1. Robert Louis Stevenson and Karfagen: Linguistic Opportunism or Thematic and Musical Legitimacy?

By Fabien Desset

Whereas Iron Maiden rewrote and recast the text of S.T. Coleridge’s ‘Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner’ (1798, 1817) in the eponymous song published in Powerslave (1984), the Ukrainian progressive rock band Karfagen chose to quote the text of Robert Louis Stevenson’s A Child’s Garden in Verse (1885) more literally, in Echoes from Dragon Island (2019), whose title actually refers to Treasure Island (1883). However true to the text the songs may be, there is yet some room for transformation, due to the musical context and transposition, as well as the handling of the poems by the band’s composer and singer, Antony Kalugin, whose mother tongue is not English. Besides the thematic choice of such poems and their musical adaptations, there may therefore also be linguistic issues, which this presentation will try to expose.

Fabien Desset is a Senior Lecturer at the University of Limoges, where he teaches 18th and 19th century English Literature. He also teaches a course on music and social changes and focuses on rock music and heavy metal. As a member of the research units EHIC and SERA, Fabien specialises in transtextuality and aesthetic rewriting, and he published several articles on mythological poetry and art in Percy Shelley’s works, the Shelley couple’s travel writing, Gothic novels including Frankenstein. As part of the SAES congress, Fabien has presented a paper on the rewriting of Coleridge’s « The Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner » (1798, 1817) by Iron Maiden (Powerslave, 1984) and this year he presented a paper on William Blake’s Songs of Innocence (1788) by the Ukrainian progressive rock band Karfagen (Birds of Passage, 2020).
2. PJ Harvey’s Lyric Lyrics: The Incantator Mode of Let England Shake (2011)

by Sina Schuhmaier

PJ Harvey holds a status comparable to other canonised singer-songwriters such as Leonard Cohen or Patti Smith – critically acclaimed, more auteur than pop- or rockstar, and situated in the borderland between popular music, (visual art,) and literature. In the case of Harvey, this perception has only increased in recent years with her publication of two volumes of poetry (2015, 2022) and release of the album Let England Shake (2011). The literary resonances of the album did not go unnoticed, added by a thematic focus on Englishness and the First World War which invited the comparison with British war poetry.

While assessments of the literariness of Harvey’s lyrics are inevitably bound up with Western Romantic paradigms of authenticity and artistic value, a literary studies approach towards Let England Shake proves highly productive. Let England Shake abounds with intertextual and intermedial references – amongst them several samples, as well as references to folk song lyrics, to soldiers’ and civilians’ accounts of war, and to poetry. These are not merely quoted but rendered as ritualistic, lyric speech in Harvey’s incantatory mode of lyric invocation. If the lyric, according to Jonathan Culler (2015), is a form which invites reperformance through its aesthetic features, Harvey imbues the texts she invokes with ritualistic and performative potential. When read within the album’s wider concern with Englishness, this strategy confronts a static discourse of the nation with a plethora of re-awakened ghostly voices, a regenerative ambiguity which ‘lets England shake.’

Sina Schuhmaier is an academic staff member and doctoral student at the University of Mannheim’s chair of English Literary and Cultural Studies. She is currently working on a doctoral thesis about Englishness and England as imagined by contemporary song lyrics, proceeding from the assumption that song lyrics have the ‘cultural ecological’ potential to open up and render ambiguous the static discourse of nation. Methodologically, the thesis combines the theoretical lenses of cultural and postcolonial studies with the framework of literature as cultural ecology as developed by Hubert Zapf. Further research interests comprise Black British literature and the ‘Condition of England’-genre.

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By Christophe Lebold

In a perspective inspired by performance studies and considering literature as a concrete practice, we propose an analysis of two performed songs of different cultural status ("Be My Baby" by the Ronettes and "Higgs Boson Blues" by Nick Cave) that will approach both performances as complex literary events. Each includes

1. a recreation of the world through Logos
2. a form of lyrical theater through which the performer institutes himself as an archetypal literary “persona” that negociates for us the frontier between reality and fiction
3. a more or less explicit (and more or less playful) shamanistic ritual conducted by the performer which (for some listeners) will take on a very strong initiatory and cathartic value.

So much so that (according to the contexts of listening) the songs might constitute for some of their listeners both mimodramas (or dramuscules) that take them into fictional universes, occurrences of lyrical theatre where archetypal identities are played out, and public or private rituals where use Logos and theater as channels of personal transformation.

While the two chosen performances allows to isolate a popular and a more learned practice of the art of song, their common features will allow us to see modern pop songs as objects that are by nature hyper-literary.

As we proceed, we will also discover that if literature is a relevant category to apprehend songs-, analysis of songs conversely brings to light an aspect of the literary experience that is sometimes neglected: its ritual and shamanistic dimension.

The author of a doctorate thesis on the masks, voices and songs of Bob Dylan and Leonard Cohen, Christophe Lebold is senior lecturer at the University of Strasbourg, where he teaches literature and rock culture. A former actor, he is interested in the performing arts and in poetry as lived experience and has devoted many journal articles and book chapters to rock songwriters and performers like Dylan, Lou Reed or Elvis Presley.

After traveling extensively on the tracks of Leonard Cohen and consulting his personal archives in the poet’s company, he has published a poetic biography Leonard Cohen: The Man Who Saw The Angels Fall (2018). The book, which approaches Cohen as a rock artist and modern spiritual poet will be published in English by ECW Press (Toronto) in early 2024.

In his spare-time, Christophe Lebold likes cats, nuanced thinking and Zen

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4. The Figures of Pop Music in Novelistic Fiction

by Buata Malela

The long-standing relationship between popular music and literature can be approached from various perspectives, and raises questions regarding their interplay. As the musicologist Catherine Rudent has noted, these questions relate to the ways in which music and musicians are represented in society, particularly in terms of genres and their categorisation, the individual subject and the way in which he or she is invested in social discourse, in the arts and especially in pop music and novelistic literature. On the basis of this observation, this paper proposes to probe the treatment of a number of musical figures from the past - Bob Marley, the Beatles - and more contemporary ones - Britney Spears and Stromae - in the contemporary French-language novel, limited to a corpus of four works: *Le ravissement de Britney Spears* (2011) by Jean Rolin, *Stromae est mort à New York* (2016) by Thierry Coljon, *Resurrection song* (2020) by Teodoro Gilabert and *The Beatles are back* (2022) by Arnaud Hudelot. The aim is to understand how fictional logic translates them and how these figures from the real world can be seen as fragments linked to one another. How can these 'fragments of the real' constitute a novelistic discourse on the relationship between popular music and literature, on the