethos of the magazine and to its targeted audience. But a comparison of his contribution to this periodical with his later publications shows that he did not polish his style, especially his typographic style, when he was writing for this periodical. Later he would revise his contribution to this magazine in order to include it in the first edition of the second series of *Traits and Stories* (1833), as one can see in the following two texts.

The crowd had closed about Anne; but with the strength of a giant he flung them aside, caught the girl in his arms, and pressed her bleeding to his bosom. He gasped for breath—“Anne,” said he—“Anne, I am without hope—an’ there’s none to forgive me except you—none at all: from God to the poorest of his creatures I am hated and cursed by all, except yourself—don’t curse me, Anne—don’t curse me!—How cold the day’s got of a sudden! Hold up, a overseen mardres! I was a bad man—but to you, Anne, I was *not* as I was to every one! Darlin’, I’m far cosider now! Tell me that you forgive me, *an’ darlin’*—*an’ sin’ an’ thee an’ darlin’*, say it. Oh, say the forgivin’ word to your father before you die!”

“Father,” said she, “I deserve this—it’s only just—I had plotted with that devilish Russell to betray them all, except yourself, and to get the reward—and then we intended to go—and—live at a distance—where we might not be known—he’s at our house—let him—he—seured. Forgive me, father, you said so often that there was no truth—in religion—that I began to—think so—oh—God—have mercy upon me!” And with these words she expired.

‘The Donagh’, in *National Magazine*, vol.1, 6 (1830), 654.

inches into the wet clay.

The crowd had closed upon Anne; but with the strength of a giant he flung them aside, caught the girl in his arms, and pressed her bleeding to his bosom. He gasped for breath: “Anne,” said he, “Anne, I am without hope, an’ there’s none to forgive me except you;—none at all: from God, to the poorest of his creatures, I am hated an’ cursed by all, except you! Don’t curse me, Anne; don’t curse me! Oh, is it enough, darlin’, that my soul is now stained with your blood, along with my other crimes? In hell, on earth, an’ in heaven, there’s none to forgive your father but yourself!—*sin’ an’ thee!* Oh, what’s comin’ over me! I’m dizzy an’ shiverin’! How could the day’s got of a sudden! Hold up, *an’ sin’ an’ thee!* I was a bad man; but to you, Anne, I was not as I was to every one! Darlin’, oh, look at me with forgiveness in your eye, or any way don’t curse me! Oh! I’m far cosider now! Tell me that you forgive me, *an’ sin’ an’ thee!*—*Mamlin asther an’ darlin’,* say it. I *DARLN’T LOOK TO GOD!* but oh! do you say the forgivin’ word to your father before you die!”

“Father,” said she, “I deserve this—it’s only just: I had plotted with that devilish Martin to betray them all, except yourself, an’ to get the reward; an’ then we intended to go—an’—live at a distance—an’ in wickedness—where we—might not be known—he’s at our house—let him be—seured. Forgive me, father:—you said so often that there was no truth in religion—that I began to—think so. Oh!—God! have mercy upon me!” And with these words she expired.

‘The Donagh’, in *T&S. 1*, 1843, pp. 400-1.

The version of ‘The Donagh’ in the 1833 edition of the second series is almost the same as the later 1843 edition with the exception that the 1833 edition contains one more dash than that of the 1843 edition. A comparison of the two versions above shows that the periodical version of ‘The Donagh’ contains more dashes than that of the book editions. ‘He gasped for breath—“Anne,” said he—“Anne, I am without hope—”’ of the *National Magazine* is changed in the 1833 edition of the second series and in the 1843 complete edition of the first volume of *Traits and Stories* into ‘He gasped for breath: “Anne,” said he, “Anne, I am without hope.”’ The three dashes are thus successively replaced by a

<sup>674</sup> *National Magazine*, vol. 1, 1 (July 1830), foreword.

<sup>675</sup> ‘The Donagh; or, the Horse-Stealers’, in *The National Magazine*, vol. 1, 6 (Dec. 1830), 637-654.

colon and two commas which represent another form of expressing the gasping for breath different from the use of dashes. The colon signals a pause, and the commas semi-pauses, so that the succession of pause and semi-pauses intercalated with words creates a cadence of sobbing or a breathless person trying to speak; the dashes that were used in *National Magazine* express a similar rhythm but with a straggling effect. In these two versions, Carleton can be seen as using various devices to transcribe the spoken word with its effects.

In the two short columns above, ten dashes of the periodical version of 'The Donagh' are suppressed or replaced by other marks of punctuation (semi-colons and commas) so that one can say, from one point of view, that Carleton is improving and refining the story he published in the literary magazine. 'I am hated an' cursed by all, except yourself' is grammatically corrected as 'I am hated an' cursed by all, except you.' Elsewhere in the same story, Carleton changed some "an'" to "and", "didn't" to "did not".<sup>676</sup> These minor changes in grammar and syntax are surprising when one takes into account the prestigious nature of the literary magazine in which the story was first published. These facts lead one to the following conclusion: Carleton's typographic style is not uni-directional; he changes his style in each edition of his story as speakers change the tonality of their voices, sometimes improving their languages grammatically and adding new information.

Parts of the added sentences in the right-hand column above are highlighted in capital letters, a typographic device Carleton did not use in the former version of the story, and the use of this device gives visual effects to the dramatic moments in the story. The ten deleted dashes are replaced by four new dashes, two appearing in the added sections and two in areas that were not 'dashed' in the version that was published in the *National Magazine*. So, overall, the story in all editions abounds with dashes and other punctuation marks that express the gasping for breath and the sorrowful voice of the speaker. Carleton's typography follows the fluctuation of the voice of the seanachie from one session to another, transcribing faithfully the rhythmic flow of the storyteller's voice.

Unlike Carleton, Pacéré does not use suspension points or dashes but spacing (as shown in the diagram below) to create cadence and rhythmical effects. He also uses

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<sup>676</sup> *T.&S. I*, p. 396 and p. 650 of the edition in *The National Magazine*; new italics in *T.&S. I*, p. 390 and p. 645 in *The National Magazine*, vol. 1, 6 (Dec. 1830).

refrains in place of full stops. In the literature of the *Bendre*, refrains function as full stops or signs of a new paragraph in print literature. Taking ‘Les eaux boueuses du Kadiogo’ for a case study, we can establish a chart for the refrains featuring in this poem. This poem is a weaving of two main refrains (MR) with internal refrains (IR) and variables or empty space, the difference between the main refrains and the internal refrains being that of occurrence, as the main refrains run through the poem from beginning to end, whereas the other refrains occur once off within the poem as the page numbers in the following diagram reveal. The refrains are abbreviated by their first words but are fully restored in the second diagram.

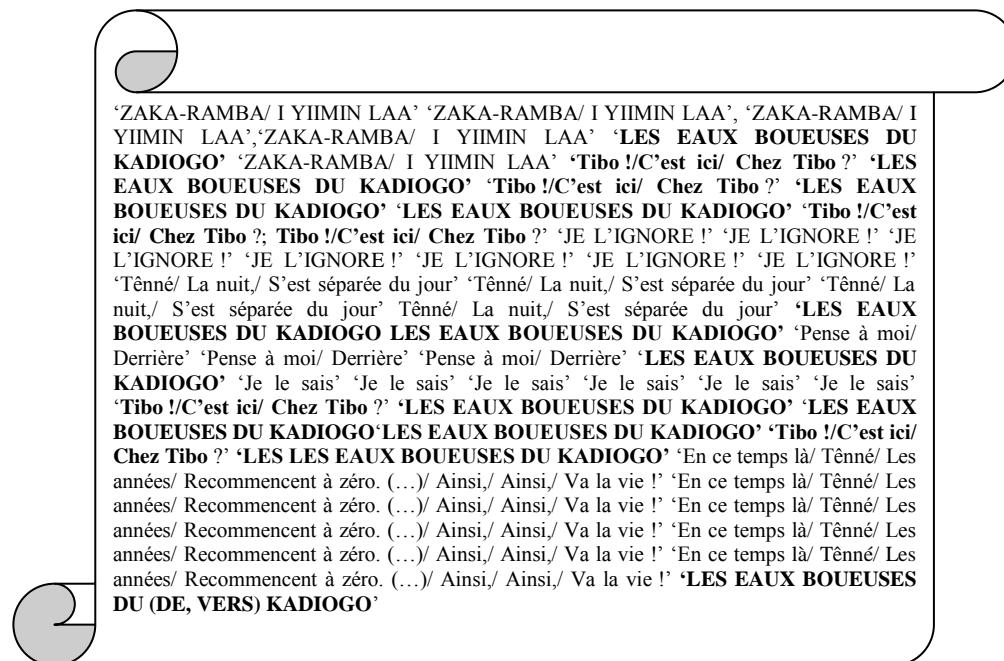
Page numbers	IR	MR
99 (twice)	Zaka	
100 (twice)	Zaka	
101 (twice)		LES EAUX <sup>677</sup>
101 (once)	Zaka	
101		Tibo
102 (once)		LES EAUX
103 (once)		Tibo
108 (once)		LES EAUX
109 (once)		LES EAUX
109 (once)		Tibo
111 (three times)	Je	
112 (three times)	Je	
113 (once)	Je	
114 (twice)	Tenné	
116 (twice)	Tenné	
116 (once)		LES EAUX

<sup>677</sup> The wording of this refrain reveals another difficulty the author encountered in translation from Mooré into French. There are slight variations in it. ‘Eaux boueuses du Kadiogo’ has the following variants which I underlined: ‘eaux boeuses de Kadiogo’, ‘eaux boueuses vers Kadiogo’, ‘eaux noires du Kadiogo’, ‘marasmes noirs du Kadiogo’. What makes them identical is the reference to water and to Kadiogo, the very terms used in Mooré, ‘Kadiog koom’ (Kadiog water). To translate this phrase which has no preposition, the poet did not know which of the French prepositions ‘du (=de le)’, ‘de’ and ‘vers’ was the best. Since each of the preposition carries some of the meaning of what is said in Mooré, the poet resolved to use them in turn so that at the end the French reader gets the whole picture by weaving together the different meanings expressed here and there.

117 (once)		LES EAUX
118 (three times)	Pense	
119 (once)		LES EAUX
120 (once)	Je le sais	
121(five times)	Je le sais	
122 (once)		Tibo
123-4 (twice)		LES EAUX
128 (once)		LES EAUX
128 (once)		Tibo
133 (once)		LES EAUX
134 (once)	En ce temps là	
135 (once)	En ce temps là	
136 (twice)	En ce temps là	
137 (once)	En ce temps là	
138 (once)		LES EAUX

(The chart is mine)

The compressing of all these refrains together, in the way they appear at different pages within the text of the poem, constitutes the frame of the poem, a ‘woven text’ in pleonastic terms, with the refrains as ‘letters’ or ‘tried words’, as my following design illustrates:



The internal refrains are either grouped within a page or run through a few consecutive pages while the main refrains (in bold characters above) cover the poetry from beginning to end, giving it a cyclical shape. The internal refrains correspond to a change in rhythm signalling a new idea or new paragraph within the general theme carried throughout by the main refrain. The two main refrains do not play the same role. The refrain 'Tibo' plays a theatrical function, signaling the actor on stage or an address to him from another actor in a dialogue situation. The other refrain 'Les eaux...' constitutes the main refrain of the work as poetry. It appears as the synopsis of the poem. The central refrain constitutes the semantic core of each poem, which itself can be seen as the expansion of the mass of information contained in the central refrain. In other words, the main refrain is the poem condensed and the poem is the main refrain extended or the expansion of the main refrain.

These case-studies have shown us Pacéré's and Carleton's concerns for the spoken language and their attempts to represent its modulation and various effects on the printed page. Though Pacéré and Carleton resorted to different procedures—layout on page, refrain, suspension points and dashes—to transcribe spoken language on the printed page, there are instances where both used the same devices, namely quotation marks, italics and capital letters, to represent aurality and wordpower in their print literatures.

### III. 1.b.iii) Quotation Marks, Italics, Capitalization

Quotation marks are used to draw our attention to the transfer from spoken language into written language. Carleton used them to introduce proverbial sayings<sup>678</sup> (e.g. "he's as crooked as the Mullin-burn,") or to signal gossip and dialogue. To report a dialogue in direct style within an oral narration, double inverted commas followed by single inverted commas (e.g. " ' ' ") are generally used in the transfer of language and dialect. Quotation marks signal direct speech and their absence may indicate the presence of indirect speech. By using alternatively the techniques of *mimesis* or showing and *diegesis* or telling, Carleton alternates direct and indirect speech. Narratologist Rimmon-Kenan says that this alternation often results in writers' use of 'free indirect discourse'<sup>679</sup>

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<sup>678</sup> *T.&S. 1*, pp. 1, 2, 6 ff.

<sup>679</sup> S. Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics* (London and New York: Methuen, 1983), p. 110. She gives the following example for free indirect discourse: 'Why the hell shouldn't they know, weren't they off'n her and out to see the goddam town and he'd better come along'.

to enhance the bivocality or polyvocality of their texts by identifying speakers and assigning given speech-features to them. The reason for Carleton's not using 'free indirect discourse' can be found in this explanation by Rimmon-Kenan: 'because of the difficulty a speaker would experience in trying to perform orally the co-presence of voices characteristic of Free Indirect Discourse,' she writes, 'the phenomenon seems more congenial to the silent register of writing.'<sup>680</sup> It is written but cannot be performed. Carleton refuses to assign his literature to silent solo reading by the use of free indirect discourse. Direct discourse is what he uses abundantly, giving to his text the appearance of a succession of quotes.

'To quote is to invite the reader to an active participation in the act of writing/reading using a shared knowledge', Nora Kazi-Tani observed, in her analysis of quotations in texts.<sup>681</sup> Carleton and Pacéré used their quotations to this end, that is, to share direct knowledge with the audience. For example, the tale, 'The Three Tasks', is told all through with quotation marks at each paragraph. Only the introductory paragraph, which remained unchanged in all editions, and some parts of the conclusive paragraphs that were lengthened in the 'New Edition' (which first appeared in parts of one shilling each before being published in book edition 1843-1844) are not preceded by quotation marks. Hayley refers to this edition as 'the most widely known collection of *Traits and Stories*, and the last for which Carleton himself seems to have prepared the text' with numerous revisions of style and content.<sup>682</sup> By selling this prestigious edition at one shilling each, Carleton was trying to reach the wider audience of the poor and not only upper-class readerships. His editing itself shows that he was not aiming at the bourgeois class for which he is usually considered to have revised his stories. For example, his lengthening the 'Three Tasks' with a two page-long expansion is certainly not directly commanded by an attempt at pleasing an upper-class readership. The possible justification one can give for this expansion is to relate it to that of a storyteller retelling a story and adding details. The expanded section concerns the debate or commentary that followed the tale, everybody in the fireside group responding to the moral of the tale as in a (West-

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<sup>680</sup> Ibid., p. 115.

<sup>681</sup> N. A. Kazi-Tani, 'Nedjima: citations aux carrefours du texte', in B. Hue, dir., *Métissage du texte* (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes et CELICIF, 1993), p. 171 : 'Citer, c'est inviter le lecteur à une participation active à l'acte d'écriture/lecture à partir d'un savoir partagé.'

<sup>682</sup> B. Hayley, *A Bibliography of the Writings of William Carleton* (Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe Ltd, 1985), p. 40.

African) palaver. Carleton lengthened this section with further discussion among the audience who had been listening to the tale. His dialect and spellings in this added section did not change. The 1830 edition conclusion is written in Standard English as is the introduction of the same edition, as well as the first, the last and commentary paragraphs in the expanded section in the ‘New Edition’. By not using quotation marks in these descriptive sections, Carleton shows that he operates on the level of ordinary reality; by using the quotation marks he invites us to travel to the unknown world of fiction, and again by dropping the quotation marks he draws us from fiction to the real world of human interaction. Seen in this perspective, his quotes are an invitation to active participation in and sharing of the story.

In his poetry, Pacéré too uses—though very rarely—quotation marks to signal a borrowing from the spoken language. In ‘Les eaux boueuses du Kadiogo,’ for example, we have:

<p>The one      Whose bowels      Looked like      Nature,      Was shouting      At an absent rag:  <i>“Hold</i>  <i>Hold well onto</i>  <i>Your ugly</i>  <i>Small child”.</i>      The old woman      Dumbfounded      Before the vomit of insults      Was trembling      Lips and hands.  <i>“Hold him”</i>      Dribbled      The black man      In white;  <i>“Hold him</i>  <i>Or bring him</i>  <i>Home</i></p>	<p><i>Celui</i>  <i>Dont les entrailles</i>  <i>Ressemblaient</i>  <i>A la nature,</i>  <i>Criaît</i>  <i>Sur une guenille absente :</i>  <i>« Attrape</i>  <i>Attrape bien</i>  <i>Ton vilain</i>  <i>Petit enfant ».</i>  <i>La vieille</i>  <i>Toute interdite</i>  <i>Devant ce qui vomit des injures,</i>  <i>Tremblait,</i>  <i>Des lèvres et des mains.</i>  <i>« Attrape le »</i>  <i>Bavait</i>  <i>L’homme noir</i>  <i>En blanc ;</i>  <i>« Attrape le</i>  <i>Ou ramène le</i></p>
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*So that he may die  
In your arms".*  
 The old woman  
 Was holding  
 With all her strength.  
 The small child was wailing  
 Like an orphan  
 Knows how to wail  
 For death.  
 "Hold him"  
 Still screamed  
 The one who,  
 We are told,  
 Cures men;  
 It is then  
 That,  
 Obviously bruised,  
 Truly trying  
 To hide the last tears  
 Of her life  
 That were falling from her eyes,  
 Stuttering,  
 The Throat tight  
 By the Calvary,  
 The woman on whom  
 Dribbled the insults  
 Murmured these few words:  
 "Mercy  
 Have mercy!  
 Mercy,  
 We come from far away!  
 I do not know this child<sup>683</sup>

*Chez toi  
Pour qu'il meure  
Dans tes bras".*  
 La vieille  
 Tenait  
 De toutes ses forces.  
 Le petit hurlait  
 Comme un orphelin  
 Sait hurler  
 Pour solliciter la mort.  
 « Attrape le »  
 Vociférait toujours  
 Celui qui,  
 Dit-on,  
 Soigne les hommes ;  
 C'est alors  
 Que,  
 Visiblement meurtrie,  
 Tentant vainement  
 De cacher les dernières larmes  
 De sa vie  
 Qui perlaient dans ses yeux,  
 Bégayant,  
 La gorge serrée,  
 Par le calvaire,  
 Celle sur qui  
 Bavaient les opprobes.  
 Murmura ces quelques mots :  
 « Pitié  
 Ayez pitié !  
 Pitié,  
 Nous venons de loin !  
 J'ignore qui est cet enfant

The quotation marks initiate a particular style at this section of the poem. The reader, who so far learned about the ordeal of life in the city of Wadgo through the words of the poet, is now brought face to face with an incident and is invited to take part by identifying himself with one of the two protagonists: the wretched woman or the cruel oppressor. The dialogue, which was implicit between Tibo and Tênné, is now made explicit with the use of inverted commas. The use of this device cautions us that we are not dealing with mere poetry, but with a mixture of genres, as the use of this technique denotes the presence of actors in performance.

In addition, Carleton and Pacéré used italics to express the aural qualities of 'spoken literature' in print form. In early nineteenth-century Ireland italic writing was

<sup>683</sup> *Poèmes*, pp. 124-125. For other examples, see *Du lait*, p. 23 ; *Des entrailles*, pp.18-20, 22, 24, 27.

taught at school. In John M'Crea's *New Pronouncing Spelling-Book, Upon the Principles Laid down by the late Ingenious Mr. Sheridan and Mr. Walker, Compiled for the Use of Schools*, the alphabet is given under five columns as follows:<sup>684</sup>

Roman	Italick (sic)	Modern Sounds	Ancient Sounds	Old English
A      a	A      a	a as in hate	a as in hat	A hall a

A letter of A. O'Beirne to Carleton in August 15, 1832 bases an argument for the dating of a manuscript, the inscription on the *donagh*, on typography: O'Beirne said that he could not persuade himself that 'a MS. written in a clear, uniform, *small* character of the Roman form could have been written in remote times, when there is reason to think that MSS. were written in uncial characters only, without stops, and with few divisions into words, sentences, or paragraphs. (...) Small letters, and the distinctions above mentioned, were the inventions of later times.'<sup>685</sup> We learn from this letter and from the spelling books used in early nineteenth-century Ireland that Carleton and his contemporaries were fully aware of the meaning and importance of the use of italics and other typographic elements to the extent that one can say that typography was not left to the decision of printers, but was part and parcel of an author's writing style.

Italics have decorative and emphatic functions.<sup>686</sup> Change between roman and italic letters gives a mosaic visual shape to a printed text, as in the following texts of Carleton:

<sup>684</sup> John M'Crea, *The New Pronouncing Spelling-Book*, 7<sup>th</sup> edition improved (Dublin: James Cumming and Co. Hibernia Press-Office, 1815), p. v.

<sup>685</sup> 'The Donagh; or, the Horse-Stealers', in *T.&S. I*, p. 403.

<sup>686</sup> Cf. H. W. Fowler, *A Dictionary of Modern English Usage* (Ware: Wordsworth edition Ltd., 1994), pp. 304-305.

with respect to these outrages, I never knew one to occur, the cause of which was not personal and local, and totally unconnected with any thing but the interests or passions of those concerned in them; nor did I ever know a man who would join in a burning or murder, were it not for two motives; one—that he thinks it may be done with secrecy, and the other—that he thinks his accountability for the crime before God, is removed, when he confesses it to the priest. Here are the two principles, joined to a hereditary religious hatred which no circumstance can modify, from which the disturbances of Ireland proceed. The only reading in which I have much indulged has been that of history and travels, and now that I am able to trace the causes of things with more clearness, I may adduce as a proof of what I advance, not only my own knowledge and experience, but Italy, Portugal, Spain and other Catholic countries, where stabbing, poisoning, and midnight assassinations, are frequent, because every man becomes his own avenger on the same principle as in Ireland. This, indeed, often puzzled me before, for I thought that those countries that were *purely Catholic* should be full of *holiness, charity, and peace*, but I now see the principle fully developed which makes them *scones of lust and murder*. The nature of the murders and burnings in Ireland is just the same; for they are the result of a cool, deliberate calculation, which is foreign to most hearts, and it is certainly true, that there is a confidence derived from the existence of some secret cause, stronger than any impulse merely human. *That cause is the ordinance of confession, which gives, as is conceived, a full power of remitting the guilt of sin to the priest.* Would to God my dear B.— that this was more generally known! and that Roman Catholic Priests would more honestly perform their duty to the government under which they live!" I have here given, as faithfully as possible, the substance of what he said; though I have amended in some degree the expression: yet less than any man who did not himself know Lacy would imagine. He told me that he would have pleaded guilty at his trial, were it not for two reasons—the state of his unprotected children, and his unfitness to die.

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'The Broken Oath', in *The Christian Examiner*,  
vol. 7, 37 (July 1828), 36.

"On Monday, in Jack Gallagher's, of Carraghnamodagh. Are you there, Jack?"

"To the fore, yer Reverence."

"Why, then, Jack, there's something ominous—something auspicious—to happen, or we wouldn't have you here; for it's very seldom that you make part or parcel of this *present* congregation; seldom are you here, Jack, it must be confessed; however, you know the old classical proverb, or if you don't, I do, which will just answer as well—*Nisi super videt Apollo*—it's not every day *Mamie* kills a bullock; so, as you are here, be prepared for us on Monday."

"Never fear, yer Reverence, never fear; I think you ought to know that the grain' at Carraghnamodagh's not bad."

"To do you justice, Jack, the mutton was always good with you, only if you would get it better killed it would be an improvement. Get Tom McCauley to kill it, an then it'll have the right smack."

"Very well, yer Reverence, I'll do it."

"On Tuesday, in Peter Murphy's of the Crooked Commons. Are you there, Peter?"

"Here, yer Reverence."

"Indeed, Peter, I might know you are here; and I wish that a great many of my flock would take example by you: if they did, I wouldn't be so far behind in getting in my *dues*. Well, Peter, I suppose you know that this is Michaelmas\*?"

"So fat, yer Reverence, that they're not able to wag; but, any way, Katty has them marked for you—two fine young crathurs, only this year's fowl, and the ducks isn't a taste behind them—she's crammín' them this month past."

"I believe you, Peter, and I would take your word for more than the condition of the geese. Remember me to Katty, Peter."

"On Wednesday, in Parrah More Slevin's, of Mullaghfadd. Are you there, Parrah More?"—No answer. "Parrah More Slevin?"—Silence. "Parrah More Slevin, of Mullaghfadd?"—No reply. "Dan Fagan?"

"Present, Sir."

"Do you know what keeps that reprobate from mass?"

"I believe he's takin' advantage, Sir, of the frost, to get in his prates to-day, in respect of the bad footin', Sir, for the horses in the bog when there's not a frost. Any how, botone that and a bit of a sore head that he got, yer Reverence, on Thursday last is takin' part wid the O'Scallaghans agin the Brady's, I believe he had to stay away to-day."

"On the Sabbath day, too, without my leave! Well, tell him from me, that I'll make an example of him to the whole parish, if he doesn't attend mass better. Will the Brady's and the O'Scallaghans never be done with their quarrelling? I protest, if they don't live like Christians, I'll read them out from the altar. Will you tell Parrah More that I'll hold a station in his house on next Wednesday?"

"I will, Sir; I will, yer Reverence."

"On Thursday, in Phadthy Sheenue Phadthy's of the Eaker. Are you there, Phadthy?"

\* Michaelmas is here jocularly alluded to as that period of the year when geese are fatest.

'The Station' in *T. & S. I* (1843), p. 146.

These two texts show Carleton's constancy in the use of italics, from his first contributions to *The Christian Examiner* (1828) to his last revision of *Traits and Stories* (1843-44), as the three-line italicised sentences in the first text and the four-line italicised phrases in the second text give a mosaic aspect to the texts, similar to that of the brushing of a paint brush on a board. At first sight, one could attribute the typographic details in Carleton's early stories to the editor of *The Christian Examiner* and charge him with underlining aspects in Carleton's articles to serve the purpose of the Church of Ireland. However, a comparison with Carleton's later publications cautions us not to attribute the typographical presentation in Carleton's stories to the printing press or publishers; to do so would be to underestimate Carleton by lessening his responsibility. Though the mosaic

italics were lost when Carleton revised and extended the story of 'The Broken Oath' for book publication, under the title *Art Maguire; Or, the Broken Pledge: A Narrative*, he italicised instead other words and phrases in this book edition,<sup>687</sup> which suggests that he was also responsible for the italics in the first publication of the story in periodical form. This is even more explicit in the second example above, as the italics in the excerpt from 'The Station' (1843) are the same as in its first periodical appearance in *The Christian Examiner* (1828),<sup>688</sup> and in the first edition of the first series (1830),<sup>689</sup> which implies that one author is behind these typographical presentations, namely, William Carleton.

This implication also leads us to attribute equally to Carleton noticeable changes in the different editions of his stories, such as, for example, the addition of an extra paragraph to the beginning of 'The Station' in the 1843 edition, the insertion of new dashes, and the italicisation of words that were not in italic in the 1830 edition of the same story.<sup>690</sup> The following illustration from two editions of 'The Lough Derg Pilgrim' (1828, 1843), visually shows the continuity and change in Carleton's style of writing, as from the version in *The Christian Examiner* to the later book edition of the same story some italics are reproduced while changes in wording resulted in the suppression of other typographies:

seems to have got a hard hout of him. So saying, "—  
rated. Michael followed me out—"this is an awkward business,"  
said he, "you had better *make submission*, and ask his pardon;  
for you know he can injure your prospects, and will do so, if  
you don't *make submission*; he is not of the most forgiving cast  
—but that's between ourselves." "What o'clock is it," said  
I. "Near two." "Well, good-bye, and God bless you: if he  
had a spark of the Christian in him, I would beg his pardon at  
once, if I thought I had offended him; but as to *making submis-*  
*sion to such a man, as you call it—why—this is a very sultry day,*  
*Michael.*" I returned directly to the old man and his son; and,  
*Let virtue of motive go as it may, truth to tell, they were no losers*

'Pilgrimage to Patrick's Purgatory', in *The Christian Examiner*, vol. 6, 35 (May 1828), 359.

<sup>687</sup> W. Carleton, *Art Maguire; or, the Broken Pledge: A Narrative* (Dublin: James Duffy, [1845], 1847). At the climax of the story, 'Forgive me all' is put in capital letters on page 212 to draw attention, and italicised words and phrases also abound (e.g. pp. 116, 119, 164).

<sup>688</sup> Cf. Wilton, 'Sketches of the Irish Peasantry, n° I: The Station', in *The Christian Examiner*, vol. 8, 43 (January, 1829), 45-46.

<sup>689</sup> Cf. 'The Station', first edition, first series, 1830, pp. 211-214.

<sup>690</sup> Cf. 'Gallus Gallinaceus', in 1830 edition, p. 299, and 'Gallus Gallinaceus' and two extra dashes in 1843 edition, p. 177, of 'The Station'.

saying, we separated. Michael followed me out—"This is an awkward business," said he, "you had better *make submission*, and ask his pardon; for you know he can injure your prospects, and will do so, if you don't submit; he is not of the most forgiving cast—but that's between ourselves." "What o'clock is it?" said I. "Near three." "Well, good bye, and God bless you: if he had a spark of humanity in him, I would beg his pardon at once, if I thought I had offended him; but as to *making submission* to such a man, as you call it—why—this is a very sultry day, my friend." I returned directly to the old man and his son; and, let

'The Lough Derg Pilgrim', in *T. & S. I*, p. 268.<sup>691</sup>

A comparison of the two texts reveals that italics ('*make submission*', '*making submission*', 'such') that were used in *The Christian Examiner* version of 'The Lough Derg Pilgrim' are reproduced in the 1843 book edition of the same story. In his later editions, Carleton kept some of these early typographical elements while making new changes in them (which I underlined): he changed '*make submission*' (in italic) into 'submit' (without italics). This change can be seen, by anyone wishing to link Carleton's changes to a targeted scholarly audience, as an improvement; however, this argument fails to explain why the other uses of '*make submission*' were not replaced by 'submit'. Moreover, if the change from '*make submission*' into 'submit' were to be seen as improvement, the change from 'nearly two' to 'near three' is syntactically a regression, the cause of which remains to be found. Even if one were to relate these two different changes to audiences, the changes from 'two' to 'three', from 'Michael' to 'my friend', or from 'spark of the Christian' to 'spark of humanity', which are grammatically speaking neither improvement nor regression, cannot be explained on the grounds of audience. Therefore, as the changes are not uni-directional, they are unlikely to be primarily audience-related. One possible explanation this research suggests is that of free changes, as in storytelling. It is all in Carleton's honour as 'National Writer' to see him as the author of the typography in his written texts.

Carleton italicised sentences as well as single words, aiming in both ways at drawing readers' attention, because when a word or two are italicised in the body of a roman-type text, they draw readers' attention and signal readers not to read heedlessly on,

or they will miss the point. The habit of writing non-English words in italics falls within this second rubric. In Carleton's *Traits and Stories* and Pacéré's poetry, foreign language words are usually written in italics. Carleton's use of italics for Latin and Irish words and phrases is an example.

Pacéré too signals words of foreign origin by writing them in italics or in capital letters, followed sometimes by simultaneous translation into French, as in the examples below.

At that time then,	En ce temps là
WAMPOKO	WAMPOKO
The female mask	Le masque femelle,
In the yard of PISSI	Dans la cour de Pissi,
Gave birth to	Enfantait
A dead person. <sup>692</sup>	Un mort.

Few pages later, he continues more explicitly:

She got three children;	Elle eut trois enfants;
WIND KOUNI	WIND KOUNI
Or,	Ou,
For the white people,	Chez les blancs,
“ <i>Deodat</i> ”;	« <i>Dieudonné</i> » ;
TITINGA	TITINGA
Or	Ou
For the white people	Chez les blancs,
The <i>Fetish of the land</i> ,	Le <i>Fétiche de la terre</i> ,
(...)	(...)
Lastly,	Enfin
WEND POULOUMDE	WEND POULOUMDE
That is,	C'est à dire
<i>Fatality</i> <sup>693</sup>	<i>Fatalité</i>

<sup>691</sup> ‘The Lough Derg Pilgrim’ is absent from the first and second series of *Traits and Stories*; it became part of it only in the 1842-44 edition.

<sup>692</sup> *Poèmes*, p. 100.

<sup>693</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 104.

In *La poésie des griots* we also have some examples: ‘My name is TIRAGO/ TIRAGO/ A male fetish.’ ‘Who loves them all/ NONGUEB/ NONGUEBZANGA!’<sup>694</sup>

All the words in capital letters are foreign words and all the words in italics are adequate translations of these foreign words. The words in capitals mean exactly what Pacéré explained. The visual technique of capital letters for Moaaga names has the advantage of singling them out for attention. He also italicizes the corresponding words in French. For example, the definite article in ‘the *fetish of the land*’ is not italicized because it is not part of the translation as the Mooré language does not use definite and indefinite articles. In these examples Pacéré brings to the fore the didactic aim of the poetry of tam-tams which is meant to entertain and to teach. In case laziness leads the reader not to bother reading about the notes at the end, by this technique of simultaneous translation the reader can’t escape from the lessons on Mooré language and culture. The phrase ‘for the white people/chez les blancs’, which obviously signals estrangement, shows that the audience Pacéré wants to teach is from the Western world, especially the French people, since it is translated into French.

This italicisation of foreign words, especially Latin, Irish and Mooré words, does not always signal aurality and wordpower. However, the irregularity of the writers in not systematically italicising all words that are foreign to the language of the narratives is itself significant. For example, though the italics used in *Quand s’envolent les grues couronnées*, include proper names such as *Nakomsé*, *Yilsé*, *Bougoume*, *Passawindin*, *Tinga*, *Gouli*, *Gnougnossé*, *djinns*, *Waogdo*, *Naba Rogbenga*, *Sikobsé*, *gourounsi*, *Koumbaongo*, *Haoussa*, *N’Dar*, *Rue Lanjuinais*, *Zida*, *dolo*, *Kounga*, *wiii!*, which are proper names of places, people, and foreign words, a quick look reveals that not all foreign words are put in italics. Timini and Tibo are sometimes in italics, sometimes not. It is likewise for capitalisation used instead of italics for foreign words. In *Du lait pour une tombe* Pacéré wrote foreign words such as allocos, sagbo, Bangui, danme, and kotroco-o in upper case. The visual device of capitalisation makes it easier to know the new words to learn. One can justify the inconsistency in the italicisation of foreign words by the fact that when Pacéré and Carleton think that the new concepts are now familiar to the reader and audience, they stop italicising them. For example, ‘Bangui’, ‘danme’, ‘warba’

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<sup>694</sup> *La poésie*, p. 11 and p. 14 : ‘Mon nom/ Est TIRAGO/ TIRAGO/ Un fétiche mâle’ ; ‘Qui les aime tous/ NOUNGUEB/ NONGUEBZANGA !’

and ‘Kouumbaongo’ were capitalized in previous collections but appear in this collection in lower case because they are presumed to be internationally known at this stage.<sup>695</sup> Likewise, some Latin and Irish phrases in Carleton’s stories, for instance in ‘The Midnight Mass,’ ‘you ignoramus’, ‘Oh, wurrah dheelish’, ‘Oxis Doxis Glorioxis’<sup>696</sup> are not in italics. In these irregularities, one can see attempts by the two writers at generalising their ‘literary grammars’ by assuming that the vocabulary of their foreign readers is already enriched with Mooré and Irish words. The italicisation of ordinary English words and phrases in Carleton and French words in Pacéré, however, is meant to bring about aurality and wordpower, as the subsequent examples will show.

In many instances, Pacéré and Carleton used italics as an invitation to declamation or performance in which the diction follows the rhythm of tam-tams or Irish dialects. Pacéré italicised words such as *Rue Lanjuinais*, *Timini* and *Tibo* for the purpose of performance. These words deserve a particular utterance because of their association with the poet’s experience: Rue Lanjuinais recalls his setbacks in France and Timini the lost loved one. The following example illustrates the use of italics with potential for performance:

His trousers are red	Son pantaloon est rouge
<i>With the blood</i>	<i>Du sang</i>
<i>Shed</i>	<i>Versé</i>
And	Et
<i>Shed over</i>	<i>Traversé</i>
Hearts	Des cœurs
Hurt	Blessés
And	Et
Half-open. <sup>697</sup>	Entrouverts.

These italics, the only ones in this poem, ‘Poème pour l’Angola’, emphasise the carnage. The coordinating conjunction ‘and’ in low case letters in the middle of the two italicised parts has the effect of creating a bouncing rhythm of high-low-high pitch highlighting the

<sup>695</sup> Cf. ‘Warba’ in capital letters in *Ça tire sous le Sahel*, p. 39; ‘Warba’, ‘Bangui’ and ‘danme’ in low case in *Du lait pour une tombe*, p. 22; and for ‘Kouumbaongo’, pp. 11, 57, 88.

<sup>696</sup> *T.&S. I*, pp. 356-357. See also ‘Larry M’Farland’s Wake’, in *T.&S. I*, p. 110 for a large section in Latin.

<sup>697</sup> *Poèmes*, p. 25.

shedding or outpouring of blood. Aurality comes to the fore in these lines. The audience hear with the words the pulsing of blood.

Carleton too uses italics to the same effect. In ‘Phelim O’Toole’s Courtship’, for example, we can observe together with Barbara Hayley that ‘the women’s language and dialect do not differ, but the tone of voice does’.<sup>698</sup> Italics signal emphases that require high pitch or special tonality in performance of any kind, as even solo or silent readers make differences between italics and standard letters in their reading. Tonality of voice evokes spoken language as well as the aural nature of the ‘written literature’. Phelim, like many of the characters in *Traits and Stories*, is conscious of the power of words:

Faith, it won’t pass, avourneen. That’s not the voice for it. Don’t you hear *me*, how tendher I spake wid my mouth brathin’ into your ear, acushla machree [sic].<sup>699</sup>

The Irish terms ‘avourneen’ and ‘acushla machree’, which are not italicised, become part of the vocabulary of Carleton’s new grammar whereas the italic on ‘me’ invites the reader to put a particular stress on this word while speaking. It is the same with the italics on words such ‘your’, ‘my’, ‘appear’, ‘you’, ‘wanst’, ‘wasn’t’, ‘now’, ‘best’, ‘I’, ‘honest’ in ‘Ned M’Keown’ (1830, 1843),<sup>700</sup> or in the passage taken from ‘The Midnight Mass’ (1833, 1844):

“Now, if that boy stretched afore us had the gun in *his* hand the time she went off, could the mark of it be *here*? Bring me down the gun—an’ the curse o’ God upon her for an unlucky thief, whoever had her! It’s too thrue!” he continued—“the man that had the gun stood *this spot*.”

(...)

“I did,” replied the mendicant, sternly; “but I heard you say, no longer ago than last night—say!—why you *shwore* it, man alive!—that if *you* wouldn’t have Peggy Gartland, *he* never should. In your own stable I heard it.<sup>701</sup>

The italics on ‘his’, ‘here’, ‘this spot’, ‘say’, ‘shwore’, ‘you’ and ‘he’ rather than on any other words denote Carleton’s desire to place a particular emphasis on each of them, as he would emphasise with tonality of voice were he reading it aloud.

These are just examples of italics used throughout *Traits and Stories* to signal pitch of voice and tonality of speech. All italics on words and phrases are designed to urge

<sup>698</sup> B. Hayley, *Carleton’s Traits and Stories*, p. 254.

<sup>699</sup> *T.&S. 2*, p. 229.

<sup>700</sup> *T.&S. 1*, pp. 10-14.

<sup>701</sup> *T.&S. 1*, p. 365.

readers to change the pitch of their voices and to put stress on these words. In other words, such readers (for an audience or for themselves) are invited to a speech exercise such as actors do in stage performance. The same purpose appears in the use of marks of intensity such as adverbs (e.g.: ‘he’s the decent thing *entirely*’), the words ‘earth’ or ‘world’ (e.g.: ‘What *in the wide earth* is there for him?’; ‘*it bates the world!*’).<sup>702</sup> This continuous tone of insistence weakens the meanings of the stressed words or phrases (e.g. ‘at all events’, ‘the dear knows’, ‘any way’, ‘sure enough’ in ‘Shane Fadh’ Wedding’). Simple repetition is also used as an occasional form of insistence. One such repetition is the direct translation from the Scottish Gaelic phrase *itir itir* in the recurrent expression *at all, at all*.<sup>703</sup> The prominence of italics and all these other forms of insistence in dramatic sections in *Traits and Stories* are cases of aurality and wordpower.

Finally, Carleton and Pacéré resorted to capitalization in order to powerfully convey aural and visual aspects for performance. In the case of Carleton, an example can be found in ‘Going to Maynooth’ (1831, 1844) when Susan said to Denis about their plan for marriage:

“Denis,” said she, “you must now be a man. We can never be married. I AM PROMISED TO ANOTHER!”

“Promised to another! Your brain is turned, Susy. Collect yourself, dearest, and think of what you say.”

(...)

“I got a scapular too, that I might be strengthened to keep my holy promise; for you didn’t come to me within the time. This is it in my hand. It is now on me.

THE VOW IS MADE, AND I AM MISERABLE FOR EVER!”<sup>704</sup>

These capitalised sentences stand out, are much more visual than the other parts and certainly require a specific utterance when reading them to mark their importance, as they draw attention to the high point of the story. Similar visual devices are used in the other stories. For example, in ‘The Midnight Mass’, italicisation and capitalisation lay emphasis on the dramatic ordeal of touching the body and on Frank’s oath:

“I did *not*,” replied M’Kenna; “I could clear myself on all the books in Europe, that he met his death as I tould you; an’ more nor that,” he added, dropping

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<sup>702</sup> Cf. ‘Ned M’Keown’, in *T. & S. I* and ‘Phelim O’Toole’s Courtship’, in *T. & S. 2*.

<sup>703</sup> This is an example of the influence of Scottish literature (especially the works of Scott) on Carleton.

<sup>704</sup> *T. & S. 2*, p. 176.

upon his knees, and uncovering his head, “*may I die widout priest or prayer—widout help, hope, or happiness, UPON THE SPOT WHERE HE’S NOW STRETCHED, if I murdhered or shot him.*”

“I say amin to that,” replied Darby: “*Oxis Doxis Glorioxis!*—So far, that’s right, if the blood of him’s not an you. But there’s one thing more to be done: will you walk over *undher the eye of God*, an’ TOUCH THE CORPSE? Hould back, neighbours, an’ let him come over alone.”<sup>705</sup>

The italics and capitals in this text give it a specific rhythm and intonation marked by high and low points. The capitals prevent the eye from missing the essential core drama. The abundance of words in italics and capital letters in this sequence, in one way, dilutes its aural potentiality but increases its visual dimension, enhanced as it is, by this mosaic of roman, italic and capital letters. The visual signs are connected to aurality, as one has to see the written signs in order to read them to the extent that one can equate seeing to reading. Here, one can appreciate the particular relevance of the term ‘spoken literature’ which we have taken and defined to include both phonetic (oral sound and its representation in writing) and non-phonetic (painting, signs and bodily gesture) dimensions of literature which are expressed together in the text above through Carleton’s typographies.

Pacéré too uses the device of capitalisation in his poetry for the purpose of emphasis, intonation, aurality and wordpower or to transcribe the non-phonetic aspects of ‘spoken literature’. Below are two examples from ‘Le repos’ and ‘La deuxième guerre’ in the collection *Refrain sous le Sahel*:

You will say	Tu diras
NO!	NON!
NO! to the weeping women	NON ! aux femmes en pleurs
(...)	(...)
You will say	Tu diras
NO!	NON!
NO! to the sobs of the child <sup>706</sup>	NON ! aux sanglots de l’enfant

<sup>705</sup> *T.&S. I*, p. 366.

<sup>706</sup> *Ça tire*, p. 40.

The repetition of ‘NO!’ in upper case (as in a sign post) followed by words in low case creates a particular, sobbing rhythm. Capitalisation here expresses the seriousness of the answer to be given. The ‘no’ is a radical one. In Pacéré’s poetry as a whole, capitalisation of ordinary French words like this functions as an aid to performance, to lay emphasis on key words. Further examples can be found in each collection. One more example may suffice:

Dead and living people,	Morts et vivants,
We will wage the SECOND WAR	Nous livrerons la DEUXIÈME GUERRE
There will be ONE BATTLE!	Il y aura UNE BATAILLE!
There will be but ONE!	Il n’y aura qu’UNE !
(...)	(...)
It will be	Elle sera
TOTAL	TOTALE
Decisive!	Décisive !
TOTAL!	TOTALE !
(...)	(...)
There will be ONE battle!	Il y aura UNE bataille !
There will be but ONE!	Il n’y aura qu’UNE !
Because:	Parce que :
CONCEIVED ON A BATTLE FIELD, BORN ON A BATTLE FIELD, WE WILL DIE ON A BATTLE FIELD, FOR THE GLORY OF THE FATHERLAND! <sup>707</sup>	CONÇUS SUR UN CHAMP DE BATAILLE, NES SUR UN CHAMP DE BATAILLE, NOUS MOURRONS SUR UN CHAMP DE BATAILLE, POUR LA GLOIRE DE LA PATRIE !

The words in capital letters here are key words. From them the message of the poem can be summarised as follows: ‘the second war will be one total battle to be fought to death.’ The intercalation of ‘TOTAL’ with other words in low key creates a jerky rhythm expressive of the battle cry of people getting ready to wage war. Sight, rhythm and sound work well together in a way that illustrates Engelbert Mveng’s perception (Cf. part

I) of African works of art as a complex structure of rhythm, gesture, spoken word and signs carrying a deep meaning. Pacéré's print literature reflects this complex mixture, as in his poetry, and in some other works by African writers which Bokiba examines, words have an ambivalent status as both 'signs' and 'things'. As a sign, Bokiba says, a word in poetry has multiple layers of meanings; as a thing, it evokes different feelings to the poet who plays with the sweetness, volume, odour and sound of words.<sup>708</sup> Capitalisation for example may express volume and loudness of words. All these different typographic devices remind us that the written word is the materialisation of spoken language and is at the service of the spoken language through performance.

### III.1.c) Written Texts as Representation of the Spoken Word.

The changes in typography, we have seen, reflected the spoken words used in different performances or re-readings of the printed texts, and thus express the characteristic of 'spoken literature' in its ability to take on changes from one session or performance to another. In their tasks of transcription, Carleton and Pacéré respected this quality of 'spoken literature'. Carleton intermittently made changes of various natures in his stories at each edition. As a whole, *Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry* offers a view of a writer at work, cutting, adding and retouching as if his stories had not yet been in print. Rather than as a response to likes and dislikes of audiences and critics, as conventionally seen by critics, the changes are better explained when seen in the perspective of a device borrowed from storytelling tradition, as Carleton engaged with his print material like a storyteller unconsciously involved in changing details at each retelling of the same story. A story is never told with the same details in two sessions. For example, there are similarities and differences between the two retellings of 'Fairy Cow' recorded from Michael McCanny in March 22, 1976 and in September 18, 1976 by the Irish Folklore Commission.<sup>709</sup> In both cases, it is still the same story, though the second retelling is almost one minute longer than the first and the words used and the names of

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<sup>707</sup> *Refrains*, pp. 65-68.

<sup>708</sup> Cf. A.-P. Bokiba, *Ecriture et identité dans la littérature africaine* (Paris : L'Harmattan, 1998), p. 78.

<sup>709</sup> Irish Folklore Commission, 1842: 310-313, tape No. 75/2 SOC; recorded from Michael McCanny, Clunahill, Drumquin, County Tyrone on 22/3/1976; duration 4 minutes, 29 seconds, in *Béaloideas*, 48-49 (1980-1981), 140-143 and Tape No. 51/1 SOC; Recorded from Michael McCanny on 18/09/1976; duration: 5 minutes, 23 seconds.

the characters are not identical. This combination of a fixed essential structure with changeable elements is common in ‘spoken literature’ in general. Abiola Irele makes the same observation in his study of the Epic of Son Jara, saying that this epic has no ‘correct’ version since it is never performed in the same way twice but instead varies according to each new audience and occasion. In the case of the epic of Sundiata, Irele writes:

The interplay between core elements of the text, which are relatively fixed (for example, the genealogies of families and clans), and the performer’s free improvisations (often involving digressions and general reflections as well as anachronistic references and topical allusions), generates a profound sense that the story, though established by tradition, is at the same time constantly renewed in performance.<sup>710</sup>

Side by side lie historical exactitude and the artist’s own inventiveness in performance. Performance brings about changes and making changes is a reminder of performance.

The existence of fixed structure, instead of being an obstacle to a writer’s freedom and creativity, is of assistance as it provides for a basis to start with but also because it protects the community or the audience from the whims of an individual causing the age-long tradition to fall apart by confusing the audience. Both fixed structure and writers’ creativity are reflected in Pacéré’s poetry and Carleton’s stories, as these works follow a given structure and essential detail to which the authors added their originalities, namely their literary grammars. The changes in the retelling of ‘Fairy Cow’ and ‘the epic of Sundiata’ are similar to the changes in the different editions of Carleton’s *Traits and Stories*. A basic framework subsists despite Carleton’s digressions and continual changes in dialect, vocabulary and even facts.

To give textual evidence of Carleton’s use of the oral practice in making changes, two stories—‘The Party Fight and Funeral’ (1830, 1843) and ‘The Lianhan Shee’ (*Christian Examiner* 1830, 1844)—one from each series, will be taken as case studies. Here we rely on Barbara Hayley’s study concerning the changes in Carleton’s *Traits and Stories*. To evidence Pacéré’s use of the structure of drum literature which he filled in with his own innovations in several collections, two collections—*Refrains sous le Sahel* and *Poésie des griots*—will be used as case-studies. The choices are made in an attempt to represent the two series or two volumes of *Traits and Stories* and the early and later

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<sup>710</sup> A. Irele, ‘Africa: The Mali Epic of Son Jara’, in *The Norton Anthology of World Masterpieces* (New York: Norton, 1995), p. 2337.

collections of Pacéré. We will consider first the general changes, especially those related to dialectal spelling, then the changes of details and finally the changes related to numeracy to show how the changes in the written texts reflect the variation that is characteristic of ‘spoken literature’.

The title ‘The Funeral, and Party Fight’ in the first edition of the first series (1830) became ‘The Party Fight and Funeral’ in the second edition of the first series (1832). The oral storyteller would see no difference in the inversion of the title whereas a print-minded critic would perhaps consider dealing with two stories, each with a different title. Some changes also occur in the dialect or the spoken word of ‘The Party Fight and Funeral’ in the second edition of the first series. Hayley noticed that ‘previously correct words are broadened to ‘masther’, ‘afther’, ‘bliieve’, ‘playin’’, ‘arrivin’’, ‘previent’ and ‘scowld’ (from ‘scold’). ‘Arly’ changes to ‘airly’, ‘could’ to ‘cowld’.<sup>711</sup> Additions and other changes made to the stories are usually meant to intensify dramatic moments: for example, ‘Party Fight and Funeral’ gains extra pathos when Mick, passing out, calls out for his mother. The broadening of the dialect continues in the third and fourth editions.<sup>712</sup> In the New Edition (1843), points of grammar are corrected in ‘The Party Fight and Funeral’, as ‘availing himself of’ for ‘availing himself from’, ‘take their last look and farewell of his remains’ for ‘to his remains’.

In ‘The Lianhan Shee’ of the first edition of the second series (1833), some changes also occur. Authorial Irishisms are removed, some words toned down and occasionally, a self-conscious word creeps in: ‘every one told it exactly as he heard it from another’ becomes ‘every one told it exactly, forsooth, as he heard it from another.’ Single words are changed: ‘a glance’ becomes ‘a glare’, ‘it was likely’ becomes ‘it was probable’. However, the kernel of the story remains intact as Barbara Hayley observes: ‘the substance of the dialogue is left intact, and only the manner of *expressing* or *pronouncing* it changes.’<sup>713</sup> (Italics mine). The changes operate on the level of ‘spoken’ literature whereas written dialogues remain more or less intact despite some changes of facts. Carleton makes changes in phonetic pronunciations, such as ‘hard’ for ‘heard’,

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<sup>711</sup> For the changes concerning this edition, see B. Hayley, *Carleton’s Traits and Stories*, pp. 36-62.

<sup>712</sup> For the changes concerning this edition, see B. Hayley, *Carleton’s Traits and Stories*, pp. 63-68. The 4<sup>th</sup> edition is a reissue of the third.

<sup>713</sup> B. Hayley, *Carleton’s Traits and Stories*, p. 84.

‘under’, ‘better’, and ‘track’ become ‘undher’, ‘betther’ and ‘thrack’. As to the second edition of the second series (1834), few changes take place in ‘The Lianhan Shee’.<sup>714</sup>

Changes of facts occur in the second edition (1834) of ‘The Lianhan Shee’ and in the ‘New Edition’ (1844) of ‘The Party Fight and Funeral’.<sup>715</sup> In the ‘Party Fight and Funeral’, changes of names take place: ‘The M’guigans’ become ‘The Grogans’; ‘Bob Arthurs’ becomes ‘Bob Beaty’, ‘George M’Gin’ becomes ‘George M’Girr’. In the second edition of ‘The Lianhan Shee’ ‘Barney’ changes into ‘Barny’, ‘Mrs. Sheridan’ to ‘Mrs. Sullivan’. Due to the fact that ‘most of the stories start immediately with the central character’,<sup>716</sup> one cannot remain insensitive to these changes of facts, especially the different names given to the characters/actors in the stories. One reason is that, though the majority of the stories begin with the main character, these changes of facts show that what is of paramount importance is the story or the plot and not the characters themselves. In other words, the names of the characters, as in oral storytelling, are not as important as what they do or say.

Variation in the numerical facts, however, may have another reason. In the ‘New edition’ (1843) of the ‘Party Fight and Funeral’, changes in numbers took place: ‘the period of my absence, I believe, was about fourteen years’ now changes to ‘fifteen years’; ‘the number of combatants amounted at least to two thousand men’ now has ‘to four thousand men’. Why does he change these figures? Is he aiming at historical accuracy or trying to please a targeted audience who would prefer the second figures more than the first ones? The numbers have no significance in themselves, but the fact of changing them has. Like a storyteller retelling the same story with changes every time, without an awareness (or at least a disregard of the fact) that the listeners will compare his new narration of the story with his past accounts, one can suggest that Carleton did not seriously consider that his different accounts of the same stories would be compared. Thus, he was free to make free ‘whimsical’ changes of facts, which are primarily neither improvement nor regression in the use of language, but the expression that each new retelling or rewriting of his stories brings changes on the earlier ones.

Changes of a similar nature happen in Pacéré’s poetry where mathematical accuracy of numbers is not always of importance. For example, in a stanza, which is used

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<sup>714</sup> Ibid., p. 258.

<sup>715</sup> Cf. Ibid., pp. 277-309.

<sup>716</sup> Ibid., p. 73.

as a refrain, the poet considers a century in three different moments of his poem, ‘Le siècle prochain,’ to be a day long, to be a thousand years long and to be two thousand years long:

Children of my Fathers	Fils de mes Pères,
This Century,	Ce Siècle,
This Century is of one day.	Ce Siècle est d'un jour.
(...)	(...)
Children of my Fathers	Fils de mes Pères,
This Century,	Ce Siècle,
This Century is a thousand years old.	Ce Siècle a mille ans.
(...)	(...)
Children of my Fathers	Fils de mes Pères,
This Century,	Ce Siècle,
This Century is two thousand years old.	Ce Siècle a deux mille ans. <sup>717</sup>

These three stanzas are treated as identical, despite the changes in numbers from one refrain to another. One can recognise a fixed structure, from the first two verses to the middle of the third verse and a changeable part, the end of the third verse. The lengthening of a century from one day to two thousand years expresses joys or boredom in life: to live a century in a day means to fully enjoy life; but to live it in one or two thousand years is endless pain. The poet defines the length of the century according to his mood at that moment. In a similar way, Carleton the storyteller modifies figures in his stories according to his moods. And yet, the historical fact is that a century is a century (hundred years), the combatants were many and there was a time of absence; hence, all these stanzas and figures are treated as identical and are used interchangeably.

The changes are for Carleton and Pacéré ways of transcribing in print the suppleness of ‘spoken’ literature. It is not by chance that many of the changes have to do with the spoken word. We are brought back to the context of ‘spoken literature’ where free rein is given for a considerable variation in dialect and vocabulary, provided the core message of the story remains intact. Carleton the *Seanachaidh* and ‘scriptor’ is engaged in translating this fluidity of storytelling through his continual changes in wording,

<sup>717</sup> F. T. Pacéré, ‘Le siècle prochain’, in *A la santé des poètes*, 13 (Ouagadougou : n. d.), pp. 13,14, 15.

typography and structures in different editions of his texts, whereas Pacéré expresses this element of ‘spoken literature’ either within the written texts, as in the example above, or by means of specific structures in the area of stanzas.

The ‘spoken literature’ of tam-tams works with a fixed structure or kernel around which many elements evolve. Let us first present the structure of the ‘spoken literature’ of tam-tams before evidencing its use in Pacéré’s poetry.

The ‘spoken literature’ of tam-tams, in West Africa, follows a ternary movement. At the colloque ‘Griotique et identité culturelle’ Amoa Urbain named these three movements as (1) the preamble consisting of beating of hands for audience participation, then (2) the narrative proper supported by chants, and finally (3) the end, consisting of the departure of the artist, preceded by a false departure.<sup>718</sup> Pacéré too distinguishes three main actions in the literature of tam-tams in Burkina Faso: invocation, juxtaposition of zabyuya and final greetings. Pacéré explains how the process of the narrative operates:

The layout of the discourse respects the method of poetical elaboration of the so-called ‘speaking’ tam-tams.

A call is made three times; by the third time people are supposed to be gathered; the poem can begin.

Any person, acting individually or acting on behalf of a group, who has to give a speech, a lecture, [direct] a soirée of entertainments, must start with apologies, paying his respects to divinities, ancestors, political and spiritual leaders, social divisions and to any physical or moral person liable to have any parcel of responsibility or importance in the society; only after doing this can the person develop his theme and draw his conclusions.<sup>719</sup>

Pacéré follows this tripartite structure in his poetry. Looking in Pacéré’s poetry for the three movements characteristic of the poetry of tam-tams, critics, namely Amoa and Yépri, observe that there is a difference between the poems written before 1982 and the poems written after 1982. Two of the collections published in 1976 contain individual poems, whereas the other collections that were published after 1982 have the form of one

<sup>718</sup> Cf. A. Urbain, ‘La griotique: Un concept et une esthétique artistico-littéraire’, in *Actes du Colloque « Griotique et identité culturelle »* Abidjan 18-20 Mars 1999, in *Libre Jeu* (déc. 2000), p. 37.

<sup>719</sup> *Saglego*, p. 17 : ‘Un appel est d’abord lancé, et ce, par trois fois ; à la troisième fois le peuple est supposé rassemblé ; le poème peut commencer. Toute personne, physique ou morale, qui doit tenir un discours, une conférence, une soirée récréative, doit commencer par s’excuser, présenter ses respects auprès des divinités, ancêtres, responsables politiques et spirituels, divisions sociales et toutes autres personnes physiques ou morales pouvant détenir une parcelle quelconque de responsabilité ou d’importance dans la cité ; elle pourra, après cela seulement, aborder, développer son thème et en tirer les conclusions.’

long poem. Commenting on the first two 1976 collections of poetry, Urbain Amoa points to the absence of some elements of the three movements. With reference to the poem ‘L’appel au tambour’, one of the six poems that compose the collection ‘Ça tire sous le Sahel’ (1976), he remarks that though the refrain, ‘Children of my fathers/let us go to the market square!/ The archers throw arrows of the Sahel’, is repeated three times in different places, nowhere in this poem does the call made three times appear in succession. On the other hand, he identifies this call in the three repetitions of ‘Night!/Night!/Night’ in the poem ‘Voltacidé’ of the same collection and finds in the stanza that follows these repetitions an enumeration of the audience of the poetry.<sup>720</sup> Amoa tries unsuccessfully to identify the three moments in every single poem of every 1976 collection. I understand the logic in Amoa’s interpretation; however, a collective perspective, taking the work overall, would be my suggestion.

Urbain Amoa analyses the poems of Pacéré’s first two collections individually. A collective perspective, I suggest, does better justice to Pacéré’s collections of poems. Many of Pacéré’s collections, especially, *Quand s’envolent les grues couronnées*, *Saglego ou le poem du tam-tam*, *Du lait pour une tombe*, *La Poésie des griots*, *Poèmes pour Koryo*, *Des entrailles de la terre* and to a certain extent, *Poèmes pour l’Angola* are constituted of one long poem. Strictly speaking, they are not collections of poems. (A collection must have more than one title; they have but one.) All these collections contrast with the first two collections, *Refrains sous le Sahel* and *Ça tire sous le Sahel*, with which Pacéré made his entry into the international world of literature. As we have already observed in part two, considering the content of these two collections, one can posit that conformity to the usual Western norms of publishing collections of poems led Pacéré to subdivide two long poems into different poems by attributing a title to each section of them. A look at these first two collections as two long poems reveals a logic respecting the three movements of the ‘spoken literature’ of tam-tams.

In *Refrains sous le Sahel*, the first two poems, viz. ‘Manéga’ and ‘Je suis triste’ (I am sad) constitute the first movement or the introductory invocation. They fit into the category of introduction as they describe the geographical framework and the speaker, the ‘I’ (Je), specified as ‘la Terre du Fétiche’ (the land of the fetish), a translation of the name ‘Titinga.’ Like the Bendre, the poet pays his respects to the ancestors, namely, ‘Zida,/

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<sup>720</sup> Cf. U. Amoa, *Poétique de la poésie des tambours* (Paris : L’Harmattan, 2002), p. 127.

Bougoum,/ Guiéghmdé,/ Timini,/ Tanga!'<sup>721</sup> The mention of 'L'eau,/ Le poulet,/ La cendre',<sup>722</sup> which evoke sacrifice made to visible and invisible powers for petition or in thanksgiving for having heard the prayers (by sending Titanga, Gouli, Windyame, Passawindin<sup>723</sup>), is a way of courteously addressing these powers before starting the narrative, as the *Bendre* usually does. This first movement ends with an invitation to turn to a conditional future introduced by the adverb 'If' (Si), an invitation to dance and, therefore, an invitation to change the rhythm in order to fill in a period of silence usually observed by the *Bendre* after the first movement.

Next, the second movement develops the narrative. The narrative goes from the poem 'L'Attente' (Waiting) to the poem 'Demain le passé' (Tomorrow the past). This second movement starts on the last note of the first movement, about the future. The narrative is, therefore, future orientated. The titles of the first and last poem give the key: 'L'attente' and 'Demain le passé' foretell that the narrative is about waiting for something which will happen tomorrow. Falinga is portrayed in the first poem of this narrative as the object waited for:

I am waiting for you!	Je t'attends!
I'll still wait for you,	Je t'attendrai encore,
My sweet Falinga	Ma petite Falinga,
As a Jew	Comme un Juif
Waits for his saviour,	Attend son sauveur,
As the Mogho,	Comme le Mogho,
For the rainy season.	La saison pluvieuse !
(...)	(...)
Falinga,	Falinga,
Falinga.	Falinga,
It is you I am waiting for!	C'est toi que j'attends ! <sup>724</sup>

The comparison of the waiting with that of the Jews waiting for the coming of the Messiah or with the thirsty people of the Sahara waiting for water lays strong emphasis on the

<sup>721</sup> *Refrains*, p. 19.

<sup>722</sup> Ibid., p. 19.

<sup>723</sup> Ibid., p. 20.

<sup>724</sup> Ibid., p. 22 and p. 25.

importance of the object waited for and on the seriousness of the act of waiting which continues in the following poem, ‘Une carte postale’ (a postcard). The poet still waits for Falinga and expects to receive a postcard from her. The tense of the verbs is still the future tense. Despite the title of the following poem ‘La fenêtre voisine’ (the next window) the third verse of the first stanza and of the last one indicates that the waiting still goes on: ‘But I will wait for thousand years’ (Mais j’attendrai mille ans).<sup>725</sup> The anxiety and impatience in waiting lead the poet to flee (‘la fuite’) and look for refuge in Timini, at Manéga, the land of rest (‘le repos’) where he will be urged and encouraged to hold on, to say ‘no’ to despair. The narrative culminates in the poem ‘L’offrande’ (The offering), the sacrifice in petition for a better future:

Take his hen and his ashes	Reçois son poulet et ses cendres,
His water, his drink!	Son eau, sa boisson !
Bring them to the Fathers,	Porte-les aux Pères,
To Zida and to the Land!	A Zida et à la Terre ! <sup>726</sup>

What follows from this sacrifice is a scandalous disappointment, leading the poet to rage against the people who offered the sacrifices, that is, the people with ‘hands reddened by the blood’<sup>727</sup> of the sacrifice. The same climate of sadness is expressive of the feelings of warriors following a defeat in war (‘Aux anciens combattus’). In the next poem, ‘Héros d’ébène’, the first verse—‘Spectre of infamy? Scandal of the world’<sup>728</sup>—carries the theme of scandal, which was intoned in the aftermath of the offering in the poem ‘Le scandale’. The fact that this poem is written in rhymed verse on the Western model is a sign that it targets a specific audience; it is a protest against the occupation of the country by foreigners, Voulet-Chanoine and their men of terror.<sup>729</sup> Faced with this alarming situation, the poet resists the temptation of giving up and so calls for a second war (‘La deuxième guerre’) of liberation. The first stanza of this poem links it with the preceding one: ‘Open,/ tombs!/ Open,/ Hecatombs!’,<sup>730</sup> an homage and an invitation to the dead killed by the occupants. A second war will be waged to honour the dead and to reverse the plight of the

<sup>725</sup> Ibid., p. 32 and p. 34.

<sup>726</sup> Ibid., p. 42 and p. 48.

<sup>727</sup> Ibid., p. 49 : ‘Des mains rouges de sang’.

<sup>728</sup> Ibid., p. 56 : ‘Spectre d’infamie? Scandale du monde?’

<sup>729</sup> Cf. Ibid., p. 57.

country. Like the waiting for Falinga in the first poems, the second war is planned for the future—most of the verbs are in the future tense—and will be undertaken ‘for the glory of the fatherland’.<sup>731</sup> The next poem, ‘La termitière’ (the anthill), takes up the theme of the building-up of the fatherland on the ruins made by the occupants. The death of these predators is foretold in the refrain ‘THEY WILL ALL DIE.’<sup>732</sup> The following poem also evokes the havoc done but highlights that ‘the ants hold the power of the crowns’ and ends with an expectation of a brighter tomorrow: ‘Tomorrow,/ The sun will be high in the heavens.’<sup>733</sup> The next poem takes up the theme of ‘tomorrow’ while looking at the past; hence, its title: ‘Demain le passé.’ The circle is then closed. The second movement is thus ended.

The third movement is the conclusion, a summary of what has been developed. The last poem, with an evocative title similar to the preceding one but more explicit than this, summarises everything already said: ‘L’éternel retour’ (The eternal cycle). Its first verse, ‘Thus’/‘Ainsi’, which is repeated three times as part of a refrain, hints at a conclusion.<sup>734</sup> Like the rest of the whole collection, this conclusion is also orientated towards the future.

Thus, this collection clearly appears as a long poem and can be understood in this way with the suppression of the titles given to sections of it, as we have just proved. The collection runs smoothly and logically when read as a long poem without the titles marking the different poems. The three movements clearly appear in this way of looking at the collection. It is as if Pacéré first wrote a long poem, (as he was to do after his first two collections), and then cut it in different parts, rearranged them and attributed titles to each of them. The title of the collection itself, *Refrains sous le Sahel*, invites one to consider it as a long poem with many refrains. The poet sees life as a circle around which events recur, only the refrains change. In *Ça tire sous le Sahel* the infernal serpentine circle, starting from the Market place in the opening poem and ending at the Market place in the last poem of the same collection, seems difficult to break. Repetition means that things circulate, thus providing continuity necessary for the maintenance of the culture but

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<sup>730</sup> Ibid., p. 60 : ‘OUVREZ,/ TOMBEAUX! OUVREZ,/ HECATOMBES !’

<sup>731</sup> Ibid., p. 68 : ‘POUR LA GLOIRE DE LA PATRIE!’

<sup>732</sup> Ibid., pp. 70, 72, 74: ‘ILS MOURRONT TOUS.’

<sup>733</sup> Ibid., p. 76 : ‘Les termites détiennent la puissance des couronnes’ ; p. 79 : ‘Demain / Le soleil sera haut dans le ciel.’

<sup>734</sup> Cf. Ibid., pp. 87, 88, 89.

it means also that, almost unnoticed, in the flow of this repetition there is growth in the same culture. This is the meaning of the symbolism of repetition in the ‘spoken literature’ of tam-tam. James Snead’s opposition of black culture to the European culture on the basis of repetition is unacceptable. His argument, based on the racist ideas of Hegel, is that in black literature repetition means circulation in the same manner without change or progress whereas in European literature, it is circulation with both growth and accumulation.<sup>735</sup> There is growth and development in repetition in this African culture as we have just seen in the analysis of this collection and will show in other parts of this chapter.

However, what is lacking in *Refrains sous le Sahel* (and in the other collections as well, except *Saglego*) to achieve the structure of the ‘spoken literature’ of tam-tams is the call repeated three times. The purpose of this call is to gather people to listen to the literature. Let us quote again Pacéré’s explanation on this call: ‘A call is made three times; by the third time the people are supposed to be gathered; the poem can begin.’<sup>736</sup> The poem begins once the people are gathered and not when they are called. It is explicit from this quote that the call does not have an intrinsic part in the structure of the literature of tam-tam *per se*. It serves this literature in the sense that it summons the audience for the performance of this literature. The poem does not start with this call but once people are gathered following this call. Therefore, the absence of this call in the collections does in no way lessen the fact that these collections display the structure of the literature of tam-tams. What Amoa<sup>737</sup> identifies in ‘Voltacidé’ as a call repeated three times appears to me to be both a rhetorical figure of emphasis on ‘night’, symbolic of darkness, sadness and a premonition of death foretold in the title ‘Voltacidé,’ and the expression of a particular rhythm of tam-tam. It is not a triple call aiming at gathering people. This process of insistence may intervene at any stage in the course of the poetry. In *Du lait pour une tombe*, it occurs in the second stanza, at the beginning of the second movement:

Son,	Fils,
Son,	Fils,

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<sup>735</sup> Cf. J. A. Snead, ‘Repetition as a Figure of Black Literature’, in H. L. Gates, ed., *Black Literature and Literary Theory* (New York and London: Methuen, 1984), pp. 59-79.

<sup>736</sup> *Saglego*, p. 17.

<sup>737</sup> Cf. U. Amoa, *Poétique de la poésie des tambours* (Paris : L’Harmattan, 2002), p. 127.

Son of my fathers!	Fils de mes pères !
Son of my fathers!	Fils de mes pères !
Son of my fathers!	Fils de mes pères !
When you will go to Abidjan	Quand tu iras à Abidjan,
will go to Kumassi!	Tu iras à Kumassi !
There is a tomb!	Il y a une tombe !
A small tomb!	Une petite tombe !
There is a tomb!	Il y a une tombe !
The tomb of a man!	La tombe d'un homme !
There is a tomb!	Il y a une tombe !
Will you stop?	Tu t'arrêteras ?
Pour	Verse,
Pour	Verse,
Pour on it	Verse sur elle
Some motherly milk! <sup>738</sup>	Du lait maternel !

Many words and phrases are repeated here for different purposes. The repetition of ‘tomb’ lays emphasis on death, the subject matter of the narrative. The repetition of ‘son’ in the beginning, and of ‘pour’ at the end of the stanza, is particular. It is a representation of a way of drumming which repeats the same thing twice or three times as if to create an effect of suspense and then at the third or fourth time repeats it by adding a complement to it, like ‘Son of my fathers’ and ‘Pour on it...’ Pacéré’s writing style reflects the beating rhythm of the *bendre* in a way that is analogous to Carleton’s phonetics following Irish dialect.

However, it can be objected to the identification (above) of the three movements of drum literature in the poetry of Pacéré (considering the collections as being two long poems) that many of the poems in these two collections have had an independent existence prior to their being put together. In fact, we have already shown that Pacéré composed them when he was still a secondary school student and performed them in the drama societies he directed. In his preface to the first collection, *Refrains sous le Sahel*, the professor Joseph Ki-Zerbo refers to this earlier existence of some of the poems in the collection and to the fact that Pacéré even burnt some of his earlier manuscripts. The

<sup>738</sup> *Du lait*, p. 12.

professor goes on to say something more relevant to my analysis of the collection as a long poem when he says: ‘It is “these remains of a consumed whole,” which, arranged and completed, are today proposed to the public.’<sup>739</sup> Therefore, the prior existence of the individual manuscripts integrated into the collection does not constitute an objection to my argument, since these poems have been arranged and completed for the purpose we have identified above. ‘The text,’ Roland Barthes argues, ‘is a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centres of culture.’<sup>740</sup> Pacéré’s work of editing was similar to quoting from different cultural sources to make a point. Even the other collections present this aspect of weaving of zabyuya following a ternary structure. *La poésie des griots* is an example to that effect.

In *La poésie des griots*, the three movements aforementioned clearly appear step by step, as the poet begins with a geographic description of the place or territory (Ici.../ here...) followed by the introduction to the poetry.<sup>741</sup> Then, in the second movement, he proceeds with an address to visible and invisible powers of the host region and courtesy greetings to the king (My regards to history/And to my fathers...<sup>742</sup>). Following this address, the Ben-Naba gives the narrative, which is punctuated by a refrain taken up by the other tam-tams. After this weaving of zabyuya taken from different artists and centres of culture, there is a dialogue between the Ben-Naba and the others before the Ben-Naba concludes, bringing us to the third movement or conclusion: ‘Goodbye/People of Manéga/I will come back...’<sup>743</sup>

In this way, *La poésie des griots* follows the three-fold structure of the ‘spoken literature’ of the *Bendre*. It follows a fixed structure similar to early religious and legal utterances that were stored through rhyme and meter or ‘tried words’ (Cf. I.1.C). Even the formal constitution of each collection in one long poem reflects the literature of tam-tam which is constituted of one poem per session, though many themes may be juxtaposed. Thus, Pacéré’s poetry reflects the structure and flow of tam-tam literature and is also true to the social organisation where collectivity prevails over individuality. In the same way

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<sup>739</sup> *Refrains*, p. 5 : ‘C’est ce reste d’un tout consumé’ qui, arrangé et complété, est proposé aujourd’hui au public.’

<sup>740</sup> R. Barthes, ‘The Death of the Author’, in D. Lodge, ed., *Modern Criticism and Theory: A Reader* (London and New York: 1988), p. 170.

<sup>741</sup> *La poésie*, p. 5.

<sup>742</sup> Ibid., pp. 8-9. (Mes respects à l’histoire/Et à mes pères...).

<sup>743</sup> Ibid., p. 85. ‘Adieu/Hommes de Manéga/Je reviendrai....’

that many individuals form a community, many fragments put together make up the literature of tam-tams.

However, while in some collections, namely *La poésie des griots* and *Saglego*, where Pacéré appears (in fact he is not) as a mere translator of the poetry of tam-tams, using both its structure and its words (zabyuya), in other collections, especially his first trilogy and other later collections, such as *Poèmes pour l'Angola* and *Les entrailles de la terre*, Pacéré simply uses the framework of the poetry of tam-tam, filling this structure with his own poetical words in a way that is analogous to Carleton's use of Irish narrative framework to tell his own experiences (of the hedge school, Lough Derg, Ribbonism, etc.), as we shall illustrate soon. The following stanza<sup>744</sup> is an example concerning Pacéré. (Bold emphases are mine; they show the beginning of each fragment.)

The sun	1	Le soleil
The sun		Le soleil
Will no longer rise in the East!		Ne se lèvera plus à l'Est !
At Manéga	2	A manéga
All is		Tout est
Black, white, yellow		Noir, blanc, jaune
With crowds;		De monde ;
The flies pray		Les mouchent prient
And weep	3	Et pleurent
To their brains' breaking down,		A se détacher la cervelle,
You will wait for me		Tu m'attendras
On the right or on the left,		A droite ou à gauche,
It does not matter,	4	Peu importe,
We all have		Nous avons tous
The same fate!		Le même destin !
Thus,	5	Ainsi,
All men		Tous les hommes
End their ambiguous adventure		Terminent leur aventure ambiguë
Which drains them against themselves,		Qui les draine contre eux,

<sup>744</sup> *Poèmes*, p. 107.

In this stanza, there are neither proverbs, maxims, nor mottos but only a juxtaposition of five blocks of free verses similar to that of zabyuya in the poetry of the *bendre*. The first fragment deals with the sun, the second is about people of different colours at Manéga, the third about flies and the fourth about waiting for somebody. Only the conclusion introduced by ‘Thus’ (Ainsi) gives meaning to this juxtaposition of fragments, by highlighting its ambiguity: it is an ‘ambiguous adventure’ involving every creature under the sun, humans of all races as well as flying insects, all submitted to the same fate. In this example, Pacéré is a scribe in using the structure of the literature of the *bendre*. He is also a compositor in making this structure his to convey his message.

Carleton also used traditional Irish storytelling structures to tell his own experiences of Lough Derg, Maynooth, hedge school, etc. In *Traits and Stories*, we move from general chat to ghost stories, one story leading to another according to the Irish saying, *tarraigíonn scéal scéal eile*: ‘Sit down, gentlemen,’ said Ned; ‘sit down, Father Ned, you and Father Pether—we’ll have another tumbler; and, as it’s my turn to tell a story, I’ll give yez something to amuse yez.’<sup>745</sup> Ned tells the tale of ‘The Three Tasks’, Shane gives an account of his wedding, etc. Carleton further develops a true storytelling tradition by introducing each member of the ‘village circle’ with identification tags, such as ‘Tom M’Roarkin, the little asthmatic anecdotalian’, ‘old Bill M’Kinny, poacher and horse-jockey’. His overall concern is that of a storyteller, which is to captivate the attention of the audiences, to teach them in an entertaining way. Thus, Carleton tries to reproduce the stories as heard, that is, he tells his stories using the setting and narrative framework in which he heard them. We have shown in part two that Carleton was familiar with the storytelling environment and narrative techniques. ‘A child in the corner, warm with ashes, or rocked in his wooden cradle’, the Irish critic Benedict Kiely writes, ‘he [Carleton] could have looked up when the house filled with neighbours in the evening, heard his father tell such stories, heard his mother sing such songs’.<sup>746</sup> Carleton’s print literature is a facsimile of this ‘spoken literature’ in regard to audience (reader, neighbours), time sequence (evening) and setting (fireside). Carleton’s talents remain

<sup>745</sup> *T.&S. I*, p. 22. It is the same text as in the first edition of the first series (1830), at the exception of ‘you’ being transcribed there as ‘yes’ instead of ‘yez’ as in the quote.

<sup>746</sup> B. Kiely, *Poor Scholar*, p. 16.

rooted in the oral culture of cultural Irish folkways, as he adopts Irish storytelling framework to ‘dress’ his printed narratives, by using telling (*diegesis*) and showing (*mimesis*) techniques.

Telling and showing methods lie side by side in Carleton’s narratives. The showing method is predominantly used in the fireside stories, that is, the first four stories of volume one of *Traits and Stories* (1830, 1843) which present a formal unity of setting, Ned M’Keown’s fireside, and manner of storytelling, everybody in the group tells a story. However, like the Italian poet Boccace (1313-1375), the English poet and taleteller Chaucer (ca. 1340-1400), and the Irish writer Griffin (1803-1849) who all embarked on and then abandoned the fireside device, Carleton also decided to drop the formal use of this technique. Griffin, in *Hollandtide* [1827] set the scene, and had one character say, ‘Gather round the fire, do ye, and let everybody tell his story after his own way’, but then changes his mind to avoid the direct narrative: ‘Avowing the source from which his materials were taken, the collector thinks himself entitled to tell the stories after his own liking.’<sup>747</sup> Carleton too dropped this fireside device after ‘The Battle of the Factions’ (1830, 1843) with the following explanation, which is also a justification of his use of showing method in his stories:

[It was the original intention of the author to have made every man in the humble group about Ned M’Keown’s hearth narrate a story illustrating Irish life, feeling, and manners; but on looking into the matter more closely, he had reason to think that such a plan, however agreeable for a time, would ultimately narrow the sphere of his work, and perhaps fatigue the reader by a superfluity of Irish dialogue and its peculiarities of phraseology. He resolved therefore, at the close of the Battle of the Factions, to abandon his original design, and leave himself more room for description and observation.]<sup>748</sup>

Carleton, like Pacéré in some ways, has been working within the narrative cycle of orature performance, formally with regards to his first four stories which form the first volume of the first series (1830) of which ‘Ned M’Keown’ is an introduction, and informally with the other stories of the first and second series, as these relate mainly to his own experiences of faction-fighting, religion and school. His explanation above, which did not

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<sup>747</sup> Gerald Griffin, *Hollandtide & The Aylmers of Ballymer*, cited in B. Hayley, *Carleton’s Traits and Stories*, p. 416.

<sup>748</sup> *T. & S. I*, p. 144.

feature in the first edition of the first series (1830), came after the event in order to justify his shift from formal to informal use of the narrative framework.

Carleton's reason for using the showing method is that it is able to express aspects of spoken language, or what he calls the 'superfluity of Irish dialogue and its peculiarities of phraseology' which are present in all his stories. His justification for abandoning it is in order to give 'more room for description and observation'; 'more room' means that there were description and observation though these were given little room. Thus, Carleton can be seen as trying to find a balance in his use of showing and telling techniques, or in his use of Irish dialogue and phraseology along with authorial descriptions and observations, as he uses both devices in all his stories. For example, in the first five pages of 'Ned M'Keown' (1830, 1843), Carleton is involved in using the telling method to present the setting, Ned's house in Kilrudden and its surrounding areas, and the characters' personalities to the audience. Then, he switches to the showing method where we learn about the characters' motivations through dialogues:

'Indeed, childher, it's no wonder for yez to enquire! Where did I get him, dick?—musha, and where would I get him but in the ould place a-hagur; with the ould set: don't yez know that a dacent place or dacent company wouldn't sarve Ned?—nobody but Shane Martin, and Jimmy Tague, and the other blackguards.'

'And what will you do with him, Nancy?'

'Och! Thin, Dick, avourneen, it's myself that's jist tired thinking of that; at any rate, consuming to the loose foot he'll get this blessed month to come, Dick, agra!'<sup>749</sup>

Then, the dramatic method is suddenly interrupted by two paragraphs of telling:

'During these conversations, Ned would walk on between his two guards with a dogged-looking and condemned face; Nancy behind him, with his own cudgel, ready to administer an occasional bang, whenever he attempted to slacken his pace, or throw over his shoulder a growl of dissent or justification.

On getting near home, his neighbours would occasionally pop out their heads, with a smile of good-humoured satire on their faces...<sup>750</sup>

At this stage, an intruding note embodying the characteristic of 'telling' tells the reader not to rely on the personalities of the characters as seen through the dialogues: 'The reader, here, is not to rely implicitly upon the accuracy of Nancy's description of the persons

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<sup>749</sup> *T.&S. I*, p. 6.

<sup>750</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

alluded to. (...) Shane was a rollicking, fighting, drinking butcher, who cared not a fig whether he treated you to a drink or a drubbing.<sup>751</sup>

As it appears, even within the fireside stories, Carleton combines telling and showing methods for the purpose of description and to convey aspects of orality. A similar process of intercalation or merging of telling and showing techniques is used throughout the whole collection of stories. In ‘Phelim O’Toole’s Courtship’ (1830, 1844), for example, there is farce and melodrama: while the narrator addresses his readers straightforwardly with the telling method, he also allows the characters to carry the story forward in direct speech. Likewise, in ‘The Midnight Mass’ (1830, 1843), the narrator, after his telling narrative, resorts to the showing technique: the dramatic ordeal of touching the corpse is told in dialogue, with Frank’s false oath at its centre. In ‘The Poor Scholar’ (1830, 1844) too, Carleton lets the story emerge in dialogue: the Yallow Sam plot is mostly told in dialogue, down to the landlord’s final questioning that reveals the agent’s misdeeds. In ‘The Battle of the Factions’ (1830, 1843), the merging of the two methods appears in the transitions from the hedge schoolmaster’s ‘manuscripts’ to his seemingly ‘oral’ relation<sup>752</sup> of the account of the battle. In ‘The Party Fight and Funeral’ (1832, 1843), the emancipation of this narrator, a typical Carleton ‘I’ who attended a hedge school with his friend Denis Kelly and who stepped out of the peasant life,<sup>753</sup> produces a piece of orature when his old *pisthrogues* are instantly revived by seeing a coffin, and in the ‘tall English’ of a schoolmaster, he describes the Irish superstitions with practical details.

Thus, by using showing and telling, specific ‘literary grammars’ and different devices such as phonetic transcription, repetition, quotation marks, italics, capitalisation and presentation on the page and narrative framing, Carleton and Pacéré mix spoken and written modes together, producing works that lie between transcription and composition. Composition, in the context of Carleton’s and Pacéré’s writings, means the organisation of two traditions to create an in-between literary form, *orature*, which vacillates between transcription and composition, being at the cusp between ‘spoken literature’ and literacy, superposing elements of both sources and addressing many audiences. Carleton and Pacéré successfully conveyed ‘spoken literature’ in written form; this form in turn is used

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<sup>751</sup> Ibid., p. 6.

<sup>752</sup> Cf. *T. & S. I*, p. 116 for ‘oral relation’, p. 136 for ‘manuscript’.

<sup>753</sup> Cf. *T. & S. I*, pp. 182, 189.

for the service of ‘spoken literature’ as an aid to performance through which ‘written literatures’ go back to their natural settings, as recycling is characteristic of literature. Their artistic transcriptions also conveyed the other core element of orature, that is, mixture of performance genres, which the following chapter will show.

## Chapter Two: Mixed Performance Genres in the Works of Carleton and Pacéré

The literary works of Carleton and Pacéré contain cultural elements of Irish and Burkinabé traditions in terms of mixture of two modes, as shown in the preceding chapter, and of mixed performance genres so that a deeper understanding of these works necessitates the knowledge of the cultures in which these works are moulded, as both writers used literary devices to capture, in print form, ‘senses of oral cultures’. The importance of this way of approaching literary works explains why many voices have been raised in recent years to caution critics against the danger of evaluating a work of art by disassociating it from the culture in which it was shaped and fashioned. Eldred Jones, for example, said: ‘The critic of traditional African literature, it is clear, must steep himself in the tradition from which the work springs and not confine himself to what is transferable on paper, and particularly in a foreign language.’<sup>754</sup> What is written in an author’s second language, and this is the case for both Carleton and Pacéré, is the expression of images that are originally in this author’s first language. A critic’s assessment remains superficial if it forgets about the original language and the culture associated with it. The same remark is true of early nineteenth-century Irish literature. The ways in which the audiences of the authors’ times appreciated these literatures were not the same then as now.

The first two chapters helped us to gain insight into the traditions from which Carleton and Pacéré’s works emerged. In those chapters we have shown how such factors as hybridity in the social context of early nineteenth century Ireland and Burkina Faso and in the biographies of Carleton and Pacéré, and the acquaintance of the audience with the practice of reading aloud or performance, predisposed Carleton and Pacéré to produce works which belong to the literary form of orature. The definition of orature in the earlier chapter also highlighted the fact that authorship in works of orature is not of primary importance, as authorship in these arts involves both transcription and creation, both collective authorship and individual influences. Drawing from the conclusions and recommendations of these chapters, the present one aims at showing how hybrid are the works that are commonly referred to as poetry, short story, drama or novel, with illustrations from Carleton’s *Traits and Stories* and Pacéré’s ‘poetry’. This chapter will

look at textual evidence of the mixture of performance genres in Carleton's *Traits and Stories* and in Pacéré's poetry and will show the presence in them of songs, music, descriptions of dance, drawings, short stories or plays. Thus, both writers tried to represent in textual print medium the cultural entertainments that was depicted in figure one in the general introduction when many arts (dance, music, song, poetry storytelling, drama) are simultaneously performed in one session by different actors. For illustrations, we will restrict examples to one or two stories (from the complete definitive 1843-1844 edition of *Traits and Stories*) and poems by Pacéré, as case studies.

### III.2.a) Carleton's *Traits and Stories* and Pacéré's Poetry as Descriptions of Dance

Taking dance as theatre of the mute body, a language which functions without words, one can consider dancing as a way of speaking or of weaving a text, the dancer offering his body as a narrative. Such dances have found expressions in forms as diverse as 'Irish mumming plays, or spectacles of street theatre such as the Galway-based company Macnas creates,' A. J. Fletcher observes, while dealing with performance history.<sup>755</sup> If a book can be written about dance, it can only be through verbal description of how the dance operates and with illustrated pictures to visualise how to dance it. In this sense, one can see Carleton providing his readers with the name of the dance (e.g. 'the *Humours of Glin*'), with the appropriate music that accompanies it ('the music') and with visual illustrations of the dance (Harvey's etching), the nonverbal features which he used to invite his readers to a dance performance. Within the context of the practice of reading-aloud and with internal textual evidence of intrusions for comments or performance, one could imagine that anytime the reader would read about dancing, the audience would spontaneously interrupt the reader by making comments or executing any kind of performance suggested by what is read, and in this way, resurrect all aspects of the oral entertainment that is written in printed form.

'Shane Fadh's Wedding' is an example of a description of dance in printed form, as Carleton tries in his narratives to capture Irish oral culture in its details; in Carleton's fireside stories alone, the word 'dance' occurs at least forty times. We are constantly told

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<sup>754</sup> E. Jones, 'The Role of the African Critic', in Society of African Culture, *The African Critic and his People*, p. 190.

that songs and dance accompany the stories. Carleton, who had been a graceful dancer, knew what dancing and music meant to the participants. Therefore, many a time, he described dances and dancers. For example, in a note on ‘Ned M’Keown’ (1830, 1843), Carleton described *Screw-pin Dance* and Bob who was a good performer in that particular dance.<sup>756</sup>

The following quotes taken from ‘Shane Fadh’s Wedding’ illustrate how frequently the reader is told that all in ‘Shane Fadh’s Wedding’ is about descriptions of dance, and which is so much part of Irish cultural expression that in some instances below dance is used as a metaphor—for example, eyes dancing. The column for the page numbers shows the many textual references to and invocations of dance, the performance of which involves the participation of a certain number of artists (collective authorship), namely, dancers, musicians (fiddler), singers and on-looking audiences who contribute to this art by their active involvement, criticism and appreciation. The following quotes from Carleton’s 1843 edition of ‘Shane Fadh’s Wedding’ show how the textual edition (as a performative text) evokes dance, for, to use Barthes’ terms, Carleton tried to make his text ‘reach that point where only language acts, ‘performs’, and not ‘[himself]’.<sup>757</sup>

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<sup>755</sup> A. J. Fletcher, ‘Turning and Turning in the Narrowing Gyre: The Shaping of W.B. Yeats’s Dramaturgy and its Sense of Irish Performance history’, in *Irish Studies Review*, vol. 13, 2 (May 2005), 217.

<sup>756</sup> *T. & S. I*, p. 5.

<sup>757</sup> R. Barthes, ‘The Death of the Author’, p. 168.



Page Numbers	'Shane Fadh's Wedding'
51	Picture above
56	But there she was—the bright eyes <b>dancing</b> with joy in her head to see me. I bating them all leaping, <b>dancing</b> , and throwing the stone.
63	The <b>Fiddler</b> was to come with ourselves, in order, you know, to have a <b>dance</b> at the priest's house, and to play for us coming and going; for there's nothing like a taste of <b>music</b> when one's <i>on</i> for sport.
64	I thought everything was <b>dancing</b> and smiling about me, and certainly everyone said, that such a couple hadn't been married, nor such a wedding seen in the parish for many years before. All the time, as we went along, we had the <b>music</b> .  We then went straight to his Reverence's barn, which had been cleared out for us

65	the day before, by his own directions, where we <b>danced</b> for an hour or two, his Reverence and his Curate along with us.
73	Billy was now getting pacified, bekase they gave way to him a little; so the fun went round, and they <b>sang</b> , roared, <b>danced</b> , and courted, right and left.
77	By the time the company was hard and fast at the punch, the <b>songs</b> , and the <b>dancing</b> . (...) When we made our appearance, the flure instantly cleared for us, a she and I <b>danced</b> the <i>Humours of Glin</i> .
77	Well, it is no matter—it's all past now, and she lies low; but I may say that it wasn't very often <b>danced</b> in better style since, I'd wager. (...) and—hem—and when the <b>dance</b> was over, how she stood leaning upon me, and my heart within melting to her...
78	In this way we passed the time till the evening came on, except that Mary and the bridesmaid were sent for to <b>dance</b> with the priests.
78	... their Reverences within have a bit of a <b>dance</b> ...
78	... there was Father Corrigan planted upon the side of a settle, Mary along with him, waiting till they'd have the fling of a <b>dance</b> together, whilst the Curate was capering on the flure before the bridesmaid, who was a purty dark-haired girl, to <b>the tune of 'Kiss my lady'</b> ; ...
78	Whilst Father James was <b>dancing</b> with the bridesmaid, I gave Mary the wink to come away from Fr Corrigan... Mary, in the mean time, had got up, and was coming away, when his Reverence wanted her to stay till they'd finish their <b>dance</b> .
78	... 'Shane,' says his Reverence, winking at me, and spaking in a whisper, 'stay here, you and the girls, till we take a hate at the <b>dancing</b> ...
79	'sure you needn't dashed before them—they'll <b>dance</b> themselves'.
79	'Come away,' says [Mary], 'lave them there, and let us go to where I can have a <b>dance</b> with yourself, Shane.'
79	...[Mary] looked so tall and illegant, that you wouldn't think she was a farmer's daughter at all; so we left the priests <b>dancing</b> away, for we could do no good before them.

	When we had <b>dance</b> an hour or so, them that the family had the greatest regard for were brought in, ...
79	After tay the ould folk got full of talk; the youngsters <b>danced</b> round them; the friar <b>sung</b> [sic] like a thrush, and told many a droll <b>story</b> . The tailor had got drunk a little too early, and had to be put to bed, but he was now as fresh as ever, and able to <b>dance</b> a <b>hornpipe</b> , which he did on a door. The Dorans and the Flanagans had got quite thick after drubbing one another—Ned Doran began his courtship with Alley Flanagan on that day, and they were married soon after, so that the two factions joined, and never had another battle until the day of her berrial when they were at it as fresh as ever. Several of those that were at the wedding were lying drunk about the ditches, or roaring, and swaggering, and <b>singing</b> about the place. The night falling, those that were <b>dancing</b> on the green removed to the barn. Father Corrigan and Father James weren't ill off; but as for the friar, although he was as pleasant as a lark, there was hardly any such thing as making him tipsy. Father Corrigan wanted him to <b>dance</b> —‘What!’ says he, ‘would you have me to bring on an earthquake, Michael? (...) By the bones of St. Dominick, I'd desarve to be suspinded if I did. Will no one tell me who mixed this, I say, for they had a jewel of a hand at it?—Och—
79-80	
80	
80	<p style="text-align: center;">‘Let parsons prache and pray—      Let priests too pray and prache, Sir;      What’s the rason they      Don’t practice what they tache, Sir?      Forral, orral, loll,      Forral, orral, laddy—  <i>Sho da slainthat ma collenee agus ma bouchalee.</i> Hoigh, oigh, oigh, healths all!      (...)’</p>
80	The masther then took a sate himself, and looked on while they were <b>dancing</b> , with a smile of good humour on his face—

All emphases in bold type are mine.<sup>758</sup> The highlights help us to see ‘Shane Fadh’s Wedding’ as a mixture of drawing (see sketch by Harvey 3 pages before), descriptions of dance, music, song, theatre and story, with descriptions of dance holding the predominant place. The etching by Harvey synthesises this mixture of performing genres: in the

depiction one can see people talking in a room while the newly wed couple and other people are dancing outside to the sound of music, after having eaten and drunk; on-lookers are sitting down watching the spectacle and gossiping. Drawing is used here as a ‘literary genre’ to encapsulate the story about ‘Shane Fadh’s Wedding’. By the 1843 edition of *Traits and Stories*, Carleton had different illustrations from different artists to choose from. The illustration for ‘Shane Fadh’s Wedding’ in the 1830 edition of the first series was by W. H. Brooke and represented a fight rather than a dance,<sup>759</sup> as Carleton described fight as a component part of Irish dancing amusements when he said that it was usual for ‘crack dancers from opposite parishes, or from distant parts of the same parish, to meet and dance against each other for victory’.<sup>760</sup> With this association of dance and faction fighting, ‘Shane Fadh’s Wedding’ as a book describing dance would be incomplete without the mention of a fight. Faction fight is mentioned in this ‘dance book’ when Carleton reported that ‘The Dorans and the Flanagans had got quite thick after drubbing one another—Ned Doran began his courtship with Alley Flanagan on that day, and they were married soon after, so that the two factions joined, and never had another battle until the day of her berrial when they were at it as fresh as ever’.

While Brooke illustrates fight as an aspect of Irish dance, the above illustration by Harvey represents a different aspect of Irish wedding as seen in the light of the storyteller’s account of Shane Fadh’s Wedding. These two illustrations cannot be compared to one another, as they do not represent the same aspect of the story, but they contribute to make different aspects of the story more intelligible than the mere written letters of the writer. ‘Shane Fadh’s Wedding’ is thus accessible as a work of collective authorship in which text and image play an important part.

Next, the disposition of the quoted lines of poetry (or song) shows the presence of a drama or dialogue between two persons, one being addressed as ‘Sir’: one asking a question and the other answering it. The layout of the poetic lines is significant in this regard, and more examples will be given later to show their strong dramatic elements, as drama is only evoked here within the confines of dancing.

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<sup>758</sup> The punctuation may seem erratic, as the end quote is missing, but is reproduced from the original.

<sup>759</sup> Cf. ‘An Irish Wedding’, in W. Carleton, *Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry*, ‘First Series’, 2 vols., vol. 1 (Dublin: W. Curry, 1830), p. 116.

<sup>760</sup> ‘The Midnight Mass’, in *T. & S. I*, p. 340.

Then, each time dance is mentioned, song and music are referred to as well: song and music accompany dance. Dancing and other performances were conducted with singing or music, as in the example above. In ‘The Hedge School’ (1830, 1843) too, when Dick Malone was invited to dance the *Humours of Glynn*, he objected he could not dance without music: ‘Who’ll sing, Sir? For I can’t be aither dancin’ a step widout the music.’<sup>761</sup> Mr Kavanagh sang ‘Too-ra-loo-ra-loo-ral’ for him to dance. Sometimes, Carleton gives the air of the music used to accompany dances, such as music of the air of Cannie Soogah or the air of ‘Little House under the Hill’.<sup>762</sup> The former is ‘The Jolly Pedlar’, an old Irish air; the latter is of Scottish origins.<sup>763</sup>

Another example of performance supported by music appears at the onset of the battle, in ‘The Battle of the Factions’ (1830, 1843), when Carleton uses onomatopoeic words as visual and auditory devices. Pat Frayne’s exuberant dramatization transformed the story into a play, setting the general harmony of the row into music, intermingling sounds of language and cudgelling in a merry crescendo:

For the first twenty minutes the general harmony of this fine row might be set to music, according to a scale something like this: — whick whack—crick crack—whick whack—crick crack—&c.&c.&c. ‘Here yer sowl—(crack)—there yer sowl—(whack.) Whoo for the O’Hallaghans!—(crack, crack, crack.) ‘Hurroo for the O’Callaghans!—(whack, whack, whack.) The O’Callaghans for ever!—(whack) ‘The O’Hallaghans for ever!—(crack.) Blood and turf!—(whack, whick)—tunther-an-ouns’—(crack, crick.) ‘Hurroo! my darlings! handle your kippeens—(crack, crack)—the O’Hallagans are going!—(whack, whack.)’<sup>764</sup>

This stylistic extravagance, which bombards the eye with dashes and brackets for musical sound, gives an animated picture of a faction fight. Music served as support to action in a way that calls to mind war music. With striking visual images such as W. H. Brooke’s illustration of this fight in the 1830 edition of the story in the first series or the four illustrations, two of which were by Phiz, in the 1843 edition of the story in the first volume of *Traits and Stories* and with the soundtrack above, ‘The Battle of the Factions’ becomes like a film script, endowed as it is with image, sound, and with a camera (the

<sup>761</sup> *T.&S. I*, p. 316.

<sup>762</sup> *T.&S. I*, pp. 4 and p. 47.

<sup>763</sup> Cf. <[www.leeds.ac.uk/music/info/RRTuneBk/gettune/0000004b.html](http://www.leeds.ac.uk/music/info/RRTuneBk/gettune/0000004b.html)> (Accessed on 8 March 2006).

<sup>764</sup> *T.&S. I*, pp. 136-137.

spectator's eyes) zooming on some actors (the bridesmaid, the bridegroom, the crowd and the priests).

The illustrations were sought by Carleton and used by him as a technique to transcribe the oral Irish literature in print form, as verbal descriptions do not always successfully convey the object that is depicted. For example, after describing ‘Cork-red phaties’ with words, Carleton finally felt constrained to use an illustration, as a last resource to make the audience see the image he tried to depict, by inserting this note: ‘The engraving at the end of this Tale represents the real Cork red-drawn from the life itself by Mr. MacManus.’<sup>765</sup> The telling of the tale is thus a collaborative action involving a musician and storyteller (Carleton) and illustrators (e.g. Phiz, MacManus). The illustrations changed from one artist to another, so did the representation of the sound, as can be seen in the excerpts below.

whick whack—crick crack—whick whack—crick crack ||: crack crack—whack whick—whack whick—crack crack—whack crack—whick crack—whick crack—whack crack ||—with my whack—with my whick ||: with my whick—with my whack || with my whick whack—with my crack crack || with my whack which—with my crack crack ||: whack, with my whick with my whack—with my crack, crack, crack || with my whack with my whick—with my crack, crack, crack || with my whack with my whick with my crack || with my whack with my crack, crack, crack || with my whick whack—crick crack—whack, whack, whack, &c. &c. &c. 'Here yer sowl—(crack) —there yer sowl—(whack.) Whoos for the O'Hallaghans!—(crack, crack, crack.) 'Hurroo for the O'Callaghans!—(whack, whack, whack.) The O'Callaghans for ever!—(whack.) 'The O'Hallaghans for ever!—(crack.) 'Murther! murther!—(crick, crack) —foul! foul!—(whick, whack.) Blood and turf!—(whack, whick)—tunther-an-euns'—(crack, crack, crack.) 'Hurroo! my darlin! handle your kippeens—(crack, crack)—the O'Hallaghans are going!—(whack, whack.)

" You are to suppose them here to have been at it for about half an hour.

" Whack, crack—'Oh—oh—oh! have mercy upon me, boys—(crack—a shriek of murther!) murther!—crack, crack, whack)——my life—my life—(crack, crack—whack, whack)—eb! for the sake of the livin' Father!—for the sake of my wife and

'The Battle of the Factions', first edition of the first series in 2 vols., vol. 1 (Dublin: Curry, 1830), p. 260.

scribe what followed. For the first twenty minutes the general harmony of this fine row might be set to music, according to a scale something like this:—Whick whack—erick crack—whick whack—erick crack—&c. &c. &c. ‘Here yer sowl!—(crack)—there yer sowl!—(whack.) Whoof for the O’Hallaghans!—(crack, crack, crack.) ‘Hurroo for the O’Callaghans!—(whack, whack, whack.) The O’Callaghans for ever!—(whack) ‘The O’Hallaghans for ever!—(crack.) ‘Murther! murther! (erick, crack)—fool! fool!—(whick, whack.) Blood and turf!—(whack, whick)—tunther-an-oun’s!—(crack, erick.) ‘Hurroo! my darlings! handle your kippeneens—(crack, crack)—the O’Hallagans are going!—(whack, whack.)

" You are to suppose them here to have been at it for about half an hour.

"Whack, crack—oh—oh—oh! have mercy upon me, boys—(crack—a shriek of murther! murther—crack, crack, whack)—my life—my life—(crack, crack—whack, whack)—oh! for the sake of the living Father!—for the sake of my wife and childher, Ned Hallaghan, spare my life."

" 'So we will, but take this, any how'—(whack, crack, whack, crack.)  
" 'Oh! for the love of God don't kill—(whack, crack, whack.)  
Oh!—(crack, crack, whack.)

" 'Huzza! huzza! huzza!' from the O'Hallaghans. 'Bravo, boys! there's one of them done for: whoo! my darlings! hurroo! the O'Hallaghans for ever!'

‘The Battle of the Factions’, complete edition in 2 vols., vol.1, 1843, pp. 136-137, and in William Tegg’s edition, 1869, pp. 136-137.

<sup>765</sup> 'The Battle of the Factions', in *T.&S. I*, p. 126; engraving, p. 144.

It can be noticed that, though the dashes, exclamations and parentheses surrounding ‘whick-whack, crick-crack’ are continuously used in all three editions above, Carleton used paralleled bars (||) in the first edition, but dropped them in his subsequent editions. The double bars translate the aural and musical dimensions of the story. Carleton uses them to illustrate his saying that ‘the general harmony of the fine row might be set to music’.<sup>766</sup> He uses this device to harmonise his music, which is doted with a chorus, italicized in the first edition, but suppressed, along with many ‘whick-wacks’, in the subsequent edition or retelling of the story. The double bars, also called ‘measure’ in music, designate ‘a group of beats that is repeated with a consistent rhythm throughout a piece or passage of music’,<sup>767</sup> after which the chorus joins in. By using this device, Carleton inserts music in his storytelling for readers-musicians. In the other editions, he suppressed the device but kept the dashes, ‘crick-crack’ and the information that the general harmony of the fight can be set to music, and increased the number of the illustrations from one to four. Music has the same effects in all editions with the difference that the details are reduced in the following editions, in a way that is comparable to different sessions of telling the same story. The suppression of details does not make the story better or worse in the sense that Carleton is not correcting mistakes by doing that, but is retelling the same story differently.

These case-study examples show the complementarity of arts, as stories are told while music and dances are held and painting and music help to perform the written text. Carleton invites his readers to performance when he said explicitly in ‘The Midnight Mass’:

While the usual variety of Irish dances—the reel, jig, fling, three-part-reel, four-part-reel, rowly-powly, country-dance, cotillon, or cut-along (as the peasantry call it), minuet, vulgarly minion, and minionet—were going forward in due rotation, our readers may be assured that those who were seated around the walls did not permit the time to pass without improving it.<sup>768</sup>

His audience improved it with music, stories and talks often productive of bloodshed. Provided with all these elements (dance, music, storytelling, faction fight), ‘Shane Fadh’s Wedding’ has thus all the qualities of an Irish book of dance. Dance is linked with the

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<sup>766</sup> ‘The Battle of the Factions, in *T. & S. 1*, p. 136.

<sup>767</sup> *Collins English Dictionary* (Glasgow: HarperCollins Publishers, 2000), art. ‘bar’.

<sup>768</sup> *T. & S. 1*, p. 341.

other genres so that though we aimed at showing ‘Shane Fadh’s Wedding’ as a description of dance, we could not avoid pointing out the presence of the other genres. ‘Shane Fadh’s Wedding’ should be considered as an orature construction of dance, that is, a book in which descriptions of dance in view to performance include many other associated performances which are dealt with in the background of my analysis.

Pacéré’s poetry too contains elements of dance; there are numerous descriptions of dances in Pacéré’s poetry. Unlike Carleton, Pacéré does not use illustrations or paintings and musical paralleled bars to transcribe mixture of dance, music and image. He uses instead verbal descriptions and rhythm that are represented by a special layout on the page to transcribe the mixture of genres that is characteristic of ‘spoken literature’, as generally speaking, in many parts of Africa—and in Ireland as exemplified in ‘Shane Fadh’s Wedding’—, song and dance are central to rituals celebrating rain, birth, circumcision, marriage, funerals and to all ordinary ceremonies. ‘Even daily speech among peasants is interspersed with song,’ observes Ngugi who tried himself to incorporate song and dance in the structure and movement of the actors in his play *Ngaahika Ndeenda*.<sup>769</sup> As Pacéré uses the language of tam-tam and masks, which is a ritual language, his poetry incorporates song and dance. *La poésie des griots* is described as a collection of songs obtained from a griot who was the author’s cultural adviser. *Quand s’envolent les gruves couronnées* is a poetical translation of a funeral chant known in Mooré as *Baoulvaonlobo*. This chant accompanies a funeral dance or vice-versa, as the chant evokes the dance. Moreover, Pacéré the poet and the musician is also a dancer like Carleton: he won all the dance competitions he took part in at Koudougou and Ouagadougou in his youth. Therefore, Pacéré has all the assets to be a faithful scribe by transcribing the poetry in the way he experienced it, by using page layout and descriptions, so much so that the written product in print form is at once poetry, music and descriptions of dance.

Many times in Pacéré’s different collections, the readers are reminded that what they have at hand is about song and dance, being often told that the characters are singing and dancing. For example, in the poem ‘Manéga,’ the opening poem of *Refrains sous le Sahel*, the poet invites the griots to tam-tam at his tomb so that from heaven he may dance

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<sup>769</sup> W. T. Ngugi, *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature* (Nairobi: Heinemann Kenya, 1986), p. 45.

the *Warba*, a traditional dance.<sup>770</sup> He also concludes the same collection with a refrain, repeated at the end of each stanza, requesting for music to be played:

You must	Il faut
Beat,	Battre
Beat,	Battre
Beat	Battre
Beat all the tam-tams. <sup>771</sup>	Battre tous les tam-tams.

Using this disposition of the line to convey the rhythm of tam-tams, Pacéré extends an invitation to ‘tam-tam’ and to dance all the rhythms of the tropics. He explained the mechanism of the *warba* dance in the poem ‘Le concours de danse’:

The giraffe trembles,	La girafe tremble,
Trembles with its offspring,	Tremble avec sa progéniture,
The heads revolve	Les têtes tournent,
Revolve,	Tournent,
Revolve as billiard balls,	Tournent comme des billes de billards,
All is dark,	Tout est sombre,
It is a dance competition,	C'est un concours de danse,
(...)	(...)
It is the competition of WARBA	C'est le concours de WARBA
Of frenetic WARBA	De WARBA endiable

Dancers of *warba* have nicknames: ‘The giraffe’ is probably one such nickname. To dance the *warba*, one has to make one’s whole body, except the feet and the head, move clock-and-anti-clockwise successively. The author describes this process with the adequate verb ‘tremble’. The head may turn or do something else that is not caused by the movement of the trunk. As it is a competition, dancers turn to look at each other in an attempt to perform better. While making these movements, the dancer steps forward and backward while making progress forward. This progression is described in ‘Poèmes pour l’Angola’

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<sup>770</sup> Cf. *Refrains*, p. 21.

<sup>771</sup> Ibid., p. 86.

as ‘one step/ Forward/ On/ One step/ Backward’,<sup>772</sup> and in greater detail in *Du lait pour une tombe*:

I always follow	Je suis toujours
The steps	Les pas
Of	Du
The big Tam-tam.	Gros Tam-tam.
Some	Des
Castanets	Castagnettes
That	Qui
Have	Ont
Won	Remporté
All the	Tous les
Prizes	Prix,
Try	Tentent
To rhythm the	De marquer le
Pace.	Pas.
One step forward!	Un pas en avant!
One step forward!	Un pas en avant!
One step	Un pas
One step forward	Un pas en avant
One step forward;	Un pas en avant ;
Even though	Même si
The man dances	L’homme danse
Always	Toujours
In	En
A circle,	Rond,
He	Il
Must always	Doit toujours
Move forward!	Avancer !
His	Les
Slippers	Babouches
Are	Sont,

<sup>772</sup> *Poèmes*, p. 31 : Un pas/ En avant/ Sur/ Un pas/ En arrière. See also p. 28 : ‘Des danses/ De warba/ En Angolais’.

Ashen-grey	D'un gris cendré ;
His	Le
Baggy trousers	Pantalon bouffant
Are	Est
All darkened	Tout sombre
With indigo	D'indigo
His grid	La chemise
Woven	De
Shirt	Grille
Burns	Brûle
Under	Sous
The heat	La chaleur
Of	Des
Sweats.	Sueurs.
His bonnet	Le bonnet
Is	Est
All covered	Tout couvert
With	De
<i>Cauris</i> from the South.	<i>Cauris</i> du sud.
And	Et
The man	L'homme
Still moves forward	Avance toujours
Taking	A
Small steps! <sup>773</sup>	Petits pas !

Using lines of irregular lengths to represent musical cadence, in these lines Pacéré mentions first the instruments of music (tam-tam and castanets) used in this dance to time the pace of the dancers. Castanets play background music; they are usually used by the dancers themselves while dancing. The big tam-tam plays the main role. The combination of castanets, which are used only for musical purposes, with the big tam-tam used for long-distance messages, expresses the acts of transfer of music, dance and poetry, each of which can be the code of messaging.

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<sup>773</sup> *Du lait*, pp. 28-29.

After the instruments, Pacéré describes the way of dancing: the moving forward and backward is compared to a circle, but a moving circle since the movement brings the dancer always further forward. Descriptions here, as in Carleton's stories, function (but not as powerfully) as illustrations, as they aim at conveying a pictorial image to the audience so that provided with sound and image, they could stage the performance.

Pacéré's above pictorial descriptions are similar to the following description of early nineteenth-century Irish minstrels by an outsider, W. M. Thackeray:

Round each set of dancers the people formed a ring, in the which the figurants and coryphées went through their operations, the toes went in, and the toes went out, then there came certain mystic figures of hands across and so forth. I never saw less grace... The people, however, took a great interest, and it was 'well done, Tim!' 'Step out, Miss Brady!' and so forth during the dance.<sup>774</sup>

This description is an example of how outsiders can show their illiteracy or ignorance in their appreciation of cultural expressions with which they are not familiar; subtleties are lost to some foreign observers such as Thackeray. However, his account of Irish dance reveals some similarities with Pacéré's narrative: the way of dancing, of moving forth and back in Pacéré's description or moving in and out in Thackeray's depiction of Irish dance, is similar. Also common is the gathering around a circle. Dancers in both cultures also wear special dresses. Pacéré describes the dress of the dancer from toe up: shoes, trousers, shirt, and hat, as described in the poem above, are traditional vestments used by the dancers of *warba*. The dressing of the country dancing master with 'his little pumps, little white stockings, his coaxed drab breeches, his hat, smart in its cock but brushed to a polish, and standing upon three hairs, together with his tight questionable-coloured gloves,'<sup>775</sup> as described by Carleton, reveals some similarities. In both cultures, the dancer is dressed in such a way as to draw the attention of the onlookers. The dressing is an expression of the literariness of dance as literary genre or fiction. The dressing reveals a move from an ordinary world to a world of fiction where ordinary gestures acquire metaphorical meanings in another system of writing. The performer of Pacéré's poems is invited to join action to reading in the way it is suggested by the author in his descriptions. Thus, by using narrative descriptions for visual representations of scenes, and layout on page to represent rhythm and musical sounds, Pacéré invites his audience who are

<sup>774</sup> W. M. Thackeray, *The Irish Sketch-Book* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1863), p. 146.

<sup>775</sup> W. Carleton, *Amusing Irish Tales*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (London: Simpkin, ca 1889), p. 10.

equipped with the necessary means to perform or recreate the ‘spoken literature’ that is thus transcribed in printed form. Thus, descriptive and performative modes are not self-exclusive but are complementary, one calling for the other, as the descriptions of dances or games (cf. III.2.d) suggest and facilitate performances of that which cannot be otherwise conveyed on paper than through descriptions.

### III.2.b) Carleton’s and Pacéré’s Works as Poetry, Music and Song

We have already shown how song and music have pride of place in Irish and Burkinabe cultures and how works (Gil Blas, ‘Willy Reilly’, etc.) were adapted, changing from novel to play and vice versa. The harp as Irish emblem from the nineteenth century onwards testifies to the importance of music for the Irish people. No single story in *Traits and Stories* is without reference to or citation of songs or music. In fact, Carleton told the stories he heard from his father and accompanied them by the songs he heard from his mother so that his transcriptions of the oral performances into the printed medium are a hybrid mixture of stories, music and song.

Carleton, we have already shown, was able to develop a popular song, ‘Willy Reilly’, into a novel, *Willy Reilly and His Dear Colleen Bawn* (1855), thus bridging the division of genres, as ‘Willy Reilly’ now refers to a song and to a novel, or a novel in which there are song elements. Carleton’s novel contributed to the survival and popularity of this song by writing it down. Well before his novel, Carleton used the song in his stories: in ‘The Geography of an Irish Oath’, Carleton had a man mourning the death of his wife sing this popular song.<sup>776</sup> References to songs like this pervade *Traits and Stories* as an expression of Carleton’s attempt at transcribing all aspects of hybrid nineteenth-century Irish oral performances.

In live public entertainments in nineteenth-century Ireland, song, music, dance and storytelling were simultaneously performed by different artists, as depicted in figure 2 (Cf. General Introduction). Abbreviation is a technique Carleton uses to signal the presence of songs and poetry in his transcriptions of oral literature of mixed genres. The songs he transcribed would have been entirely sung (chorus and verses) in live performances, but Carleton’s references to these songs are usually through short forms, that is, by giving

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<sup>776</sup> *T. & S.* 2, p. 58.

either the names of the composers, the titles of the songs or just by quoting some verses of the songs. Carleton uses this technique of referencing in order to convey a sense of mixture of genres or the hybridity that is characteristic of early nineteenth-century Irish oral performances. For example, Carleton's reference in 'The Three Tasks' (1830, 1843) of 'Nancy sitting at her wheel, singing "Stachan Varagah"'<sup>777</sup> is an abbreviated form of quoting the following song<sup>778</sup> by referring only to its title. The text of the song in English and Irish is below:

The Rakes Frolick, or Stauka an Varaga	
<p>Through nations ranging, raking elements, Spending my days in peace and fellowship, Oro, and plenty good store, In each company fill your bumpers high, With pleasing jollity toast the lasses free, Oro, and drink to your store. Through Munster I rov'd with jovial company, Rowling insport, resorting pleasantly, In each barony through the country, Boozing heartily, crusing gallantly, Oro, and pleasure golore.</p>	<p>Es Buohileen f/sast ha saar arr chanosagh, Da hanigh oan Monister s/faulhe ee yhallo Room, Oro, gus thouir dhum pog. Neer vadah lume eihe Ueenthe er liooba lath Cush thieve varileh en eething maraga, Oro, es da ylaning da score. Prabig noor see agus leenther knogarea, Gallim oam chree ga niolhodb a tharigid, Thiogh a saggarth es bemeestn cagiithe, Mjo vouhill</p>

Carleton's comment in the same story that Jack, after catching the filly, one of the three tasks that are imposed on him, sang 'Love among the Roses',<sup>779</sup> is also a short form of reference to the following song:

#### LOVE AMONG THE ROSES

Young love fled to the Paphian bower,  
And gather'd sweets from many a flower,  
From roses and sweet jessamine,

<sup>777</sup> *T.&S. I*, p. 33.

<sup>778</sup> Transcribed by Jule Hennigan (Notre Dame University) from 'An Answer to Stauka an Vauraga. To which are added Johnny and Nelly. The Phoenix of Ulster, the Banks of the Dee' (Monaghan: Printed by John Brown ca 1790), BL 11622df34 (34).

<sup>779</sup> 'The Three Tasks', *T.&S. I*, p. 33.

The lily and the eglantine,  
The graces there were culling posies  
And found young love among the Roses.  
O! happy day, O! joyous hour,  
Compose a wreath from ev'ry flower,  
Let's bind him to us, ne'er to sever,  
Young love shall dwell with us for ever,  
Eternal springs the wreath composes,  
Content to live among the roses.<sup>780</sup>

These are just examples. Some of the other references are in English; others are in Irish and Latin. The fireside stories alone are a compilation of at least fifteen songs, some of which have been used twice or three times: *Song of Roger M'Cann*, *Song of Katty Roy*, *Dies Irae*, *Hermit of Killarney*, *Stachan Varagah*, *Peggy Na Laveen*, *Paddeen O'Rafferty*, *Love among the Roses*, *The Black Joke*, *Little House Under the Hill*, song ending with ‘his house never wants a good ram-born spoon’, ‘For, you see, if I had’ (verse of an old song), ‘Let Parsons Prache and pray’ (verse), ‘Will you list and come with me, fair maid?’ (verse) and *Silly Ould Man*. Carleton used popular and hedge schoolmasters’ songs which, according to Julie Henigan, ‘exhibit one or more “literary” features which reflect the influence of the classical and Gaelic traditions,’ as a result of social and intellectual changes of the eighteenth century.<sup>781</sup> Classics were orally appropriated, that is, learned by heart, the printed material being used as support in this process (cf. I.2.C.i.). The interplay of oral and literary texts and of elite and popular literatures here is another illustration of the circle of interaction and mutual influences between the different modes of expression of literature which this thesis seeks to highlight. The schoolmasters’ songs were ‘literary’ in two ways: firstly, they were literary in the sense of ‘tried songs’ that were made to last longer in memory through repetitions or performances, as was the printed literature; secondly, they were ‘literary’ by opposition to ‘ordinary’ or casual songs. They were a hybrid genre that used print as aid to memory.

The songs referred to by Carleton, some of which are taken from the repertoire of hedgeschool masters, are from different countries, languages or traditions. The itinerant

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<sup>780</sup> L. Shepard, *The Broadside Ballad: A Study in Origins and Meaning* (Jenkins, 1962), pp. 160-161.

schoolmasters were learned in Latin and Greek and a number of them were established poets before becoming teachers; hence, the literariness and mixture of origins in the repertoire of hedge schoolmasters' songs. Carleton is using some songs of this repertoire as well as traditional Irish songs. The *Dies Irae* (Day of Wrath) is an old Latin hymn of sorrow that was used in Christian countries for worship. *Little House Under the Hill* is from Scotland.<sup>782</sup> Attempts at identifying the sources of all these songs have not always been successful, but it can be said that all the songs were generally known in Britain and in Ireland.

Carleton's reference to songs through abbreviations, that is, by quoting titles or first words deserves commentary and analysis. Behind the use of this procedure lies the assumption that the songs were already known, 'stored' or 'saved' in the memories of Carleton's audiences, just as the *zabyuya* whose opening words Pacéré uses are familiar to an initiated Mooré-speaking audience. Carleton and his contemporary audiences knew the songs he referred to and Carleton's references to the songs in short forms (title, author, verse) is a technique of safely preserving the oral material without uprooting it, as otherwise print kills the spoken word in order to preserve it. The short form of referencing is a good technique of using print as support to memory by giving to singers some clues of the song to help them to remember the entire song and perform it. By using the technique of abbreviations, Carleton shows that the literature he transcribes is more than what is written in print form; on the contrary, what is written down is a summary that is meant to be expanded in performance. Because the readers of Carleton's narratives were familiar with the songs he referred to in short form, Carleton did not see the need to detail the songs; he was not doing the work of a folklorist, but that of an artist of orature. His technique aimed at ensuring the survival of the folklore materials (he used) by suggesting performance. In this context, it is worth reciting here Sir William Wilde's observation in his *Irish Popular Superstitions* of 1852 that 'nothing contributes more to uproot superstitious rites and forms than to print them'<sup>783</sup> and to note Carleton's means of negotiating and avoiding this danger. Carleton's technique of printing only parts of the 'spoken literature' to serve as support to performance was meant to ensure its survival. His

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<sup>781</sup> J. Henigan, 'For Want of Education: the Origins of the Hedge Schoolmaster songs', in <[http://www.mustard.org.uk/articles/hedg\\_sch.htm](http://www.mustard.org.uk/articles/hedg_sch.htm)> (Accessed on 8 March 2006).

<sup>782</sup> Cf. <[www.leeds.ac.uk/music/info/RRTuneBk/gettune/0000004b.html](http://www.leeds.ac.uk/music/info/RRTuneBk/gettune/0000004b.html)> (Accessed on 8 March 2006).

abbreviations are similar to the ‘letters’ or ‘tried words’ used in ‘spoken literatures’, and by using this device Carleton invites the reader to performance in order to recreate the ‘spoken literature’. If today we do not know the complete versions of some songs to which the abbreviations are referring, it may be because we have stopped performing them or expanding the abbreviations to their fuller forms, or have broken off using print as mediation in ‘spoken literature’ in the way Carleton intended by resorting to the technique of abbreviations. ‘Had Carleton’s ideas been widely adopted, country people might have continued to speak Irish [and practice orature I would add] in the home and personal life’, the critic Declan Kiberd observed.<sup>784</sup>

An interesting comparison between Carleton and Pacéré is evident here: Carleton, like Pacéré, cites just some lines of the songs or the first lines of the chorus, as is the case above (e.g. ‘Stachan Varagh’ and ‘Love Among the Roses’). Carleton used the first words of songs in the same way the *bendre* would use the first words of a *zabyuure*; both of them are addressing familiar audiences. In the case of the songs, quoting the first lines or even giving the title or the author of the song is similar to giving the air or tune of music or song to people to start singing it. In the context of reading-aloud, it is possible that at hearing of the mention of a particular song, the audience would sing the whole song or play the whole music of it. However, the ephemeral nature of such performances means that one cannot substantiate this claim by conventional evidence. The observation one can make is that the *zabyuya* in the ‘spoken literature’ of the *bendre* and Carleton’s special abbreviations serve as invitation and support to performance: it is more likely that the whole version of songs rather than the written shorthand version were performed when these stories were read aloud.

The mixture of genres that is characteristic of orature, especially the intertwining mixing of dancing, singing and storytelling, is also present in Carleton’s transcriptions of early nineteenth-century entertainments. While telling his stories Carleton was naturally led to use poetry and at times he did so while apologizing to his readers. At the outset of ‘The Lianhan Shee’ in *The Christian Examiner*, following a stanza of poetry that gives some image of the evening on which the story commences, Carleton felt obliged to add this explanation: ‘Perhaps our readers could dispense with the poetry; but, as our pen ran

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<sup>783</sup> W. R. Wilde, *Irish Popular Superstitions* [1852], quoted by C. Morash, *Writing the Irish Famine* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 161. This was already quoted in III.1.b.

<sup>784</sup> D. Kiberd, *Irish Classics* (London: Granta Books, 2000), p. 282. The bracketed insertion is mine.

almost involuntarily into the lines, we run the risk of letting them stand, particularly as they have the excellence of being short.<sup>785</sup> Carleton's argument that his adding poetry in his story is involuntary shows to what extent genres were intertwined in early nineteenth-century Irish literature. His *Traits and Stories* are strewn with poetic lines and stanzas. The line of demarcation between poetry and song being slim, it is only at the explicit mention of 'poem' or 'song' before the quoted verses that one can differentiate between the two genres. Though Carleton wrote romantic poems, such as *The Churchyard Bride*, all the poems used by Carleton are not his own compositions, some poems are those of previous writers. For example, 'Green be the turf above thee,/ Friend of my early days; None knew thee but to love thee,/ Or named thee but to praise,' which we find at the beginning of 'The Lough Derg Pilgrim',<sup>786</sup> is taken from a poem written by Fitz-Green Halleck (1790-1867) on the death of Rodman Drake. 'In the leafy month of June,/ Unto the sleeping woods all night,/ Singeth a quiet tune' in 'The Lianhan Shee' (1830, 1844)<sup>787</sup> is taken from a poem by Coleridge, and 'Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring,/ A little learning is a dangerous thing' is borrowed from Pope. Thus, Carleton's stories are drawn from hybrid sources, including oral and literary as well as elite and popular sources. Many Latin poetic lines from Horace and other authors also abound, especially in 'The Poor Scholar' where Carleton displays his knowledge of Classics. Taking the example of 'The Hedge School' (1830, 1843) for case study, we can see how recurrent poems and songs are in this piece of orature. 'The Hedge School' contains more than fifteen poems or references to poems.

Page Numbers	'The Hedge School' (Bold emphases in the following excerpts is mine)
282	<p>'Ay,' observed O'Neil, 'as <b>Solvester Maguire</b>, the <b>poet</b>, used to say—</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">"Labour for larnin' before you grow ould, For larnin' is better nor riches or gould; Riches an' gould they may vanquish away, But larnin' alone will never decay."</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">(...)</p>

<sup>785</sup> Wilton, 'The Lianhan Shee—An Irish Superstition', in *The Christian Examiner*, vol. 10, 68 (Nov. 1830), 845. The stanza was suppressed in the subsequent book editions (1833, 1844) of the story.

<sup>786</sup> *T. & S. 1*, p. 237.

<sup>787</sup> *T. & S. 2*, p. 94.

291	<p>‘Yes,’ said another; ‘but he desarves credit for travellin’ from Clansallagh to Findramore, widout layin’ a foot to the ground—</p> <p>‘ “Wan day wid Captain Whisky I wrestled a fall, But faith I was no match for the captain at all— But faith I was no match for the captain at all, Though the landlady’s measures they were damnable small.</p> <p>Tooral, looral, looral looral lido.”</p> <p>Whoo-hurroo! My darlings—success to the Findramore boys! Hurroo—hurroo—the Findramore boys for ever!’</p> <p>‘Boys, did ever ye hear the <b>song</b> Mat made on Ned Mullen’s fights wid Jemmy Connor’s gander? Well here is part of it, to the <b>tune</b> of ‘Brian O’Lynn’ —</p> <p>‘ “As Ned and the gander wor basting each other, I hard a loud cry from the grey goose his mother; I ran to assist him, wid very great speed, But before I arrived the poor gander did bleed.</p> <p>‘ “Alas!” says the gander, “I’m very ill-trated, For traicherous Mullen has me fairly defated; Bud had you been here for to show me fair play, I could leather his <i>puckan</i> around the lee bray.”</p> <p>‘Bravo! Mat,’ addressing the insensible schoolmaster—‘success, <b>poet</b>. Hurro for the Findramore boys! The Bridge boys for ever!’</p> <p>(...)</p> <p>Ay, and many a bottle of poteen, when</p>
295	<p>‘The eye of the gauger saw it not,’ was, with a sly, good-humoured wink, handed over to Mat...</p> <p>(...)</p>
298	<p>The itinerant cosmopolite, to use his own phraseology, accuses me with being lame—I reply, so was Lord Byron; and why not a ‘Star from Dromcoloher’ be similarly honored, for</p> <p>If God, one member has oppress’d, He has made more perfect all the rest.</p>
298	<p>The following <b>poetic</b> lines are to be inserted in reply to the doggerel composition of the equivocating and hoary champion of wilful and deliberate falsehood, and a compound of knavery, deception, villainy, and dissimulation, wherever he goes: —</p> <p>O’Kelly’s my name,</p>

I think it no shame,  
 Of sempiternal fame in that line,  
 As for my being lame,  
 The rest of my frame,  
 Is somewhat superior to thine.  
 These addled head swains,  
 Of paralyzed brains,  
 Who charge me with corrupting youth,  
 Are a perjuring pair,  
 In Belzebub's chair,  
 Stamped with disgrace and untruth.

We are obliged to omit some remarks that accompanied the following **poetical** effusion:—

A book to the blind signifies not a feather,  
 Whose look and whose mind chime both together,  
 Boreas, pray blow this vile rogue o'er the terry,  
 For he is a disgrace and a scandal to Kerry.

The writer of this, after passing the highest eulogium on the Rev. Mr. O'Kelly, P.P., Kilmichael, in speaking of him, says,

In whom, the Heavenly virtues do unite,  
 Serenely fair, in glowing colors bright,  
 The shivering mendicant's attire,  
 The stranger's friend, the orphan's sire,  
 Benevolent and mild;  
 The guide of youth,  
 The light of truth,  
 By all condignly styl'd.

A gentleman having applied for a transcript of this interesting document for his daughter, Mr. O'Kelly says, 'This transcript is given with perfect cheerfulness, at the suggestion of the amiable, accomplished, highly-gifted, original genius, Miss Margaret Brew, of---, to whom, with the most respectful deference, I take the liberty of applying the following most appropriate **poetic** lines:—

Kilrush, a lovely spot of Erin's Isle,  
 May you and your fair ones in rapture smile,  
 By force of genius and superior wit,  
 Any station in high life, they'd lit.  
 Raise the praise worthy, in style unknown,

300	<p>Laud her, who has great merit of her own.      Had I the talents of the bards of yore,      I would touch my <b>harp and sing</b> for ever more,      Of Miss Brew, unrivaled, and in her youth,      The ornament of friendship, love and truth.      That fair one, whose matchless eloquence divine,      Finds out the sacred pores of man sublime,      Tells us, a female of Kilrush doth shine.      In point of language, eloquence, and ease,      She equals the celebrated Dowes now-a-days,      A splendid poetess--how sweet her verse,      That which, without a blush, Downes might rehearse;      Her throbbing breast the home of virtue rare,      Her bosom, warm, loving and sincere,      A mild fair one, the muses only care,      Of learning, sense, true wit, and talents rare;      Endless her fame, on golden wings she'd fly,      Loud as the trumpet of the rolling sky.</p> <p>(...)</p> <p>... these are the fervent wishes and ardent prayers of their ever grateful servant,      JOHN O'KELLY.</p> <p>O rouse my muse and launch in praise forth,      Dwell with delight, with extasy on worth;      In these kind souls in conspicuous flows,      Their liberal hands expelling-human woes.      Tell, when dire want oppressed the needy poor,      They drove the ghastly spectre from the door.      Such noble actions yield more pure content,      Than thousands squander'd or in banquets spent.</p> <p>(...)</p> <p>Mental calculations for the first time are simplified, which will prove a grand      desideratum and of the greatest importance in mercantile affairs.</p> <p>You will not wonder when I will ye,      You have read some pieces from O' Kelly;      Halt he does, but 'tis no more      Than Lord Byron did before;      Read his pieces and you'll find      There is no limping in his mind;</p>
301	

	<p>Reader, give your kind subscription, Of you, he will give a grand description.</p> <p><i>Price 2s., to be paid in advance,</i></p> <p>(...)</p>
304	<p>Listen; and you yourself, Paddy, are one of the Letthers:</p> <p>‘ “A turf and a clod spells nebachod— A knife and a rasure, spells Nebachodnazure— Three pair of boots and five pair of shoes— Spells Nebachodnazure, the king of the Jews.”</p> <p>(...)</p>
316	<p>“Boys, which of yez’ll sing for Dick? I say boys, will none of yez give Dick the Harmony? Well, come, Dick, I’ll <b>sing</b> for you myself:—</p> <p>‘Torral lol, lorral lol, lorral lol, lorral, lol— Toldherol, lorral lol, lorral lol, lol,’ &amp;c. &amp;c.</p> <p>(...)</p>
317	<p>‘What’s the matter? What’s the matter?’ said the gentlemen. ‘Good morning, Mr. Kavanagh!’</p> <p>“—Tooral lol, lol— — —”</p> <p>(...)</p>
318	<p>‘Did you never hear, for all so long as you war in Cambridge, of a nate little spot in Greece called the groves of Academus?’</p> <p>‘ “Inter lucos Academi quaerere verum.” ’</p> <p>(...)</p>
319	<p>‘Ay, or how will you consther and parse me this sintince? said Mat—</p> <p>‘ “Ragibus et clotibus solemus stopere windous, Nos numerous sumus et fringes consumere nati, Stercora flat stiro rara terra-tantaro bungo.” ’</p> <p>(...)</p>
320	<p>I hope my honour will pardon me for the facetiousness—</p> <p>‘ “Quid vetat ridentem dicere verum!”</p> <p>as <b>Horace</b> says to Maecenus, in the first Sathirs.’</p>

Carleton’s disposition of lines and paragraphs above denotes a demarcation of roles played by different actors in a theatrical setting. The different main actors of this drama are: narrator, musician, singers and poet, each of them participating in the making-up of a communal literature in which they lose their identity for the benefit of the whole

community. The layout also shows the presence of many genres, highlighting through disposition the distinction between verse and prose. When ‘Tooral, looral, looral looral’, chorus of an Irish lullaby, follows a poem, as it is the case in the first occurrence above, the indentation sets it apart as belonging to another genre, namely song. Poetry and song are closely linked. The connection between the two genres can be seen in the same piece being referred to as song sung to the tune of ‘Brian O’Lynn’ and the actor who executed it as poet in the example above. The blurring of the difference between song and poetry is brought about by print as on the written and printed page song and poetry espouse the same metrical or rhyming form but are different when orally performed. This is another example of the deficiency of ‘written literature’ versus ‘spoken literature’; the remedy to this flaw would be to consider printed literature as support to performance in the perspective of orature.

The mixture of genres in the passages above has consequences for the notion of the authorship of ‘The Hedge School’. To consider Carleton as the author is to see in Carleton a storyteller, a poet, a musician, a dramatist and a singer. But Carleton acknowledges some of the sources of the poems he used. ‘Solvester [sic] Maguire’, ‘John O’Kelly’ and Horace are the authors of some of the poems that make up ‘The Hedge School’ as a collection of poems. Horace is a literary classic poet, but we do not know the identity of the other poets or singers except the Irish names they bear (‘Solvester Maguire’, ‘John O’Kelly’) or the authors of some songs (‘Brian O’Lynn’) or poems, especially the Latin ones, two of which are cited without references to their original authors. To hold Carleton as the author of ‘The Hedge School’ is to attribute to Carleton authorship of materials he borrowed from hybrid sources, namely from Latin, classic, English and Irish local traditions. Carleton shows himself in ‘The Hedge School’ as a studious classical student who, like all students of classics at that historical period, was expected to learn classics by heart in order to perform them (cf. I.2.C.i.), as he recites (from memory to print) as much poetry as was stored in his memory. Occasionally he does mention the authors to the effect of drawing attention to himself as author of the ‘performed’ poetry that is more likely quoted from memory than copied from written sources, showing how performance generates a second authorship which can eclipse the original author. This is an illustration of how performance in orature overrides hybridity of authorship and also shows that what is usually called collective authorship in ‘spoken literature’ is composed of a mixture of

individual authorships which are treated as less important than performance in oral setting. ‘The Hedge School’ in its hybrid composition of performance genres, namely of poetry and story with song and music at the background is thus a work of multiple authors arranged as the final product of a performer, Carleton, who draws from different sources and traditions which he does not always feel obliged to acknowledge as what matters to his immediate listening audiences is the performance and not the authorship.

Pacéré’s poetry too can be assessed as songs of unknown individual composers. ‘Above all, keep in mind that everything in *La poésie des griots* was intended to be a faithful transcription of chants,’<sup>788</sup> Pacéré cautions his audiences, and then, drawing attention to the inaccuracy of translation, he immediately adds that ‘chants’ are to be understood, in the traditional *Moaaga* way, as a multi-faceted genre, and not only a combination of sounds to produce something pleasant to hear. However, he is silent about the authors of these chants he transcribed; the authors of these chants are occluded in favour of collective authorship and/or authorship through performance. Pacéré refers to this collective authorship when he says that his poetry is a collection of funeral chants used and performed by the ensemble Kiéma of Manéga. The identity of the performers is thus known, but that of the original composers is unknown, which is a general characteristic of orature. Emphasis is laid on performance, especially with this information that the collection is actually a transcription of what Pacéré recorded at the last performance of the troupe at the tomb of their deceased leader as Pacéré explains:

Because of the special and important character of the burial ceremony, I decided to record it integrally (...) I translated the thought of all the discourses in their succession.<sup>789</sup>

Pacéré’s transcription or written recording respects the performance of these chants, as he uses the fixed structure of the ‘spoken literature’ of tam-tams and refrains to confer on his print literature the character of song and music, as one can see with the collection *Saglego* as case-study.

In *Saglego*, refrains of castanets, which are only used for musical purposes,<sup>790</sup> are used and annotated by the author. Notes 57 and 58 explain that ‘Opens the horizon to his

<sup>788</sup> *Poésie*, pp. 111-112 : ‘On n’oubliera pas surtout que tout ce qui porte sur la « *La Poésie des Griots* » n’a voulu être qu’une transcription fidèle de chansons.’

<sup>789</sup> *Poésie*, p. 133 : ‘En raison du caractère spécial et important de cette cérémonie, j’ai préféré l’enregistrer intégralement (...) J’ai traduit la pensée de tous les discours dans leur succession.’

<sup>790</sup> Cf. *Le langage*, pp. 87-152.

son!' (*Paasda bangre!*) and 'Does not hate his neighbour' (*Pa kis a to ye!*) are musical refrains of castanets borrowed here by the tam-tams. Three other notes draw attention to the use of popular songs that follow:

1.	1.	1.
The sane man	L'homme qui se connaît	Sên mi a mēng
Does not burn the bush!	N'est pas un pyromane !	Pa yōog moog ye !
Do not cut green wood!	Ne fends pas le bois vert !	Da ke ra-maas ye,
Do not cut green wood!	Ne fends pas le bois vert !	Da ke ra-maas ye
Do not cut green wood!	Ne fends pas le bois vert !	Da ke ra-maas ye
2.	2.	2.
The sane man	L'homme qui se connaît	Sên mi a mēng
Does not cut what is green!	Ne coupe pas ce qui est vert !	Pa keegd mass ye!
3.	3.	3.
Do not massacre,	Ne massacre pas,	Da varg
Wild animals!	Les animaux sauvages !	We-rūms ye!
Wild animals!	Les animaux sauvages !	We-rūms ye!
Wild animals!	Les animaux sauvages !	We-rūms ye!
The sane man	L'homme qui se connaît,	Sên mi a mēnga
Does not massacre	Ne massacre pas,	Pa varg
What belongs to the bush! <sup>791</sup>	Ce qui appartient à la brousse !	We-rūms ye

All these three refrains are musical refrains integrated into the poetry. In addition to being marks of punctuation, refrains in Pacéré's poetry are also pointers to chant and music. The appearance of a new refrain signals the beginning of a new chant: the audience is invited to repeat the refrain. Sometimes, songs are also explicitly referred to. In *Quand s'envolent les grues couronnées* a storyteller emerges who tells the narrative with music in the background and singing chants, taking the figure of the dusty bearded philosopher:

There	C'est là
Was born	Qu'est né
The dusty-bearded philosopher	Le philosophe à la barbe de poussière

<sup>791</sup> *Saglego*, pp. 68-69, notes 89, 90 and 91 on page109.

Who used to sing every evening,  
 His refrains until dawn:  
 “The future  
 Draws from the past!  
 Greatness is that which is governed,  
 The value  
 Of all history is at this cost.”<sup>792</sup>

Qui chantait tous les soirs,  
 Ses refrains à l’aube :  
 « L’avenir  
 se tire du passé !  
 La grandeur est celle qui est gouvernée,  
 La valeur  
 De toute histoire est à ce prix. »

The quotation marks are used to introduce the refrain, which the philosopher is supposed to sing or used to sing. The presence of musical refrains like this, in this collection which tells a narrative about the life experiences of Pacéré in a poetic and dramatic form among other things, makes of this collection such a broad ranging work of poetry, history, epic, drama, fiction and a philosophical reflection on life and death, in short, a holistic work of orature.

However, Pacéré’s collections are not pure hymnals, music or dance books, though they contain some aspects of these. Their primary poetical qualities should never be disregarded. In other words, poets find interest in reading the ‘poems’. In *La poésie des griots*, described by Pacéré as a collection of chants, Louis Millogo (whom one can consider as a representative of an interpretive community of poets) highlights the poetical elements it contains and draws this conclusion:

After having found that the text of *La poésie des griots* ... follows the poetical principles written by Jakobson (structure in equivalences) I may say that the words of Pacéré on the non-poetical character of his writing, his ‘transcription’ as he says, appear to be a sign of humility. *La poésie des griots* is not a simple transcription. It is a text whose manipulation is quite of the domain of poetical competence in the strict sense of the French language.<sup>793</sup>

A similar critical assessment of Carleton’s transcriptions can be seen in the praise of many critics: D. J. O’Donoghue, P. Kavanagh, A. Boué, H. S. Krans, D. Krause and B. Sloan, to cite just a few. O’Donoghue wrote that ‘the accent of old Ireland is more truly and faithfully preserved in *Traits and Stories* than if it were treasured up in the most perfect

<sup>792</sup> *Quand*, p. 7.

<sup>793</sup> L. Millogo, ‘Éléments de poétique de *La poésie des Griots* de Titinga Frédéric Pacéré’, in *Mélanges offerts*, p. 377.

phonographs'.<sup>794</sup> Sloan also praised 'Carleton's ability to capture the energy, flow and vitality of the spoken word',<sup>795</sup> and observed that with characters like Corcoran, and indeed with most of his peasants, Carleton's ear seldom lets him down. Krause too, presenting Carleton as the demiurge of a new creation, saw in his writing the 'revival of the Gaelic oral speech patterns intoned by the wise old shanachie. Transposed into spoken English, Carleton's Gaelic folk idioms and rhythms follow the shape of the storyteller's humorous invocations and cleverly suspenseful digressions that become an organic part of the vivid tales'.<sup>796</sup> In the same manner, Boué points out that Carleton's interest is not in orthography or correct spelling but on eccentric transcriptions which are aimed at giving the flavour of Irish sounds and other characteristics of this language: 'He writes as he would speak to neighbours at evening time at the fireside. His art is without constraint that of a popular storyteller.'<sup>797</sup> All these critics invite us to see Carleton as a faithful transcriber of oral performances in a way that is similar to Pacéré's description of his own poetry in the above citation.

However, as I have argued throughout, there is no contradiction (only a productive tension) between being a scribe and an artist; Pacéré and Carleton, in their transcriptions, are both artists and Barthesian scribes, as they show inventiveness in finding techniques and devices to artistically render 'spoken literature' in print form or to use the structure of this literature and fill it with words and ideas of their own. What is transcribed has aural qualities, and this is underlined by the critics, because these qualities existed in the 'spoken literature' prior to the transcription. Pacéré and Carleton artistically transcribed with techniques of their own a literature that was at once poetry, music, song, story and theatre in Burkinabé and early nineteenth-century Irish popular entertainments. Among the different techniques Pacéré and Carleton used in their artistic transcriptions, the art of drawing holds so important a place that their works can be assessed from that perspective.

<sup>794</sup> D. J. O'Donoghue, ed., *Traits and Stories of Irish Peasantry*, quoted by B. Sloan, *The Pioneers of Anglo-Irish Fiction 1800-1850* (Gerrards Cross: Colin Smythe, 1986), p. 171.

<sup>795</sup> B. Sloan, *The Pioneers of Anglo-Irish Fiction*, p. 151.

<sup>796</sup> D. Krause, 'William Carleton, Demiurge of Irish Carnival: *Fardorougha the Miser*, 1839', in *Éire-Ireland*, vol. 29, 4 (1994), 30.

<sup>797</sup> A. Boué, *William Carleton, Romancier Irlandais*, p. 291 : 'Il écrit comme il parlerait à des voisins le soir au coin du feu. Son art sans contrainte est celui du conteur populaire.' See also p. 234.

### III.2.c) *Traits and Stories* and Pacéré's Poetry as Graphic Drawings

In the foreword to his poem 'Les reflets de New York', Pacéré wrote: ‘ “Les reflets de New York” constitute a translation in writing of beliefs that are based on audio-visual perceptions and others.’<sup>798</sup> How these audio-visual perceptions are transcribed on the printed page is what we want to examine and demystify in this section. The disposition of stanzas in Pacéré's poetry has a particular significance in this respect, as a glance at any part of his poetical collections makes one aware of Pacéré's originality. In *La poésie des griots*, for example, Pacéré distinguishes left-column stanzas (89 in total) from right-column ones (88 in total). Studying this disposition, Albert Ouédraogo says that there is a mystical relationship between Pacéré's pen and the paper and that the whole disposition of verses reminds one of the divinatory practice of the mouse which is used by the *yogr-baga* or soothsayer. The *yogr-baga* spreads sand in a hut and places bait for mice on one extremity, opposite the entrance to the hut. Drawn by the bait, mice walk through the sand to get it. After a night is passed, the *yogr-baga* interprets the signs or figures left out by the traces of mice.<sup>799</sup> Pacéré's writing is in a way similar to traces of paws of mice as it draws some shapes through the disposition of lines. This parallel entails that we are called to play the role of the *yogr-baga* or soothsayer and try to interpret the significance of the shapes in Pacéré's writing. Pacéré knows of the practice of the *yogr-baga*; there is a portrait of signs about it in his Museum at Manéga. The disposition of stanzas is thus very meaningful in Pacéré's poetry and gives some typical shapes, which carry or express strong ideas of the poems that are shaped that way. For example, this following poem<sup>800</sup> is laid down in the shape of the letter 'T' to express a thorough 'Total war'.

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<sup>798</sup> *Poèmes*, p. 45 : ‘ « Les reflets de New-York » constituent une traduction par l'écriture de croyances fondées sur des perceptions audio-visuelles ou autres.’

<sup>799</sup> Cf. A. Ouédraogo, ‘La poésie des griots ou la lente gestation de la bendrologie’, in Université de Ouagadougou, ed., *Annales*, série A, vol. 5 (1992), 223.

<sup>800</sup> *Refrains*, pp. 65-68.

Dead and living people,  
We will wage the SECOND WAR

Morts et vivants,  
Nous livrerons la DEUXIÈME GUERRE

There will be ONE BATTLE!

Il y aura UNE BATAILLE!

There will be but ONE!

Il n'y aura qu'UNE !

Not two,

Pas deux,

Not three,

Pas trois,

Not four,

Pas quatre,

Not five!

Pas cinq !

There will be ONE battle!

Il y aura UNE bataille !

There will be but ONE!

Il n'y aura qu'UNE !

Yaoundé,

Yaoundé,

Bamako,

Bamako,

Prétoria,

Prétoria,

Salisbury,

Salisbury,

Ouagadougou,

Ouagadougou,

Abidjan!

Abidjan !

There will be ONE battle!

Il y aura UNE bataille !

There will be but ONE!

Il n'y aura qu'UNE !

Washington!

Washington !

Paris!

Paris !

Berlin!

Berlin !

London!

Londres !

Prague!

Prague !

Honolulu!

Honolulu !

There will be ONE battle!

Il y aura UNE bataille !

There will be but ONE!

Il n'y aura qu'UNE !

It will be

Elle sera

TOTAL

TOTALE

Decisive!

Décisive !

TOTAL!

TOTALE !

Violent!

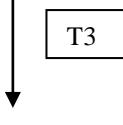
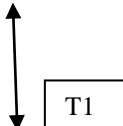
Violente !

TOTAL!

TOTALE !

Atrocious!

Atroce !



Horrible!	Horrible !
Bloody!	Sanglante !
TOTAL	TOTALE !
A carnage	Un carnage,
A massacre!	Un massacre !
TOTAL!	TOTALE !
A TOMB!	Un TOMBEAU !
Tomb	Tombeau
TOMB!	TOMBEAU !
TOMB!	TOMBEAU !
Total!	Totale !
There will be ONE battle!	Il y aura UNE bataille !
There will be but ONE!	Il n'y aura qu'UNE !
Because:	Parce que :
CONCEIVED ON A BATTLE FIELD, BORN ON A BATTLE FIELD, WE WILL DIE ON A BATTLE FIELD, FOR THE GLORY OF THE FATHERLAND!	CONÇUS SUR UN CHAMP DE BATAILLE, NES SUR UN CHAMP DE BATAILLE, NOUS MOURRONS SUR UN CHAMP DE BATAILLE, POUR LA GLOIRE DE LA PATRIE !

We have already explained that the intercalation of 'TOTAL' with other words in low key creates a jerky rhythm expressive of the battle cry of people getting ready to wage war. There is also in the layout of the stanzas an expression of the relationship between the visual aspect of performance in the Moaaga tradition and the metaphorical abstraction of poetic language. The disposition of stanzas in this poem, as in Pacéré's poetry as a whole, is significant as it shows Pacéré as artist and composer of ways of transcribing 'spoken literature' in print. Analysing similar disposition of lines in Michel Butor's works, André Helbo says that white space and gaps between stanzas express the discontinuity of the logical discourse and thus compel the reader to look in each stanza for words that would link the stanzas together.<sup>801</sup> This explanation of the use of blanks is particularly relevant to the poetry of tam-tam that uses a meta-language whose meaning lies in what is not said, in

<sup>801</sup> Cf. A. Helbo, *Michel Butor. Vers une littérature du signe* (Bruxelles : Ed. Complexe, 1975), pp. 72-78.

the white spaces. The blank or empty space following each fragment may also reflect silences, especially in the context of drum beating or the flow of spoken discourse.

These two interpretations are relevant to Pacéré's alignment of stanzas, creating gaps between them, moving some forward and some backward. This visual layout lets stanzas appear as fragments held together by the key words within them. The main central idea (There will be ONE battle! / There will be but ONE!) is put near the margin. The indentation is increased for the other lines and has the advantage of highlighting the first two lines. This presentation gives to the poem the shape of a juxtaposition of four 'T's which are supported by the alliterations in 't' at the basis and the repetition of 'TOTAL'. 'Totale' in French never loses its link with the 'bataille' (battle): grammatically, it carries the feminine genre of 'bataille' everywhere, even when it comes after the masculine words 'carnage', 'massacre' or 'tombeau'. With such examples, Pacéré creates the visual dimension of orature. The end lines form the basis or foundation of the poem if the poem is erected as a building. The total destruction is pictured by the broken layout of this basis at the end of the four 'Ts', an expression of things falling apart, of total destruction.

Different shapes are thus used for different purposes. Some pages have but three verses; others have more than thirty verses. In some poems, verses do not vary very much in length. For example, the study of Louis Millogo on *La poésie des griots* reveals that of 258 verses, there are eleven verses of six feet, nine of seven feet and five of eight feet. The majority of verses, he observes, has fewer than five feet.<sup>802</sup> The accumulation of such short verses on the page gives a visual impression of an amalgamation of fragments for the purpose of incantation.

The visual dimension is also present in Carleton's *Traits and Stories* which appear as a pictorial strip or cartoon. Carleton can be seen, Hayley observes, as 'mediating between ear and eye, trying to express outlandish sounds in not too outlandish letters'.<sup>803</sup> Carleton's peculiar phonetic transcriptions catch the eyes of readers in the same way paintings or drawings do. Carleton's representations are not limited to 'outlandish letters' or phonetics but are extended to outlandish signs (e.g. +) to represent outlandish gestures of blessing, as in the example below. Carleton used these visual representations in two ways and to different effects.

<sup>802</sup> L. Millogo, 'Éléments de poétique de *La poésie des Griots* de Titinga Frédéric Pacéré', in *Mélanges offerts*, p. 366.

<sup>803</sup> B. Hayley, *Carleton's Traits and Stories*, p. 35.

Firstly, the visual dimension in the writing conveys particular graphic impressions, similar in some ways to Pacéré's accumulation of fragments. But while the visual dimension in Pacéré's poetry appears in the layout of stanzas, in Carleton's *Traits and Stories* it appears not only in the accumulation of descriptive passages with thin lines of poetry or songs, as exemplified earlier, but also in the phonetic transcriptions and etchings. Visual dialect is a major stylistic characteristic of Carleton's stories. The reader's eyes are dazzled by the recurrence of apostrophes for missing letters, for example: 'what is that you are doin' asked Ned', 'by speakin' of him', 'mixin' the smallest taste'.<sup>804</sup> In 'The Midnight Mass', the signs of blessing, that is +, are visual and theatrical:

He formed the sign of the cross in every direction to which he turned: "God save it to the South! + to the Aiste! + and the Waiste! + Save it upwards! + and save it downwards! + Save it backwards! + and save it forwards! + Save it right! + and save it left! + Save it by night! + and save it by day! + Save it here! + save it there! + Save it this way! + an' save it that way! + Save it atin'! +++ an' save it drinkin'!  
++++++ Oxis Doxis Glorioxis – Amin.<sup>805</sup>

By using these graphics Carleton tries to represent what Patrice Pavis calls 'non-représentable',<sup>806</sup> such as intonations, looks, and gestures. The plus signs or crosses (+) are not a written representation of originally oral words but of gestures (of liturgical blessing), so that by using these signs Carleton translates a literature that was expressed by words of mouth and gestures, which justifies the use of the inclusive term 'spoken literature' instead of the reductive term 'oral literature', as established in part one.

Secondly, *Traits and Stories* is a pictorial strip from the point of view of the illustrations in it. The task of the illustrators was made easier by Carleton's graphic or 'light and shade' descriptions of Irish character. Later critics such as Roger McHugh have noted the growth of Carleton's reputation as a graphic writer: in McHugh's words, his stories are 'marked by [...] graphic pen-pictures'.<sup>807</sup> These pen-pictures helped artists to illustrate them. The editions that followed the first editions of the first and second series contain etchings by many artists, Phiz and other 'artistes of Eminence'. These sketches originally appeared in each copy facing the related texts and pages they illustrated. The

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<sup>804</sup> *T.&S. I*, p. 14.

<sup>805</sup> *T.&S. I*, p. 337.

<sup>806</sup> Cf. *L'Analyse des spectacles: Théâtre, mime, danse, danse-théâtre, Cinéma* (Paris : Nathan, 1996), p. 25.

first series of *Traits and Stories* (1830) contained six etchings and engravings on wood by W. H. Brooke and the second series (1833) contained twenty-one etchings and engravings on wood from the designs of Brooke, but later editions used the talents of other illustrators. The complete 'New Edition' of *Traits and Stories* in two volumes (1843-1844) for example, has thirty-six plates from illustrations of eight artists and numerous illustrated title headings and tailpieces and woodcut illustrations by various artists within the text. Correspondence between Carleton and his publishers showed that Carleton took great care with the illustrations of his stories. O'Donoghue, Carleton's biographer, noted that Carleton 'took a keen interest in the illustrations to his stories, and was anxious that there should be nothing disfiguring in them'.<sup>808</sup>

Carleton's illustrators were Irish and English artists. The two volumes together of the 'New Edition' of *Traits and Stories* (1843-44) contain at least eighty-seven illustrations of any kind, fifty-four in the first volume and thirty-three in the second volume. The numerous illustrations were done by Harvey, Hablot Knight Browne or 'Phiz' (1815-1892), John Franklin (1819-1861), Daniel Maclise (1806-1870), Henry Macmanus (1810-1878), Gilbert, William Henry Brooke (1772-1860), Thomas Sibson (1817-1844), Wrightson, Lee, Griffiths and other artists of eminence.<sup>809</sup> Of this group of illustrators, Henry MacManus, Brooke, Maclise, and Franklin were Irish.

Correspondence between Carleton and his publishers, the subject of a recent article by Jackie Turton,<sup>810</sup> reveals that Carleton had prejudices against illustrations by English artists on the grounds that their etchings could not be true to Irish realities since they did not have a firsthand knowledge of Ireland. Neither was he satisfied with all the illustrations done by Irish artists, namely MacManus and Franklin. Though in reply to MacManus' request,<sup>811</sup> Carleton employed him at the work of illustration, he took offence at MacManus's illustration of his birthplace.<sup>812</sup> Carleton objected also to some of the drawings by Franklin, and Orr agreed to delete them:

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<sup>807</sup> R. McHugh, 'William Carleton: A Portrait of the Artist as a Propagandist', in *Studies* (March 1938), 52.

<sup>808</sup> *Life*, vol. 2, p. 55.

<sup>809</sup> Cf. Entries on the different authors in W. G. Strickland, *A Dictionary of Irish Artists*, vols. 1&2 (Dublin and London: Irish University Press Shannon Ireland, 1968) and C. Wood, *The Dictionary of Victorian Painters*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Suffolk: Antique collectors' Club, 1978).

<sup>810</sup> J. Turton, 'Making it National; or, the Art of the Tale', 175-187.

<sup>811</sup> Cf. Letter to Carleton, May 30<sup>th</sup>, 1842, in *Life*, vol. 2, p. 53.

<sup>812</sup> Letter from Orr to Carleton, August 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1842, in *Life*, vol. 2, p. 54.

I am inclined to agree with you as to the propriety of deleting the cut at the end, and have accordingly done so (...). They are by Franklin, who is an Irishman, but you must admit does not make an artist.<sup>813</sup>

In the same correspondence, Orr apologizes for being unable to show Carleton the illustrations before publishing them but promises he will do every effort ‘to get them done in good taste, and appropriately chosen,’ hoping that Browne’s journey to Ireland will help him in the task of illustration. Carleton certainly did not agree with this arrangement. Analysing a letter, dated 5 September 1842, by Carleton to William S. Orr, his publisher, Jackie Turton shows that Carleton was unhappy with Orr’s arrangements for the English artist, Browne (who used the pseudonym Phiz) to illustrate Carleton’s stories. She says that Carleton ‘expressed misgivings about the use of English illustrators for this most Irish of works, and had demanded to see the story illustrations before publication’.<sup>814</sup> Orr sent the proofs to Carleton and Carleton objected to particular illustrations, some of which Orr agreed to remove. For example, on seeing the illustrations for two of the tales, ‘Shane Fadh’s wedding’ and ‘Larry M’Farland’s Wake’, Carleton objected that the illustrations had been wrongly inserted:

How it comes that the illustrations of Larry McFarlane’s Wake [sic] happen to be projected to Shane Fadh’s Wedding, and those of Shane Fadh’s Wedding to Larry McFarlane’s Wake... I say how does this come about?

Then, he complained that the wrongly inserted plates even failed to capture the essence of his texts, being, he says, ‘extremely tame and unfaithful’:

[I]f you look into the whole ‘Wake’ you will not find that either he or she ever drank a drop of whisky under their own roof, with the exception of the treat which Art Roe Sheridan gave them in page 93—Phiz ought to get McManus over who understands Irish life to look at his sketches before he etches them or he ought to look a little more closely at the letter press... they ought to be at the end of a meal and I have not described Larry as having two pigs—but one—he was much too poor for that—<sup>815</sup>

He also saw Phiz’s illustration for ‘Shane Fadh’s Wedding’ as ‘as bad as bad can be—ill selected and worse executed’, and ‘inferior to Brooke’s from which it is taken from first to

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<sup>813</sup> Ibid., p. 54.

<sup>814</sup> J. Turton, ‘Making it National; or, the Art of the Tale’, p. 178.

<sup>815</sup> W. Carleton to W. S. Orr, 5 September 1842, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign Campus rare Books and Special Collections Library, MS 823C19tr pt.1-25, in J. Turton, ‘Making it National; or, the Art of the Tale’, 179. Carleton mistook here Sibson for Phiz as the illustration for ‘Larry M’Farland’s Wake’ was not done by Phiz, but by Thomas Sibson.

last'.<sup>816</sup> Carleton also objected to Harvey's tail-piece illustration to the same story and asked Orr: 'Do like a good fellow leave *that* out—and get McManus to put something in its place—but at all events, *out with it*'.<sup>817</sup>

This overview of Carleton's relationship with his illustrators is significant when understood in the general context of Carleton's search for graphic drawings to represent Irish 'spoken literature', as the drawings, like the + signs above, powerfully convey realities that mere letters cannot. One can see in Carleton's vehement criticisms above his concern for accuracy to the Irish 'spoken literature' he artistically transcribes into print. As Jackie Turton points out in conclusion to her article on the illustrations of *Traits and Stories*, 'Carleton's exacting and sometimes irritable demands upon his illustrators that they produce representative images was more than justified by his success in giving an authentic picture of peasant Ireland'.<sup>818</sup> Carleton demanded that the plates be an authentic artistic translation or transfer to drawing of the system of writing used by himself as the national writer so that the people who could not read written texts might apprehend the story by 'reading' the illustrations alone. A flawed representation would be a distortion of the original depiction and, thus, harmful to the fame of the national writer. For example, by 'reading' 'two pigs' in the illustration to Larry's wake, one can say that Larry was rich; however, the reader of the printed text would construe, by reading in the actual printed text that Larry had *one* pig, that Larry was poor. To avoid this contradiction between transcription in letters and transcription in drawings of Irish life, Carleton asked his publisher to remove some inaccurate plates and the publisher removed some of them, such as the one illustrating the preface or 'General Introduction' to *Traits and Stories* and also a cut by Franklin.<sup>819</sup>

By contrast to Turton who, in her article 'Making it National; or, the Art of the Tale', argues that Carleton was looking for Irish artists to illustrate Irish national work,<sup>820</sup> our argument is that the issue in question is not simply that of the nationality of the illustrators but that Carleton's fundamental concern is with discovering a non-literal alphabet (graphic drawings) for the depiction of Irish life or to enhance his transcription of Irish 'spoken literature'. This approach is further justified especially when one takes into

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<sup>816</sup> Ibid., 180.

<sup>817</sup> Ibid., 182.

<sup>818</sup> Ibid., 185.

<sup>819</sup> Cf. *Life*, vol. 2, p. 54.

account that he rejected illustrations by foreign artists and Irish illustrators alike. The etchings constitute, for Carleton, both an alternative to telling the story they illustrate and graphic signs that express realities which are difficult to transcribe in alphabetic letters. We have already shown that prior to the use of alphabetic letters, stories were preserved in drawings. It was through similar drawings, carving and paintings that missionaries in many countries sought to explain some Gospel passages to people who were illiterate in terms of letters and print. Illustrations in Carleton's *Traits and Stories* tell the printed stories in another form. They convey a good impression of the stories, crowded as they are with fighting, mourning, laughing, praying and busy peasants living in slums, hillside chapels, farms, and hedge schools. The illustrations function like the *zabyuya* in Pacéré's poetry in the sense that they are the summaries of long stories which need an expansion by connoisseurs in the language of *zabyuya* or in reading illustrations. Taking 'The Three Tasks' as a case study, an analysis of the different illustrations of it from the first edition of the first series (1830) to the complete edition (1843) will demonstrate Carleton's use of drawings as transcription signs to clearly convey Irish 'spoken literature' in print form.

Overall, the 1843 edition of 'The Three Tasks' contains eight illustrations by different artists. The sketches together summarise the whole story. Except for Phiz, the names of the other illustrators are not given in the table of illustrations and the names (Evans, Robinson, Clayton) under some of the illustrations below are signatures one can read in the illustrations themselves, which may well be the artists' real or pen names. Illustrations one, three, five and seven are most likely by the same artist, when one judges by the similarities in the portrayal of Jack and the lady in these plates. Prior to this edition (1843), this uncertainty of authorship did not exist as there was only one illustrator, W. H. Brooke, for all the stories. The unique illustration of 'The Three Tasks' (Jack now pulled up the Filley), in the first series (1830), served as frontispiece of the first volume of these series. This illustration and all of Brooke's illustrations were reproduced in the subsequent editions of the first series (1832, 1834, 1835), of the second series (1834, 1835) and of the combination of the two series (1836) of *Traits and Stories*, before the New Edition (1843-44).<sup>821</sup> Though Carleton was involved in changing words, syntax and phonetics in these different editions, he left Brooke's illustrations intact, but did not use any of them in his

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<sup>820</sup> Cf. J. Turton, 'Making it National; or, the Art of the Tale', 181.

<sup>821</sup> Cf. B. Hayley, *A Bibliography of the Writings of William Carleton*, pp. 24-32.

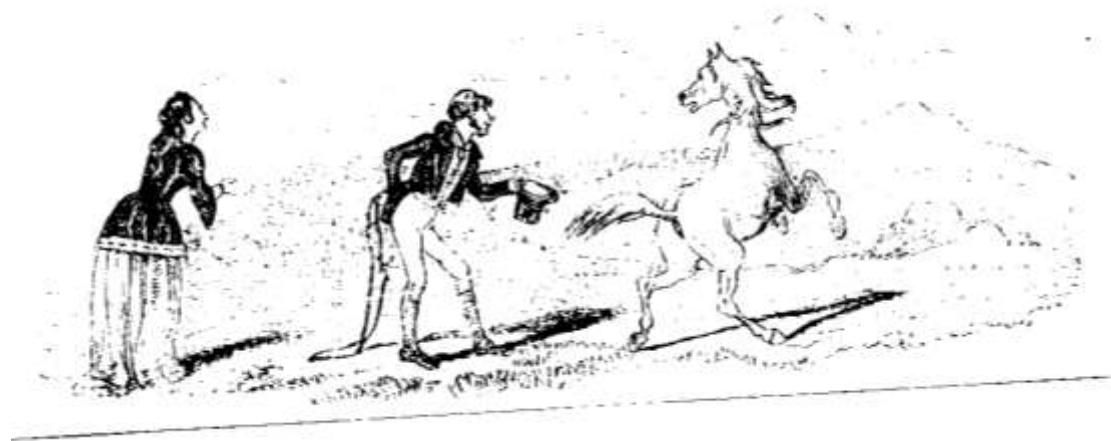
new edition of *Traits and Stories*. This fact signals a change in Carleton's use of illustrations, as he moves from using the same artist to tell, in drawing terms, his alphabetically written stories, to using plates by different artists as graphic signs. The unique illustration of 'The Three Tasks' prior to 1843 did not create ambiguity of interpretation, but the mixing of drawings by different artists is not without creating confusion for somebody reading the illustrations alone, as one can see by looking at the different representation of Jack in the 1843 sketches below:



Sketch 1



Sketch 2, by Phiz.



Sketch 3



Sketch 4: by Phiz



Sketch 5



Sketch 6, signed by Clayton and E. Evans



Sketch 7



Sketch 8, signed by E. Evans and Robinson

Phiz's image of Jack (sketches 2 and 4) and Evans' portrayal of Jack (sketch 6 and 8) are very different from each other and from the images of Jack in the remaining sketches and can thus mislead readers of illustrations. However, keeping in mind the element of mixture of genres in orature, one may say that the drawings were not meant to be isolated from the written text but were used by Carleton as alternative visual signs to transcribe that which alphabetical letters fail to powerfully convey. For example, they give a powerful visual depiction of scenery.

Though they do not function without the written text, they tell the story alongside it. Thus, sketches one to six tell the story chronologically following the sequences of the story in the book. The title heading illustration presents Jack Magennis in the house of the 'dark looking gentleman'. The gentleman tells Jack that if ever he refuses to obey his orders his head will be numbered among the skulls depicted at the background of this first portrait. Sketch two, by Phiz, depicts Jack Magennis playing cards with the dark gentleman. The third etching illustrates Jack trying to accomplish one of the three tasks the gentleman asked him to do: to catch the wild filly. Jack receives help from the lady. In the next sketch Jack Magennis and the beautiful lady are planning to run away from the gentleman. In sketch five, we see them running away followed by the gentleman who tries to catch them. The story initially finishes in sketch six with Jack waking from his sleep, as

what follows is the response from the listening audience, which is an addition that did not exist in the first edition of the first series (1830). In this way, after a first reading of the story in letters and drawings, one can retell the story by using only the sketches.

The last two sketches, which appear more like sketches in pictorial strips in the way three pictures are juxtaposed, recall some scenes of the story in line with the audiences' reactions to these scenes. They show the ordeal of Jack and the lady under the patronage of the gentleman. The tailpiece presents Jack and the little dog, the companion of the wicked gentleman.

The contribution of illustrations in the telling of the stories is hugely important as a device used by Carleton in his transcription of Irish 'spoken literature', to the extent that he himself sometimes refers his readers to illustrations for clarity of expression (cf. III.2.A. for his reference to the illustration of 'Cork-red phaties') and pays tribute to Brooke for his 'exquisite and unrivalled illustrations' of Irish life and delineations of the Green Isle in ways that 'have far surpassed [Carleton's] own creations'.<sup>822</sup> Carleton can be seen as rejecting awkward illustrations and using the fine ones, as ready-made words or expressions and tools, in his transcription in print of Irish life. In this way, his use of illustrations, without always acknowledging their authors, is quite similar to Pacéré's use of *zabyuya* as sayings of forgotten authors to powerfully convey a message, or to make the audience see the image he tried to depict with ordinary words. Like the illustrations, each *zabyuure* is coined by a dignitary, though *zabyuya* are generally used without reference to their authors with this consequence that in the long run the *zabyuya* become a collective property. By using *zabyuya* in association with ordinary words, or by using drawings alongside alphabetical letters, Carleton and Pacéré succeed in giving great pictorial spirit and life to the popular entertainments of their kith and kin in their transcriptions of them on the printed page. This usage, in the tasks of transcription, of a mixture of tools belonging to different arts is also expressive of mixture of genres in the transcribed literatures. Furthermore, it shows the awareness by both writers of their addressing different readerships or audiences of literary readers (including performers, readers-aloud, transmitters between the printed material and the audience), listeners, and spectators, whether of the illustrations in his stories or of a soirée of theatre (cf. II. 2.B).

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<sup>822</sup> *Traits and Stories*, Second Series, second edition (Dublin and London: Wakeman, 1834), pp. v-vi.

### III.2.d) Carleton's Stories and Pacéré's Poetry as Plays or Theatre

Carleton's use of theatrical vocabulary in *Traits and Stories* hints that he was writing his stories with the mindset of a playwright, as many times Carleton refers to actors in his stories as *dramatis personae*. For example, in 'Phelim O'Toole's Courtship' he says: 'Still it is to be remembered, that the *dramatis personae* of our story are of the humblest class.' Then, he asserts that every retelling of the story involves the presence of new *dramatis personae*: 'new circumstances were added, fresh points made out, and other *dramatis personae* brought in.'<sup>823</sup> Such an explicit theatrical register, added to the use of language for characterization (evidenced earlier), leads one to see Carleton's printed literature as having a strong dramatic element.

Pacéré's poetry is not different in this regard and, indeed, contains theatrical features. First of all, Pacéré draws his inspiration from traditional Moaaga drama, which is a compendium of music, poetry, storytelling and dance, and has a ternary structure, characteristic of many African plays. This ternary structure is usually interpreted as an influence of the same structure found in West African rituals (as argued in II.2.A). Traditional theatre is basically a forum theatre. The first Burkinabé written play was modelled after this theatre and drew its theme from the past—historical plays—in the same way that Pacéré's poetry is modelled on the literature of tam-tam. Pacéré's poetry is shaped after the forum theatre although the subject matter deals with historical rather than with current issues of forum theatre. Making a comment on his own poetry, Pacéré explicitly draws attention to it as plays:

'It is to be noticed, concerning my collections especially, that there is, a background, a scene, several actors staging an action before a public; even the layout of verses, ideas or pages follow this mindset; in reality it is a play and no more.'<sup>824</sup>

The presentation on page of verses and stanzas delineates sections played by different actors. (Concrete examples are given below).

In addition, abundance of dialogues and the use of stage directions and graphic presentation of texts are other theatrical features in Carleton's stories and Pacéré's poetry. Dialogues are characteristic of the works of both writers but more so in Carleton's works

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<sup>823</sup> *T.&S.* 2, p. 224 and p. 242.

<sup>824</sup> *Poésie*, p. 111 : 'Concernant nos recueils on constate, qu'il y a une toile de fond, une scène, plusieurs acteurs représentant une action devant un public ; même la disposition des vers, des idées ou les pages respectent cet esprit ; en réalité et peut-être seulement une pièce de théâtre.'

than in Pacéré's 'poetry'. Stage directions are specific to Carleton while graphic layout on page is proper to Pacéré.

The typographic layout of Pacéré's poetry into two columns signals a subdivision into parts played by different actors, as is usually the case in plays. Some actors repeat the refrain while others share in turns the task of storytelling, complementing each other's accounts. Each one of Pacéré's collections can be read as a play written for an audience accustomed to live performance. Many examples can be given, but suffice two poems as case studies: *Des entrailles de la terre* and 'Poèmes pour l'Angola'.

The typographical disposition of stanzas into two different columns is significant in *Des entrailles de la terre*:

Absence,	L'Absence,
Absence is a desert.	L'Absence est un désert,
Silence,	Le Silence,
Silence is an answer at every echo.	Le Silence répond de tout écho.
That day I shouted	J'ai crié ce jour-là
With all my sinews	De toutes les fibres,
My bodily and verbal fibres.	Les fibres du corps et du verbe.
That day I shouted	J'ai crié ce jour-là
For writing in the city,	Pour l'écriture dans la cité,
The life,	La vie,
The life	La vie
Of medians and pen.	Des médians et de la plume.
Absence,	L'Absence,
Absence is the echo of the night.	L'Absence est l'écho de la nuit.
My supplications,	Mes suppliques,
Absence!	L'Absence !
My prayers,	Mes prières,
Absence!	L'Absence !
My letters,	Mes missives,
Absence!	L'Absence !
Man dies	L'homme meurt
By	Sous
The power of swords,	La puissance des épées,

The heat of Saharas	La chaleur des Saharas
And	Et
Of blockhouses! <sup>825</sup>	Des casemates !

In this opening poem dedicated to Tene Youssouf Gueye, a writer imprisoned for his writings, each column can be read independently from the other. The left column develops the theme of absence that prayers and letters fail to break; the right column is centred on a personal experience of difficulties in life. The former starts with a general observation about absence, then moves to how the ‘I’ tries to cope with it. The latter moves from a personal experience in the first stanza to a general statement about life. This disposition reflects a dialogue played by different characters. Throughout the collection, there are instances where the stanzas on the left side develop nothing but a general theme whereas the opposite side tells personal stories, or where one side carries on with the story and the other side just repeats the refrains.<sup>826</sup> In ‘Poèmes pour l’Angola’ this device is more explicitly used, sometimes together with the names of the actors:

AUGUSTO	AUGUSTO
“Where is your mother?”	« Où est ta mère ? »
“I do not know”	« Je ne sais pas »
NGANGULA	NGANGULA
Where are your people?	Où est ton peuple ?
I do not know.	Je ne sais pas.
AUGUSTO	AUGUSTO
Where is your school?	Où est ton école ?
I do not know.	Je ne sais pas.
NGANGULA	NGANGULA
Where is your army?	Où est ton armée
I do not know. <sup>827</sup>	Je ne sais pas.

The opening of this poem gives the impression of two people speaking. While one starts saying something, hardly has that person finished speaking than another actor

<sup>825</sup> *Des entrailles*, p. 13.

<sup>826</sup> For examples, see pp. 38-41 for general versus particular, and pp. 65-82 for story versus refrains.

<sup>827</sup> *Poèmes*, p. 39.

interrupts to say something else. In fact, none of the five stanzas featuring on the opening page of this poem ends with a full stop: the first stanza (I wish/ today,) ends with a comma while the other four end with a semi-colon (e.g. Father, / I want to be happy;).<sup>828</sup> The impression is that of a juxtaposition of truncated fragments voiced by different actors and illustrates the characterisation of ‘spoken literature’ as additive rather than subordinative, aggregative rather than analytic (cf. I.1.C). Progressively, the name NETO appears in the left hand column and Cardoso at the right column as two actors in dialogue with one another. They are joined at the end of the poem by two other actors (Augusto and Ngangula above) who ask some questions of an anonymous actor whose answers figure on the right hand column as above.

In other poems, *Saglego* for instance, the cast is introduced to the spectators at the onset of the performance:

Receive the greetings	Ce sont les fils	Ti Kaadyoog
Of the children	Du Kadiogo	Kom-yoaab
Of Kadiogo!	Qui saluent !	N puusde!
Their homage!	Leurs hommages !	Kantiise
Their homage!	Leurs hommages !	Kantiise!
Their homage!	Leurs hommages !	Kantiise!
The water of Kadiogo!	L'eau du Kadiogo !	Kaadyoog koom!
The water of Zambelongo!	L'eau du Zambelongo !	Zambeleng koom!
The water of Warmini!	L'eau de Warmini !	Warmin koom!
The water of Koumdayonré!	L'eau de Koumdayonré !	Kumdayoor koom!
The water of Segrima!	L'eau de Segrima !	Segrim koom!
Send their greetings!	Qui saluent !	N puusde!
Their homage!	Leurs hommages !	Kantiise!
Their homage!	Leurs hommages !	Kantiise!
Their homage!	Leurs hommages !	Kantiise!
Ouagadougou,	Ouagadougou !	Waogdgo!
Do not worry	N'aie pas peur,	Ra yaees
About your future!	De l'avenir!	Beoogo ye! <sup>829</sup>

The thespians are introduced here not by name but collectively—community being more important than individuals. It is customary to identify and present the actors by the

<sup>828</sup> *Poèmes*, p. 7 : ‘Je souhaite/ Ce jour, Père,/ Je veux être heureux ;’

<sup>829</sup> *Saglego*, pp. 34-37.

district they come from or by the *zabyuure* of that district as a sign of honour. In this instance, the *zabyuure* of Ouagadougou is: ‘Ouagadougou, / Do not worry/ About your future!’ The actors come from Ouagadougou. The triple repetition of ‘homage’ shows that the group of performers is constituted of male actors only. With these obvious theatrical elements, one might wonder whether one is still dealing with poetry. We are dealing with poetry of the literary form of orature. Reading Pacéré’s poetry as a whole, one gets this sense of the presence of actors playing different roles as in a play.

While graphic layout in Pacéré’s poetry indicates dialogue in a theatrical setting, in Carleton’s *Traits and Stories* dialogues are signalled by the use of inverted commas. Inverted commas are graphically used to indicate transfer from the spoken language into print and to circumscribe the words spoken by each actor in a way that is similar to Pacéré’s presentation of stanzas. The intercalation of enclosed paragraphs in inverted commas with inverted-comma-free paragraphs transforms the latter into stage directions that give information before the dialogues begin. The following opening paragraph in ‘The Station’ (1829, 1843) is a case in point:

Our readers are to suppose the Reverend Philemy M’Quirk, parish priest of Tir-neer, to be standing upon the altar of the chapel, facing the congregation, after having gone through the canon of the Mass; and having nothing more of the service to perform, than the usual prayers with which he closes the ceremony.<sup>830</sup>

This paragraph, which is immediately followed by a dialogue section, fulfils the role of stage directions. It presents the actor (Rev. Philemy M’Quirk), the setting (the chapel), the position of the actor (standing, facing the congregation) and his action (performance of services closing the ceremony). After this, the actor comes into play to perform. Quotation marks, which are not used in the paragraph above, signal his voice on stage: ‘Take notice, that the Stations for the following week will be held as follows:—’. An abundance of speeches like this, together with stage directions, transforms the stories almost into scripts of theatrical dramas for performance.

Explicit formal stage directions that are put between brackets are also used in some stories. In ‘The Hedge School’ (1830, 1843) for example, the author, like a playwright, puts between brackets the roles of actors once on stage, for example: (Buz, buz, buz), (omnes – ha, ha, ha, ha!), [dead silence], (whack, whack, whack) or the manner the actor

should speak, for example: (in a low voice), or again the action to be done, for example: (The master steals a glance at the Key to Gough), (drives him head over heels to his seat).<sup>831</sup>

The presence of these dramatic elements in a narrative that is supposed to be a story leads one to consider the narrative as a play meant for performance. There is collaboration between hearing and seeing, which is also characteristic of theatre. The audience listens to what is said and looks at the posture and gestures of the actors as suggested in the stage directions. This necessary collaboration led Franco Ruffini, in his article on text and stage, ‘to call theatre the product of the collaborative relationship between the text and the stage’.<sup>832</sup> This relationship is maintained by the use of these theatrical devices.

There are two plausible explanations for the use of explicit formal scenic indications in Carleton’s and Pacéré’s works. Firstly, the two writers who were fond of theatre unconsciously put theatrical elements in their works. Secondly, the two writers who attempted to paint true to reality had to have recourse to such procedures in order to convey all the visual, aural and gestural qualities of what they observed. This second explanation is more than likely. In fact, in order to be a scribe of the kind described by Roland Barthes and to transcribe a literature that is a mixture of genres, one has to use strategies belonging to different genres: sketches from painting, some verses to signal the presence of poetry, refrains or airs from song and music and stage directions from drama. All these elements help the readers or performers to reconstruct the works in ways that reflect the originally mixed literatures which the writers, as talented scribes, portrayed. Carleton’s and Pacéré’s talents in theatre were undoubtedly of great help to them in their production of these pieces of orature. Carleton even went as far as to insert two plays that are properly doted with formal *dramatis personae* within the prose narrative of ‘Tubber Derg’ (1831-1833). The actions of the Mendicant and the Poor Tenant, on the one hand,

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<sup>830</sup> *T.&S. 1*, p. 145. In other instances, stage direction paragraphs are italicised, see for example, *T.&S. 2*, ‘Neal Malone’, p. 427, p. 428.

<sup>831</sup> *T.&S. 1*, pp. 302-306, pp. 314-315. For other examples, see *T.&S. 2*, ‘The Geography of an Irish Oath’, p. 59, p. 60; *T.&S. 2*, ‘Phelim O’Toole’s Courtship’ p. 227, p. 235, p. 245, p. 246 and *T.&S. 2*, ‘The Poor Scholar’, p. 267.

<sup>832</sup> F. Ruffini, ‘The Culture of the Text and the Culture of the Stage’, in E. Barbara and N. Savarese, *A Dictionary of Theatre Anthropology: The Secret Art of the Performer* (London/New York, 1991), p. 238.

the Farmer and his Wife and their two guests, on the other hand, are formally marked in theatrical form in ‘Tubber Derg’.<sup>833</sup>

### 1. The application of a beggar for alms

*Mendicant*.—“We’re axin your charity, for God’s sake!”

*Poor Tenant*.—“Why thin for His sake you would get it, poor crathur, if we had it; but it’s not for you widin the four corners of the house. It ‘ud be well for us if we had *now* all we gave away in charity *durin’ the whole year*; we wouldn’t have to be buyin’ for ourselves at three prices. Why don’t you go up to the Big House? They’re rich and can afford it.”

*Mendicant*, with a shrug, which sets all his coats and bags in motion—“Och! och! The Big House, inagh! Musha, do you want me, an’ whip by one o’ the sarvints? No, no, avourneen—” (with a hopeless shake of the head.) “That ‘ud be a blue look-up, like a clear evenin’.”

*Poor Tenant*.—“Then, indeed, we haven’t it to help you, now, poor man. We’re buyin’ ourselves.”

*Mendicant*.—“Thin, throth, that’s lucky, so it is! I’ve as purty a grain o’ male here, as you’d wish to thicken wather wid, that I sthruv to get together, in hopes to be able to buy a quarther o’ tobaccy, along wid a pair o’ new bades an’ a scapular for myself. I’m suspicious that there’s about a stone ov it altogether. You can have it anunder the market price, for I’m frettin’ at not havin’ the scapular an me. Sure the Lord will sind me an’ the childhre a bit an’ sup some way else—glory to his name!—besides a lock o’ praties in the corner o’ the bag here, that’ll do us for this day, any way.”

The bargain is immediately struck, and the poor tenant is glad to purchase, even from a beggar, his stone of meal, in consequence of getting it a few pence under market price. Such scenes as this, which are of frequent occurrence in the country parts of Ireland, need no comment.

### 2. A Farmer’s address to his guests

On the following morning, after another abundant breakfast, and substantial marks of kindness from their entertainers, they [Owen and Kathleen] prepared to resume their new and melancholy mode of life. As they were about to depart, the farmer’s wife

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<sup>833</sup> *T. & S.* 2, ‘Tubber Derg; or, the Red Well’, p. 385, pp. 392-3.

addressed them in the following terms—the farmer himself, by the way, being but the shadow of his worthy partner in life--.

*Wife*—“Now, good people, you’re takin’ the world on your heads—”

*Farmer*—“Ay, good people, you’re takin’ the world on your heads—”

*Wife*—“Hould your tongue, Brian, an’ suck your dhudeen. It’s me that’s spakin’ to them, so none of your palaver, if you plase, till I’m done, an’ then you may prache till Tib’s Eve, an’ that’s neither before Christmas nor afther it.”

*Farmer*—“Sure I’m sayin’ nothin’, Elveen, barin’ houldin’ my tongue, a shuchar.”

*Wife*—“You’re takin’ the world on yez, an’ God knows ‘tis a heavy load to carry, poor crathurs.”

*Farmer*—“A heavy load, poor crathurs! God he knows it’ that.”

*Wife*—“Brian! *Gluntho ma?*—did you hear me? You’ll be puttin’ in your gab, an’ me spakin’? How-an-iver, as I was sayin’ our house was the first ye came to, an’ they say ther’s a great blessin’ to them that gives the first charity to a poor man or woman settin’ out to look for their bit.”

*Farmer*—“Throgs, ay! Whin they set out to look for their bit.”

*Wife*—“By the crass, Brian, you’d vex a saint. What have you to say in it, you *pittiogue*? Hould your whisht now, an’ suck your dhudeen, I say sure I allow you a quarther o’ tobaccy a week, an’ what right have you to be puttin’ in your gosther when other people’s spakin’?”

*Farmer*—“Go an.”

*Wife*—“So, you see, the long an’ the short of it is, that whenever you happen to be in this side of the country, always come to us. You know the ould sayin’—when the poor man comes he brings a blessin’, an’ when he goes he carries away a curse. You have as much meal as will last yez a day or two; an’ God he sees you’re heartily welcome to all ye got?”

*Farmer*—“God he sees you’re heartily welcome— —”

*Wife*—“*Chorp an diouol*, Brian, hould your tongue, or I’ll turn you out o’ the kitchen. One can’t hear their own ears for you, you poor squakin’ dhron. By the crass, I’ll—eh? Will you whisht, now?”

*Farmer*—“Go an. Ann ‘t I dhrawin’ my pipe?”

*Wife*—“Well dhraw *it*; but don’t dhraw *me* down upon you, barrin— —. Do you hear me? An’ the sstrange people to the fore, too! Well, the Lord be wid yez, an’

bless yez! But afore yez go, jist lave your blessin' wid us: for it's a good thing to have the blessin' of the poor."

"The Lord bless you an' yours! Said Owen, fervently. "May you an' them never—oh, may never—*never* suffer what we've suffered; nor know what it is to want a male's mate, or a night's lodgin'!"

"Amin!" exclaimed Kathleen; "may the world flow upon you! For your good kind heart desarves it."

*Farmer*—"An' whisper; I wish you'd offer up a prayer for the rulin' o' the tongue. The Lord might hear *you*, but there's no great hopes that ever he'll hear *me*; though I've prayed for it amost ever since I was married, night an' day, winther an' summer; but no use, she's as bad as ever."

This was said in a kind of friendly insinuating undertone to Owen; who, on hearing it, simply nodded his head, but made no other reply.

Two stage-directions appear in the first 'play': the first one between the name of the actor, viz. the Mendicant and the slash that usually precedes the words of each actor. The second is put between brackets. The final paragraph of this first play looks like a voice off-stage finishing up the story. In the second play, the interventions of Owen and Kathleen are not stylistically delineated as the other two actors are, a fact that leads one to conclude that these two different kinds of stylistic presentation of narrative are equivalent for Carleton. In both, he bridges the formal distinctions between drama and story by using the stylistic format of one genre in the other. It follows from this observation that the absence of a formally structured play of the kinds cited above (with actors highlighted with slashes after their names at the beginning of lines) is not sufficient proof that one is not dealing with a Carletonian play, which is a mixture of literary forms.

The last comment (This was said in a kind of friendly insinuating undertone... ) at the end of the second formally structured play has the characteristics of stage directions. After these stage directions, the dialogue continues unperturbed by the lack of theatrical stylistic presentations. It can be observed that, although the presence of stage directions in these two plays makes them different from mere dialogues as often occur in many prose narratives, what is of interest in a dialogue is what is being said. In other words, our analysis shows that where formal theatrical structures are lacking, theatrical genre is still present, though implicitly, as the following example shows.

There is, however, a difference between the previous examples and the following one: the above examples are like scripts for theatrical performance whereas the following one is better called description of games or plays in order to show how to perform these games. The description of sketches in ‘Larry M‘Farland’s Wake’ (1830-1843) is reminiscent of that of dances already explained earlier (cf. III.2.a). Descriptions appear the appropriate means to convey in print form non-verbal realities such as dances and games.

‘Larry M‘Farland’s Wake’, quoted below, is a theatrical soirée that is set (as fiction) in Tom’s barn but staged in Ned’s house which is used as theatre for representation. ‘Larry M‘Farland’s Wake’ is composed of ten ‘informal’ plays or games (*Hot-loof, Sitting Brogue, Standing Brogue, Frimsy Framsy, Marrying, White Cockade, Weds or Forfeits, Priest of the Parish, Horns, or the Painter and Silly Ould Man*) staged one after another, preceded by dances and storytelling and accompanied by songs, music and clapping of hands. A stage direction-like introduction gives us information about time (succeeding evening), place (Ned’s fireside) and disposition of actors (usual manner) and which one of the actors starts first (M’Roarkin). M’Roarkin is introduced to the audience before he starts acting, as usually happens in theatre.

Page numbers	‘Larry M‘Farland’s Wake’
85	He [Larry] was a great <b>dancer</b> , fond of the dhrop— (...)
105	‘Well, I said, it’s that was the merry wake.... In a short time the house was crowded; and maybe there wasn’t laughing, and <b>story-telling</b> , and <b>singing</b> , and smoking, and drinking, and crying— <b>all going on, helter-skelter</b> , together. (...)
106	... so by jing, off we set, maning all the youngsters of us, both boys and girls, out to Tom’s barn, that was red up [cleared up] for us, there to commence the <b>plays</b> . (...)
106	When we got to the barn, it’s then we <i>took our prumps off</i> [threw aside all restraint] in airnest—by the hokey, such sport you never saw. The first <b>play</b> we began was <i>Hot-loof</i> , and maybe there wasn’t skelping then. (...) The way they <b>play</b> it, Mr. Morrow, is this— (...)

107	The next play they went to was the <i>Sitting Brogue</i> . This is played by... (...)
107	There's another play called the <i>Standing Brogue</i> —where one man gets a brogue of the same kind. (...)
107	The next [play] is <i>Frimsy Framsy</i> , and is played in this manner:— (...)
109	The next <b>play</b> , then, is <i>Marrying</i> — 'Hooh!' says Andy Morrow, 'why, all their <b>plays</b> are about kissing and marrying, and the like of that.' (...)
111	'Well,' says Tom, 'the next <b>play</b> is in the milintary line. You see, Mr. Morrow, the man that leads the sports places them all on their sates, gets from some of the girls a white handkerchief, which he ties round his hat, as you would tie a piece of mourning; he then walks round them two or three, <b>singing</b> , Will you list and come with me, fair maid? Will you list and come with me, fair maid? Will you list and come with me, fair maid? And folly the lad with the white cockade? When he sings this, he takes off his hat, and puts it on the head of girl he likes best, who rises up and puts her arm round him, and then they both go about in the same way, singing the same words. She then puts the hat on some young man, who gets up and goes round with them, singing as before. He next puts it on the girl <i>he</i> loves best, who, after singing and going round in the same manner, puts it on another, and he on his sweetheart, and so on. This is called the <i>White Cockade</i> . (...)
111	After this comes the <i>Weds</i> or <i>Forfeits</i> , or what they call putting round the button. (...)
111	There's another <b>play</b> that they call the <i>Priest of the Parish</i> , which is remarkably pleasant. One of the boys gets a wig upon himself... (...)
112	After this comes one they call <i>Horns</i> , or the <i>Painter</i> . A droll fellow gets a lump of soot.... (...)
112	There is another game they call the <i>Silly Ould Man</i> , that's played this way: —A ring

of the boys and girls is made on the flure—boy and girl about—holding one another by the hands; well and good—a young fellow gets into the middle of the ring, as ‘the silly ould man.’ There he stands looking at all the girls to choose a wife, and, in the mane time, the youngsters of the ring sing out—

Here’s a silly ould man that lies all alone

That lies all alone,

That lies all alone;

Here’s a silly ould man that lies all alone

He wants a wife, and he can get none.

When the boys and girls sing this, the silly ould man must choose a wife from some of the colleens belonging to the ring. Having made choice of her, she goes into the ring along with him, and they all sing out—

Now, young couple, you’re married together,

You’re married together,

You’re married together,

You must obey your father and mother,

And love one another like sister and brother—

I pray, young couple, you’ll kiss together!

And you may be sure this part of the marriage is not missed, any way.’ ‘I doubt,’ said Andy morrow, ‘that good can’t come of so much kissing, marrying, and courting.’

(...)

113 The **narrator** twisted his mouth knowingly, and gave a significant groan.

The recurrence of the word ‘play’ fourteen times in ‘Larry M‘Farland’s Wake’ hints at its being as a description of a soirée of performance of plays or sketches that are named above. Whereas the soirée actually takes place in Ned’s house (Ned hosts the entertainment), the plays, as fiction, are set in Tom’s barn. A line is, thus, drawn between reality and fiction; the spectators are led into a world of fiction for entertainment. The plays are games or mimes in which the actions of the actors are of greater importance than what they say. The actors play a role that is similar to that of the actors in the virtuoso acting of Bellew or to the miming of ritual masks in West Africa.<sup>834</sup> Carleton can be seen as using words to transcribe a gestural entertainment or mimic theatre during which the

eyes of spectators read the narrative that is ‘written’ by the gestures and body movements of the actors. He uses descriptive terms (e.g.: ‘The first play was Hot-loof … The way they play it, Mr Morrow, is this’; ‘The *Sitting Brogue*. This is played by…’; ‘*Frimsy Franksy* is played in this manner’, etc. ) to translate a non-oral performance. Instead of simply telling the story of a wake Carleton uses here the procedure of ‘performative text’ to the effect of transcribing into print form a holistic entertainment involving different performance genres in the ritual of a wake. ‘Larry M’Farland’s Wake’ is a good example of mixture of genres (core element of orature), as dancing, storytelling, singing and dramatization occur one after another. We have highlighted the different genres in the text above to draw attention to their presence. In the crowded house (similar to Brooke’s illustration), ‘story-telling, and singing, and smoking, and drinking, and crying, [and plays were]—all going on, *helter-skelter*, together’. This ‘going-on-together’ of different genres is what Carleton wants to transmit, and not only the genre of ‘storytelling’ as the title ‘stories’ insinuates. The genre ‘story’ is only part of a comprehensive entertainment so that to call ‘Larry M’Farland’s Wake’ a ‘story with dramatic elements’ is as true or false as calling it ‘a drama with strong storytelling elements’, as one is designating a whole by one of its parts. From page 106 to 112 Carleton’s narrator stops and different plays are successively described, as the youngsters went to ‘Tom’s barn, (...) there to commence the plays’. Only on page 113 does the narrator reporting all these performances reappear—‘The narrator twisted his mouth knowingly’—after the self-explanatory plays to conclude his account and respond to the audience. In ‘Larry M’Farland’s Wake’ there are thus acts of transfer of storytelling, singing, plays and all the arts involved in a typical traditional Irish wake ritual. Carleton, as a talented artist, successfully conveys all this mixture by using descriptions to translate mimic games into print form, and presentation on the page of songs that stand out from the rest of the narrative.

Pacéré reaches the same target as Carleton but employs different means, namely typography to highlight the theatrical dimension of/in his poetry. Urbain Amoa showed how *Poème pour Koryo* could be staged as a play.<sup>835</sup> All the poems of Pacéré can be scrutinized as plays; ‘Le concours de danse’ is a case in point. In it, capitalisation (cf. III.

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<sup>834</sup> Cf. F. Gründ, ‘La parole lourde des théâtres en Afrique’, in *Notre librairie*, 102 (juillet-août 1990), 13. Françoise Gründ shows that in Malian ritual theatre, two masks can mime the accident of an ambulance to express the fate of a woman giving birth in catastrophic conditions.

<sup>835</sup> U. Amoa, *Poétique de la poésie des tambours*, pp. 216-225.

1.C.3) is used to introduce actors who play different scenes in the stadium or ‘arena’, as the poet himself calls it:

The tam-tams hummed	Les tams-tams vrombirent,
Inviting	Invitant
Fate	La fatalité
To go into the arena!	A monter dans l’arène !
EPHEMERAL son	Fils EPHEMERE
Crouched on the ground	Sur le sol tapi,
Did his duty	Fit son devoir,
Before WHIRLWIND	Devant TOURBILLON
Brought in by	Qu’entraînèrent
His cousins GUST and CYCLONE	Les cousins BOURRASQUE et CYCLONE.
EPHEMERAL son	Fils EPHEMERE
Did his duty	Fit son devoir
Before WHIRLWIND	Devant TOURBILLON
Which pulled up	Qui arracha
A thousand trees	Mille arbres
In order to enter on stage! <sup>836</sup>	Pour entrer en scène !

The capitalisation here points to the presence of a play being acted out. The actors are highlighted in capital letters and are personified: the weakness of the ‘son’ in the person of the ‘ephemeral’, on the one hand, and the powerful adversaries as the ‘whirlwind’ and its cousins ‘gust’ and ‘cyclone’, dreaded enemies of the ephemeral, on the other hand. It is a vivid retelling, in play form, of the story of colonisation,<sup>837</sup> the inequality of forces in the war of colonisation: the colonisers (personified by mighty winds) are armed with guns and the natives with clubs and sticks. Like the whirlwind entering on stage by pulling up trees, the gunmen shot before attacking.

This play is composed of two acts or moments which are separated from each other by a full-page refrain, preceded by a long prologue and followed by an epilogue. The first act is what we have already quoted; the second act follows immediately after the

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<sup>836</sup> *Ça tire*, p. 37.

refrain which is annexed to it and which functions as an interlude. The first act presents to the spectators the inequality of the contenders: the action of pulling up trees is the indicator of power and strength, prefiguring who will be the winner. The fight per se takes place in the second act:

When the ring of the gong	Quand le coup de gong
Was heard in the valley	Retentit dans la vallée
And that WHIRLWIND	Et que TOURBILLON
Changed course	Changea de cap
To deaden the mêlée,	Pour amortir la mêlée,
On the ground	On vit
Was seen,	Sur le sol,
Contorted,	Crispée,
Bare,	Dénudée,
Playing the devil	Gardant le diable au corps,
So as to bring the Crown back to her line,	Pour ramener la Couronne à la lignée,
The most ephemeral of all Creation,	La plus Ephémère de la Création,
Whom only	Que seules
Circumstances made unworthy,	Les circonstances ont fait démeriter,
Trembling naked,	Tremblant nue,
Dancing naked,	Dansant nue,
Before everybody veiling their faces!	Devant chacun qui se voile le visage !
Disqualification	La disqualification
Was unanimous.	Fut à l'unanimité !
Any WARBA is danced	Tout WARBA se danse
With the SANGUI	Avec le SANGUI,
With the ZAYBRE,	Avec le ZAYBRE,
Disqualification	La disqualification
Was unanimous.	Fut à l'unanimité !
And WHIRLWIND	Et TOURBILLON
Carried along by	Qu'entraînèrent
His cousins GUST and CYCLONE	Les cousins BOURRASQUE et CYCLONE

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<sup>837</sup> Although not explicitly stated in the poem, this view is based on other similar texts (cf. *Le langage*, p. 23 and *Bendr N Gomde*, vol. 3: *Nasaara Waoongo, la têngã wôrbo*) where Pacéré develops the theme of colonisation.

Caused a hundred rooftops to fly off with joy!      Fit voler cent toits de joie !

In this act, we see the defeat of the EPHEMERAL. His defeat is typographically expressed by the suppression of capitals, while the whirlwind and his cousins (the winners) conserve theirs. Grammatically, the EPHEMERAL loses his status of substantive noun to become an adjective (The most ephemeral of all Creation / La plus Ephémère de la Création) qualifying the weakest creature in the whole of creation, or weakness in short, as stated in the moral of the play (below). Made of two acts, the play ends with this epilogue, which comes after the repetition of the refrain running through the entire play:

The world today	Le monde d'aujourd'hui
Is ruled by power!	Est de puissance!
Strength	La force
Determines victory!	Détermine la victoire !
Any weakness	Toute faiblesse
Is EPHEMERAL!	Est EPHEMERE !
Such is the daily refrain	C'est le refrain quotidien
Of tam-tams!	Des tams-tams !

No actor is referred to in the moral of this epilogue but two points are made: on the one hand, strength determines victory, and weakness, defeat. On the other hand, the weak find encouragement in the statement that 'weakness is EPHEMERAL', that is, lasts only one day, leaving alive the hope that tomorrow they can expect to be the strong ones. Used as an adjective here, 'ephemeral' is highlighted in capital letters to remind us that all weakness is temporary.

The play thus described is preceded by a long prologue that gives information about time, space and circumstances surrounding the play. The time of the day is evening. We are told that 'all is dark,' that 'the sun has vanished,' that 'spectators are looking for the milky way,' and then explicitly, 'this evening'. <sup>838</sup> The fight happens in the darkness, symbol of evil powers. The time of the year is harvest time and people are rejoicing,

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<sup>838</sup> Ibid., p. 29; p. 32: 'Ce soir / This evening'.

singing and dancing after harvest.<sup>839</sup> The refrain, with which the play starts, creates this general atmosphere of noisy rejoicing and dancing competitions. At that gathering of all people (personified by animals to create a context of fiction), a jury has to give a verdict after failing to convince the ephemeral to give up. The whole year has been spent in preparation for this finale. The contest takes place in a Saharan desert full of sand<sup>840</sup> and an absence of light in the décor is signalled by the reference to a ‘Sahel without star and sun’.<sup>841</sup> This introductory section serves as stage directions for a staging of the play. The stage-director is provided with all necessary information (setting, light, décor, actors) for the performance.

After all these introductory details, the play starts with the language of tam-tams which invites fatality to come forward, suggesting that the play is performed in that spoken medium. The *Bendre*, the master of speech, plays here the multiple roles of stage director, presenter, singer and musician for audiences. The *Bendre* directs the play, tells the story, plays music and conducts dance. Every one of the spectators of this holistic literature is satisfied because whatever need each one of them has, this need is attended to by this potentially rich literature. Orature is like the chameleon that takes the colour of the environment or of the dress one wears. Orature is accessible to many audiences. Playgoers, people with poetical interests, artists, music and dance folk, all together make up the mixed audiences of this potentially mixed literature. The labelling of this literature as ‘short story’ form in the case of Carleton, or poetry in the case of Pacéré, denies potential audiences access to this hybrid literature and its complex expression of a culture. The literary form of orature, we suggest upon conclusion of this thesis, would be the correct terminology to use while referring to hybrid works such as these. Cultural expressions of life understood as a mixture of things, Issiaka-Prosper Laleye tells us in his article on African work of art, is the norm in any assessment of a work of art of this kind. ‘The determinant criterion in studying traditional African “art” ’ he writes, ‘is [cultural] life. The work of art with respect to the beautiful, the true and the good, is determined as a

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<sup>839</sup> This information is in line with Guingané’s findings in his research on *Le Théâtre en Haute-Volta : structure-production-diffusion-public*, p. 201.

<sup>840</sup> Cf. *Ça tire*, p. 36.

<sup>841</sup> Ibid., p. 30 : ‘Sahel / Sans étoile et sans soleil.’

function of life' or the expression of a culture.<sup>842</sup> Pacéré's and Carleton's works are artistic transcriptions of the cultural entertainments of people at a definite period in the history of these people.

It can be said, in conclusion to this part, that this chapter provided us with textual evidence of a mixture of potential performance genres in these works that are expressions of the 'cultural literatures' of nineteenth-century Ireland and Burkina Faso. Carleton's *Traits and Stories* is the replica of his father's memory which was 'a perfect storehouse, and a rich one, of all that the social antiquary, the man of letters, the poet, or the musician would consider valuable'.<sup>843</sup> Likewise, poets, musicians, playwrights and storytellers would consider *Traits and Stories* valuable by applying their strategies to it. The different case studies have shown the strategies used by Carleton and Pacéré to express the dimensions of dance, song, poetry, short stories or theatre in the popular entertainments they both experienced. Either of these works is potentially a mixture that appeals to different readerships. Pacéré's poetry, which is rooted in traditional West-African tradition, is a mixture of many genres. 'I still think', Léopold Sédar Senghor writes, 'that a poem is accomplished only when it is made chant, discourse and music at the same time'.<sup>844</sup> Inspired by Burkinabé traditional literature, Pacéré's poetry is a holistic art in the way Senghor defined it: it is at the same time potentially poetry, short narratives, music, dance and drama. Consequently, we recommend that these works be assessed, with the theory of orature, as hybrid works belonging to the literary form of orature, otherwise the subtleties and immense wealth which this thesis was able to highlight as hallmarks of these works would remain hidden.

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<sup>842</sup> I.-P. Lalaye, 'The Work of "Art": Dialectic of Incarnation', in Society of African Culture, ed., *The African Critic and his People as Producers of Civilisation*, Yaoundé Colloquium, April 16-20, 1973 (Paris : Présence Africaine, 1977), p. 23.

<sup>843</sup> 'General Introduction', in *T.&S. I*, p. viii.

<sup>844</sup> L. S. Senghor, 'Ethiopiques', in *Poèmes* (Paris : Editions du Seuil, 1964-1973), p. 166: 'Je persiste à penser que le poème n'est accompli que s'il se fait chant, parole et musique en même temps.'

## General Conclusion

Orature as a literary form has been subject to/of controversy in the history of literary criticism due to disagreement among literary critics on the understanding of what literature is and what can be considered as literary. Some critics, mostly Western critics, situate the beginning of literature at the point of invention of writing, thus excluding all unwritten performances from the realm of literature and suggesting that, before the era of writing and its later dissemination by the print medium, humanity did not have literature. In this mindset, terms such as ‘oral literature’, ‘oraliture’, ‘orature’ and ‘spoken literature’ have been seen and rejected as ‘monstrous concepts’, because a literature that is oral or spoken evokes a terminological contradiction. To justify their position, critics and language theorists such as Blaise de Vigenère, Claude Duret, P. J. Van Ginneken (cf. I.1.A) claimed that written language existed prior to spoken language. However, other writers, from Plato, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Ferdinand de Saussure to Jacques Derrida evidenced the supremacy of spoken language over written language by showing the incapacity of writing to reproduce all aspects of spoken language, phonetic and non-phonetic languages included. One can extend this argument to literature and postulate that ‘spoken literature’ preceded ‘written literature’.

Studies conducted on the oral traditions of Western and African countries by Walter J. Ong, Lilyan Kesteloot, Ruth Finnegan, Jacques Chevrier, J. D. Nile, Claude Hagège, Paul Zumthor and the contributors to *The African Critic and his People as Producers of Civilisation* (1973) and to *Oral Tradition, Literary Tradition* (1977), have shown that literature existed before the use of systems of writing, that early ‘written literature’ borrowed material and stylistic characteristics from its predecessor ‘spoken literature’ and that ‘written literature’ is inseparable from performance or reading of some kind. This understanding justifies the invention and use of terminologies that designate literatures that are not written; hence, terms such as ‘oral literature’, ‘oraliture’, ‘orature’ and ‘spoken literature’ have been coined to justify the existence and primacy of a literature that is spoken.

‘Letters’, when understood as memorable or ‘tried’ words, exist in both ‘spoken’ and ‘written’ literatures, as speech communities always generated means to keep and retrieve information—this means has not always been alphabetical or other types of

writing. The letters of ‘spoken literature’ are *zabyuya*, formulas and mnemonics that have been linguistically ‘tried’ to last longer than the other spoken words. For centuries before the use of systems of writing with letters, such ‘tried words’ preserved literature, for instance the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, the poetry of Irish bardic poets and Burkinabe court poets. Finnegan and Pacéré have documented the existence of this ‘spoken literature’ and outlined the privileged position of the association of royal poets (*bendre*) who were split between those who performed the works of others and those who composed new works.<sup>845</sup> The outcome of these and other researches were instrumental to the broadening of the concept of literature and to the introduction of the term ‘orature’ as literary form and theory.

Orature, as a literary form, designates a potentially mixed literary form or an interdisciplinary aesthetic system that weaves together several genres and discourses (figure 8) and that requires performance. As a theory of literary criticism, orature considers every work as potentially mixed, as the following figure shows:

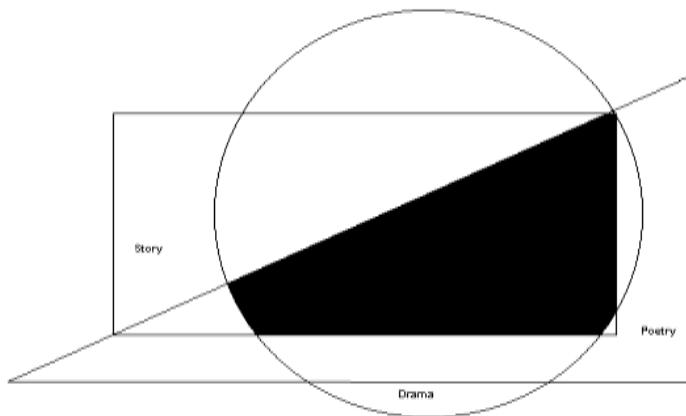


Fig. 8: Mixture of genres (2)

The black coloured part represents orature as a mixture of overlapping genres. The different shapes here show the demarcations of different genres, as drama is different from poetry, which is different from short story, a distinction which our previous representation (fig. 5 in I.2) of different genres by the same shape could not express. These two figures present the theory of orature as an interdisciplinary approach and a systematic account of the nature of literature and of the techniques for exploring it, showing it as a theory that

<sup>845</sup> Cf. R. Finnegan, *Oral Literature in Africa*, p. 89, and F. T. Pacéré, *Le langage*.

questions the taken-for-granted division of literature either into two independent categories, spoken and written, or into multiple, independent genres, by demonstrating that these divisions are historical constructions which need to be deconstructed.

The theory of orature calls for a redefinition of literature, following in this trend critics like Roland Barthes, M. a M. Ngal, Norman Vance and Niall Ó Ciosáin (critics from very different provenances) who argued for the necessity of a ‘decolonisation’ of the notion of literature and of literary theory in order to give place to orature or to the emergence of new literary values, and to the recognition of the literariness and inclusion of many writings as literature. Literature is whatever a given society considers as literature. Carleton, we have seen, was challenged to write novels by some critics who did not consider storytelling as literature; yet his novels share some characteristics of long stories because the Irish culture favoured Carleton for writing stories more so than novels. The implication of this example is twofold: on the one hand, literature is determined by social culture and by interpretive strategies readers may bring to bear on texts; on the other hand, one should redefine literature to include all texts and writings which are culturally considered as literary. Thus, the theory of orature *demands* an interpretation of literature based on an understanding of culture.

The general implications of this new literary form for the Western conventions of genre, literature and literary criticism are manifold. Firstly, orature reduces the often held opposition of ‘spoken’ and ‘written’ literatures as transcendent categories, by acknowledging the cyclical and complex interaction of these modes of literature over time. As J. R. R. Adams has shown, ‘the world of print and the world of oral culture are not too far apart. (...) Once books and other printed material penetrated a region one cannot talk of a pure oral tradition’,<sup>846</sup> nor of a pure written tradition: there is a transfer and there are influences from one tradition to another. Writing on the transferring of spoken mode to its written counterpart, with a special regard to representations in novels of spontaneous conversation, the linguist Robin Tolmach Lakoff said that the transfer of spoken discourse to writing is usually signalled by the use of quotation marks, italics, capitalisation, nonfluencies, the comic strip and other features, such as colloquial ‘wells’ and contractions,<sup>847</sup> all of which abound in Carleton’s and Pacéré’s works. Lakoff’s list of

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<sup>846</sup> J. R. R. Adams, *The Printed Word and the Common Man*, p. 173.

<sup>847</sup> R. T. Lakoff, ‘Some of my favorite Writers are Literate: The Mingling of Oral and Literate strategies in Written Communication’, in D. Tannen, ed., *Spoken and Written Language*, p. 244.

features is not exhaustive as Pacéré in his poetry, for example, uses page layout, which is not mentioned in the list above, to transfer or translate rhythm and dialogue into writing (cf. Part three, chapter one).

Conversely, spoken discourse has been enriched with typical written expressions such as ‘to dot one’s i’s and cross one’s t’s’, ‘that is it, full stop’, ‘...in brackets’, ‘...between quotation marks’, etc. Electronic or digital language has recently added its marks to this interaction with abbreviations or shortening of our written words and with the introduction of algebraic symbols in our spelling system, as in ‘K7’ for ‘cassette’ in French, or ‘L8’ for ‘late’ in English, and these new phonetic transcriptions remind us of the elocutionary dimension of our alphabet as representation of the spoken (phonetic) word. Well before this time, Carleton did similar transcriptions, by showing a difference between entries of words in a written dictionary and their actual use in spoken discourse, by using abbreviations such as ‘-in’ for ‘-ing’, ‘wit’ for ‘with’ or ‘im’ for ‘him’ in his dialogues. Pacéré too represented the rhythm of the *bendre* by the superposition of verses of irregular lengths and used page layout and typography to signal different voices and speakers. All these different attempts at reproducing the spoken word in written media are expressions of the cyclical relationship between different modes of literature, of the dynamic nature of literature and constitute an invitation to some form of performance of written words in order to resurrect the spoken word that is semi-preserved.

The dynamism within language in general is expressive of that of literature in its circulation from one medium to another. Throughout the ages, literature has been circulating through diverse material and immaterial means ranging from sign language (as the Burkinabe literature of the masks), non-phonetic pictograms (as the Ethiopian literature of the visit of the Queen of Sheba to Salomon), instrumental language (as in the literature of the *bendre*), oral words (as in storytelling), phonetic letters (as the written works of Carleton and Pacéré), electronic and digital recording in audio cassettes, CDs, MP3, computer memory (as the recording of the works of James Joyce), to film or sound and image recording in VCRs and DVDs (as the film adaptations of the works of Shakespeare). These various media record different aspects of literature, not its totality, because the dynamism of literature protects it from being totally killed by any of these media which all attempt to preserve it. The theory of orature helps us to acknowledge that we are witnesses today not to the death of literature but only to a change of its modes of

semi-preservation with a view to future performances or readings. The changes that occur in every re-recording of stories, re-edition of films (e.g. films on the life of Jesus-Christ) and books (Carleton's *Traits and Stories*), and oral re-performance of plays, songs or retellings of stories, remind us that no medium (or container) suffices to contain literature (contents). Whatever a certain etymological meaning of 'literature' may lead one to think otherwise, none of these media has the monopoly of conveying literature. Some writers, Carleton and Pacéré for instance, have resorted to many media, such as visual (cinematographic) or symbolic elements of page layouts and typography, and phonetic transcriptions, in order to preserve the maximum detail of literature for future performances.

Secondly, models of authorship evolve from orature as a literary form of mixed literary genres. Collective authorship is implied insofar as orature is the written expression of cultural entertainments that involve simultaneous performances from musicians, storytellers, poets, actors, and audience who jointly co-operate in the performance. Importance is given to the collectivity within which individual talents are expressed and promoted for the common good. In this perspective, Carleton and Pacéré appear, as they often say it themselves, as scribes or quarrymen who, using personal skills, transcribed or dug the marble for their sculpture, out of a communal, traditional lore that dealt with rituals of death, marriage and social traits and customs, for the benefit of the wider community. From another perspective, however, Carleton and Pacéré can also be seen as artists offering their particular talents of writing to a collective enterprise in the context of 'spoken literature' where ownership of literature is collective, though it is inevitably composed of the contributions of individual artists. For example, Carleton's 'Larry M'Farland's Wake' reveals the contributions of Carleton's storytelling and writing skills, as well as the works of unknown playwrights who composed 'informal' sketches or games such as 'Hot-Loof', 'Sitting Brogue', 'Standing Brogue', 'Marrying', 'White Cockade', 'Silly Ould Man', the songs of unknown individual authors and the later drawings of illustrators such as Sibson and Evans. The mixture of all these individual talents constitutes 'Larry M'Farland's Wake' which circulated anonymously for years (as part of the first series of *Traits and Stories*) as a work of a collective memory until Carleton later affixed his name on it in 1835. Similarly, Pacéré acknowledges the contribution, in his *poésie des griots* and other poetical collections, of singers and performers such as Gionfo

and Bonnéré at whose school he learned the art of the *bendre*, and so sees himself before this collectively owned literature of the *bendre*, as simply a skilful scribe.

The third implication of orature is that it opens onto new models for audience and performance, as it presents writing as necessitating a complementary act of reading aloud, the expression ‘silent reading’ being understood as a metaphor for an interior action of reading aloud, as the lowest degree of loudness in performance. Philosophers such as Pascal, Hegel and Merleau-Ponty have argued (cf. I.1.B.ii) that silence is ‘noisy with interior words’; solo-reading may thus be viewed as a form of reading aloud interiorly. Orature requires performance and audience: insofar as the text of orature is a print literature that performs itself, readers become spectators or listeners. The text of orature being also a mixture of genres, it has the potentiality of appealing to multiple audiences of listeners (of the story or poetry), of spectators (of the theatre) and ‘seers’ (of the drawings). With such an emphasis on orality and aurality in orature, performance mediates in the cyclical relationship between ‘spoken’ and ‘written’ literatures, resurrecting the dramas, rhythms and cadences with which the written words are invested, thus ensuring the survival of the spoken word.

This cyclical relationship that is characteristic of orature finds a correlation in the progress towards inventing film scenarios with an open-ended plot depending on the spectators who are called to participate in the project of creation by choosing one of a possible range of ending options. Another analogy may be drawn with ‘dictionary novels’, such as Walter Abish’s (1931-) *Alphabetical Africa* (1974) and *The Dictionary of the Chasars* (1984) by the Serb Milorad Pavić (1929-), which the critic Mario Klarer describes as novels that ‘can be read either from beginning to end in a linear way, or by starting somewhere in the middle of the text and moving back and forth from cross-reference to cross-reference’.<sup>848</sup> These significant trends express the strong dynamism that is inherent to literature. Literature is not only what is written on paper, recorded on tape or voiced orally, but includes many other non-recordable and non-alphabetical dimensions, such as cadences, rhythms, intonations and gestures that only performance can resurrect. Literature also admits the possibility of textual changes in what is already written, recorded or told. Pacéré makes internal changes within his poetry, whereas Carleton, like storytellers, changes his stories from one edition to another following his desire. Yeats’s

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<sup>848</sup> M. Klarer, *An Introduction to Literary Studies*, p. 85.

observation that Carleton's 'pages served one cause, now another, according to some interest or passion of the moment'<sup>849</sup> is an unwitting acknowledgement of these textual changes. Making a dynamic distinction between 'container' (media of literature) and 'content' of literature, the theory of orature has proved instrumental in the rediscovery of this dynamic essence of literature.

Fourthly, orature has implications for our understanding of text, textual forms and changes. Text, a weaving of different genres and procedures, exists in both spoken and written media of literature, through the use of rhyme, meter and 'tried words', on the one hand, and page layout, drawings and alphabetical letters, on the other hand. Speech is a rhapsody of words and phrases, just as the printed text is a weaving of letters; film, a weaving of sound and images; painting, a composition of colours and layers of graphic symbols; hence, one can speak of the text of a painting, music, film, writing and speech. The text of orature, in the case of Carleton's and Pacéré's works for instance, is a mosaic composition of all these different forms of texts to constitute what critics such as Roland Barthes and Ina Ferris have called 'performative texts' or a narrative that *does*, that 'deploy[s] the pragmatics of narrative to effect (...) a particular kind of hearing'<sup>850</sup> Texts of orature are performative texts and require performance and assessment with conventions of orature.

Thus, texts of orature necessitate the application of specific critical skills—a literary criticism of orature—for their assessment; otherwise, any critical analysis of such texts can be erroneous. 'There are peculiar problems in studying a body of fiction which is part literature and part folklore and partaking of the characteristics of both written and oral culture',<sup>851</sup> Robert Irwin observes in his study of the *Arabian Nights*, which was one of the popular books Carleton read and one of the books which was used in reading-aloud practices in nineteenth-century Ireland. With a methodological approach different from that of orature, critics of works, such as the *Arabian Nights*, Carleton's *Traits and Stories* or Pacéré's poetry, become disappointed when they find features which do not correspond to their interpretive strategies or literary conventions. This is the case for many critics who, since Yeats and from O'Donoghue onwards, gave a negative appreciation of

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<sup>849</sup> W. B. Yeats, ed., *Representative Irish Tales* (1891, Smythe: Gerrards Cross, 1979), p. 32.

<sup>850</sup> Cf. R. Barthes, 'The death of the Author', pp. 168-171 and I. Ferris, 'Narrating Cultural Encounter: Lady Morgan and the Irish National Tale', in *Nineteenth-Century Literature*, vol. 51, 3 (Dec. 1996), 288.

<sup>851</sup> R. Irwin, *The Arabian Nights: A Companion* (London: The Penguin Press, 1994), pp. 214-215.

Carleton's works.<sup>852</sup> The fault usually pointed out is Carleton's weakness of principle in continually bringing changes to his narrative. With criteria pertaining to written tradition understood as irremediably fixed, it is not surprising that critics, such as Krause, Hayley and Deane, view Carleton's plots as 'irregular',<sup>853</sup> 'unoriginal',<sup>854</sup> lacking coherence, or as 'marred by a series of stylistic ruptures which repeated revisions could not heal'.<sup>855</sup> The criteria of appreciation that these critics used are those belonging to a conception of a tradition of writing that is opposed to and excludes 'spoken literature'. They approached Carleton without an understanding of the conventions of orature, such as repetition, variation, changes around a fixed kernel and interference between 'spoken' and 'written' traditions. Carleton's work exhibits the dynamism of a literature which uses many channels for its expression, and from the viewpoint of the theory of orature, readers can admire the originality of Carleton's style when they become aware that in works of orature, stylistic ruptures are an invitation to the reader to work with the author in the construction of the book. Kiely's assertion that Carleton has 'praise from great men who were few, from small men who were many, and from some he [has] blame and bitter words'<sup>856</sup> shows the complexity in Carleton's work of orature and its immense contemporary popularity. To be part of the 'few great people' who fully appreciate Carleton's work and its immense contemporary popularity, the critic must assess these with the theory of orature, and this is what this research has strived to achieve.

The comparative approach this research has embarked on has revealed similarities and differences between the cultures of twentieth-century Burkina Faso and nineteenth-century Ireland and between the performance and performativity of the works of Carleton and Pacéré. Culture in a transitional period is one of the three main areas of similarities between Burkina Faso and nineteenth-century Ireland, the other two being hybridity and community-centeredness. Carleton's and Pacéré's countries have had a history of colonisation and linguistic hybridity which followed the introduction of new languages and literary systems in these countries. This factor of colonisation, however, should never lead critics—as it has often done—into assessing the works that have been written in these

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<sup>852</sup> See C. Morash, *Writing the Irish Famine*, pp. 156-157; See D. Krause, 'William Carleton, Demiurge of Irish Carnival', 31 and note 11 for a list of critics on Carleton.

<sup>853</sup> Cf. D. Krause, 'William Carleton, Demiurge of Irish Carnival', 26.

<sup>854</sup> B. Hayley, *Carleton's Traits and Stories*, pp. 1-2.

<sup>855</sup> S. Deane, 'Irish National Character', in T. Dunne, ed., *The Writer as Witness: Literature as Historical Evidence* (Cork: Cork University Press, 1987), p. 106.

countries simply as by-products of colonisation, because, even though their writers experienced colonisation, and at times in their works thematically dealt with the trauma of colonialism, such as absenteeism in Carleton's stories and racist ill-treatment of African people in Pacéré's works, the works of these writers are primarily the continuation of a form of literature that existed before colonisation. Spoken language as medium of 'spoken literature' has had a crucial role in the production and reproduction of pre-colonial African society (which possessed pre-colonial writing: Amharic, Swahili, Arabic, etc, just as Ireland possessed pre-colonial writing in the early Middle Ages) because, as Liz Gunner observes in her article on 'Africa and orality', 'it is often language combined with the performativity of the body, and enacted in both the public and the private space', and 'in some circumstances coexisting with music in the form of song, or with instruments, and dance, generat[ing] an almost unimaginable range of genres that enabled and empowered social, political and spiritual existence'.<sup>857</sup> 'Spoken literature' did not come into existence after the invention of the alphabet or after the colonial invasion of Africa by the West and, therefore, should not be seen as simply 'the absence of literacy' or its opposite, but as something self-constitutive, *sui generis*, as it existed in all cultures before the use of written letters. Far from reducing itself to the use of the vocal chords, as the term 'oral literature' suggests, 'spoken literature' involves the performativity of the mute body as sign language, the expression of that performance in both private and public space, the use of instruments (*bendre* for example) and the mixture of genres (song, dance). Provided with this range of pre-colonial, national linguistic expressions and with foreign languages and literary systems that followed colonisation, native writers of these previously colonised countries, Carleton and Pacéré for instance, tried to give to universal culture a corrected depiction of the national characters of their countries, and did so by producing literatures that are expressive of their cultural traditions in a transitional stage.

The second common characteristic of the two countries is the social organisation around the community before which literature was encountered as a group rather than as an individual experience, to the extent that solo-reading for individual benefit was rare. This social organisation of society, in both Burkina Faso and early nineteenth-century Ireland, in closed neighbourhoods, facilitated rituals and communal performances in

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<sup>856</sup> B. Kiely, *Poor Scholar: A Study of the Works and Days of William Carleton*, p. 3.

<sup>857</sup> L. Gunner, 'Africa and Orality', in F. A. Irele and S. Gikandi, eds., *The Cambridge History of African and Caribbean Literature*, 2 vols., vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 1.

which orality and literacy complemented each other through reading-aloud and other performances that maintained the relationship between the printed page and the audiences. Carleton and Pacéré showed this relationship with their performative writings which follow the structure of rituals celebrating life, wedding or death. Pacéré's poetry follows the tripartite framework of the poetry of the *bendre*; Carleton's stories are constructed around the fireside as place of social gathering for storytelling and develop themes of social interests such as funerals, faction fighting, wedding and popular devotions. To preserve these traditions that were in a transitional phase, Carleton and Pacéré, with their skills in drama and oral performances, used writing as a means of and support to performance, by blending 'spoken' and written traditions to develop a particular style of writing that culminates in performance.

The transitional periods of the two countries were also characterised by a relationship of mediation between the original 'spoken' material, its transmitter to the printed page, and its audiences. Carleton and Pacéré came from these countries, lived in these transitional periods and interacted with both oral and print literatures. They were brought up, in their childhood, within the 'spoken literature' by their parents who also sent them to a new school to acquire a new means of literary expression: writing. This combination of a knowledge of the unwritten tradition, together with literacy acquired by education, made possible for Carleton and Pacéré the project of recording the spoken literature, which they heard being told around them, in order to enhance the survival of these unwritten materials through performance. Thus, with pen and paper, they tried to be the transmitters of these 'spoken' literatures to the printed page and this was later resurrected through performance for audiences that included literate and illiterate alike. The hybrid elements in the writings of Pacéré and Carleton, signs of the transitional character of historical periods when oral and literary procedures overlapped, are expressions of the cultures and periods in which the two writers lived; both were influenced by this hybridity to become creators of a new imaginative literary form which we call 'orature', as it mediates between print and spoken literatures and mixes different performance genres. Carleton and Pacéré aimed at promoting the continuity of 'spoken literatures' by reproducing them as heard.

Our study has also pointed out that, though similar from the point of view of historical, cultural and literary considerations, Carleton and Pacéré are different in their

literary careers and in the techniques they used in their literary grammars. Carleton's career verged towards assimilation (while keeping a certain amount of Irishness) to English literary forms when, responding to a challenge that he could not write novels, he stopped writing stories for novels, whereas Pacéré's authentic style of orature started when he rejected assimilation to French poetic forms. What this difference shows is that *more* authentic illustrative examples of orature are to be chosen among the first works of Carleton, *Traits and Stories of the Irish Peasantry*, and in the last poetical collections of Pacéré, a recommendation which justifies focusing on these works in particular in our thesis.

Carleton and Pacéré also used many techniques to transcribe the spoken language in print form. Carleton's problem of 'the English tongue [which] is gradually superseding the Irish' applies, Barbara Hayley observes, not to the writer primarily, the language of the shared literary tradition having been English, but to the *speaker*, mainly in works such as Carleton's which attempt to record phonographically the words of their characters.<sup>858</sup> Carleton and Pacéré were interested in the 'spoken literature' which was perceived as dying out; with this interest and with close knowledge of their subjects, Carleton and Pacéré were well equipped to transpose the living phrase into writing, using both theatrical and typographic elements of aurality, and wordpower. Carleton used procedures such as phonetic transcriptions and typography to help the reader in the reconstruction of peasants' dialects in the process of reading. Pacéré too was able to transcribe aspects of the voice, rhythm, cadence, and gesture of the 'spoken literature' of the *bendre* by means of syntactic and graphic procedures<sup>859</sup> (capital letters, italics, *zabyuya*, abbreviations, page layout, etc.) which are extremely performative.

Carleton and Pacéré thus differed also in the techniques they used to transcribe the spoken literature of their respective countries. To transcribe the rhythm of the *bendre*, Pacéré employed page layout and succession of stanzas of unequal lengths whereas Carleton used dashes and suspension points; this difference entails difference in the performance and performativity of the orature of Pacéré and Carleton. For example, performance of the transcription of the *warba* dance in 'Poèmes pour l'Angola' and in the collection *Du lait pour une tombe* (III.2.a) is significantly different from Carleton's

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<sup>858</sup> B. Hayley, *Carleton's Traits and Stories*, p. 362.

<sup>859</sup> Cf. N. A. Kazi-Tani, *Roman africain de langue française*, p. 52.

descriptions of cultural Irish games in ‘Larry M‘Farland’s Wake’ (III. 2.d): as expressions of different cultural entertainments, the differences between the two descriptions lie in the use of the telling technique by Carleton, in this particular case, whereas Pacéré uses the showing method, presenting the dancer in action with his appropriate dresses. A further difference is that Carleton transcribed Irish dialects phonetically and Irish thought processes into the English language, whereas Pacéré transcribed drum language and Mooré language and thought processes literally under French words. This difference makes one aware of the possibility of using different methods to compose pieces of orature and, therefore, of a distinction between transcription and artistic composition in print form, as Pacéré and Carleton transcribed ‘spoken literature’ by using personal skills and talents to lay it in print form.

Among the common techniques employed by the two writers in their poetry or stories of orature form are the use of abbreviation as memory marks for performance, namely the abbreviation of song and dance titles or first lines of songs and poetry by Carleton on the one hand, and the use of abbreviation of *zabyuya* or mottos by Pacéré on the other hand. Both of them also used quotation marks, italics and capitalization in order to signal wordpower and aurality, or the elocutionary dimension of writing, the mixture of elements of different genres, or the reality that, as Pacéré puts it, ‘the drummers, even in wanting to remain themselves, must be understood and so must themselves provide help for the comprehension of their messages, above all if they intend that their drummed messages resound on all eardrums.’<sup>860</sup> Like such drummers, Carleton and Pacéré tried many techniques in an attempt to make ‘spoken literature’ resound on eardrums of audiences of all times.

The use of performative techniques made easier, in mid nineteenth-century Ireland, the ‘re-conversion’ of Carleton’s stories to the ‘spoken’ tradition through performance. One result of the interdependence of Carleton’s works with performance is that today, with the distance created by a long time interruption of performance, a full re-appropriation of the written text by spoken medium is impossible; what was not wholly written but technically suggested by giving the air, the title or the author of the material has in some cases not been preserved in memory through ‘loud’ performance and so can no longer be retrieved, though we still have the air, title and author in print form. The

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<sup>860</sup> *Poésie*, p. 1. Already quoted in part 3.

orature text is thus dependent on performance, which makes Carleton's orature differ from Irish folklore collection. Folklore collection recording illustrates Sir William Wilde's idea of print contributing to uproot 'spoken literature',<sup>861</sup> whereas Carleton and Pacéré promote 'spoken literature' by using techniques that invite one to perform the printed text, by using print as support to memory and not as substitution for it. However, though the technique of abbreviation mediates the cyclical relationship of 'spoken' and 'written' traditions, it has the inconvenience of restricting the work to specific audiences who are used to these abbreviations. Pacéré and Carleton tried to remedy this by joining explanatory notes to their works of orature in order to help foreigners to read and understand their works.

Performance is necessary to counter the danger of having only written texts without their corresponding equivalents in 'spoken literature'. 'Silent reading', we have seen, is reading aloud in the mind. This type of performance, however, is not always loud enough to 'hammer' literature into memory. The era of lowest level of performance (silent reading) caused the irremediable loss of the full texts of Carleton's orature of which the abbreviations remain as its residue or skeleton. Our comparative approach draws attention to the fact that a similar danger of loss of performative materials unfortunately threatens Pacéré's poetry if it is not read louder than the loudness of 'silent reading' in the mind. That is why, following the recommendations of critics of poetry and its public in Burkina Faso (e.g. Traoré), our comparative approach leads us to advocate the urgency and necessity of poetical declamations of Pacéré's poetry for Burkinabe audiences, otherwise the spoken literature of the *bendre* that Pacéré transcribed will meet a fate similar to the songs and poems Carleton alluded to in his stories.

The necessity of performance is still relevant today even with our new technologies, because the new devices cannot be a substitute for performance without risking the death of literature which is dynamic in essence; textual changes affect both 'written' and 'spoken' literatures from one edition or performance to another. The new media can, however, be used to enhance performance and to offer it to larger audiences through the radio, television and internet for example. Moreover, the new form of language that these new electronical and digital media introduced, namely the use of abbreviations, in order to meet people's aural and visual needs today, can be seen as

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<sup>861</sup> Cf. W. R. Wilde, *Irish Popular Superstitions*, quoted by C. Morash, *Writing the Irish Famine*, p. 161. Already cited in the research.

incentive to ‘loud’ performances; without this, phrases like ‘wan 2 C a moV’ would be hardly retrievable in the future as ‘I want to see a movie’, and abbreviations like ‘KIT’ for ‘Keep in touch’ would, in the absence of performance, be confused with ‘kit’ (set of tools) or ‘kit’ (diminutive name for kitten), for future generations.

The comparative approach of this research has also proved beneficial in the demystification of orature and in challenging the overemphasis on orature as a singular literary form of African literature. To move from William Carleton to Pacéré is to experience a strange sense of similarity, even as one begins to realize that significant differences exist. The comparison of Carleton’s and Pacéré’s works of orature shows that orature exists in many forms in many cultures (Ireland and Burkina Faso<sup>862</sup>) and in different historical periods (nineteenth and twentieth centuries) and in various models, as different authors used varieties of techniques in their works of orature to weave together poetry, music and stories in order to produce a spoken textual product that is transmitted into print and that is recycled through performance. To a certain extent, Carleton was the precursor of Somerville and Ross, in terms of use of language, and of James Joyce, in matter of language and literary form. Like Carleton, Somerville and Ross showed particular interest in the transcription of dialects, explaining that ‘right or wrong pronunciation and spelling are small things in the presentment of dialect’ and used typographical devices to convey ‘the vitalizing power in the rhythm of the sentence, the turn of the phrase, the knowledge of the idiom and (...) the attitude of mind’.<sup>863</sup> James Joyce, too, had an ear for Irish dialogue and, like Carleton, adopted the form of orature in the mixture of genres in his works which are sometimes compared to Carleton’s. Declan Kiberd observed that some of Carleton’s stories, ‘like “Phelim O’Toole’s Courtship” and “Denis O’Shaughnessy Going to Maynooth”, are halfway between short story and *Bildungsroman*—as such, they presage books like *Dubliners* and the trilogy of Beckett, being neither one thing nor the other, books not of a made society but of one still in the making’,<sup>864</sup> because they are potentially performative. It is likewise for his *Ulysses* which has been compared to a telephone directory because the hybridity of genres (prose

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<sup>862</sup> We have also noted American examples and Caribbean ones also exist.

<sup>863</sup> Ross, ‘Children of Captivity’, in *Some Irish Yesterday*, quoted by N. P. Greene, ‘Dialect and Social Identity in *The Real Charlotte*’, in *New Hibernia Review*, vol. 4, 1 (2000), 122.

<sup>864</sup> D. Kiberd, *Irish Classics*, p. 273.

narrative, poetry, theatre, etc) in it baffled its (early) readers who found it ‘experimental, unconventional,’ impossible to read.<sup>865</sup>

The works of late twentieth-century Irish writers, such as Ciaran Carson, also reveal the form of orature. Carson, like Carleton, was lullabied by his parents with ‘songs of love and murder, songs of unrequited love and re-united lovers, Orange songs and Green songs, nonsense songs, songs of ’98’,<sup>866</sup> songs which, as he develops in *Last Night’s Fun*, require performance, that is, ‘demand a context of being sung, of having listeners and other singers around you’.<sup>867</sup> By inserting songs in his poetry, in fulfilment of his desire of ‘getting some orality into the poetry’, and by making of his book *Fishing for Amber* a ‘synthesis of autobiographical details and bizarre anecdotes interspersed with stories from Greek mythology, Irish fairy folklore, and paintings from the Dutch Golden Age’ in an attempt to create a work which he describes as veering ‘between poetry and prose maybe (...), between music and haphazardness, between conversation and form’,<sup>868</sup> Carson’s works also reveal themselves as interesting sites for the application of the theory of orature. Furthermore, Joyce and Carson, like Carleton, read their works aloud and recordings of Joyce’s readings exist so that people can listen to them as to an oral narration. Both the script and recording of Joyce’s works have the status of literature, even though one can be called ‘spoken’ and the other ‘written’ or ‘printed’ literature.

In the African and Afro-American contexts, the works of Werewere Liking, Okot M’Bitek and Toni Morrison, to cite just a few names, are comparable to the works of Carleton and Pacéré, in terms of the mixture of novel, poetry and music in one literary form, and of the transcription of the spoken word into print form. Recall can be made here of Liking’s pronouncement that she does not subscribe to the systematic scission of genres (cf. III) and of Morrison’s use of the letters of the alphabet and punctuation to make her narrative appear aural (cf. III.1). The application of the theory of orature to these writings (by Joyce, Carson, Liking, M’Bitek, Morrison) would certainly reveal unheard-of wealth in terms of literary appreciation. The comparative approach, which has the advantage of

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<sup>865</sup> J. Johnson, ‘Introduction’ to J. Joyce, *Ulysses* (1922, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), p. xi.

<sup>866</sup> C. Carson, ‘The Poet Ciaran Carson Writes on the Power of the Anonymous Authors of Folksongs’, in C. Kinsella, ed., *Waterstone’s Guide to Irish Books* (Waterstone: Middlesex Waterstone’s Booksellers Ltd., 1998), p. 259.

<sup>867</sup> C. Carson, *Last Night’s Fun: A Book About Irish Traditional Music* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1996), p. 161.

showing the existence of orature in many continents and historical epochs, functions as a remedy against the confinement of orature to African literature, seen as it were, as a singular characteristic of African art.

In conclusion, print-medium and typographical orature is fully understandable only in this overall performative context. The mingling and cyclical interaction between ‘written’ and ‘spoken’ literatures, evident in the texts of older writers of both Burkina Faso and nineteenth-century Ireland, have indeed created divisive views of these forms of literary works. However, that does not justify ignoring the sophistication and important symbiotic relationships between the different carriers of literature. We hope that the literary theory of orature, which we have used as a methodological tool to approach these literatures, has reached a brighter assessment and understanding of these works than has been the case hitherto, or, at least, has indicated the point at which a revival of interest in the teaching and reading of the works of Carleton and Pacéré might begin. This theoretical method is not historically confined to works of a particular century, such as the transitional oratures of Carleton and Pacéré, but is also relevant and applicable to cross-continental writers of all times, such as James Joyce, Toni Morrison, Werewere Liking, Ciaran Carson, and all past, present-day and future writers of performative texts.

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<sup>868</sup> Radio Netherlands, *Aural Tapestry*, in <<http://www.radionetherlands.nl/features/cultureandhistory/carson010514.html>> (Accessed on 19 April 2006).

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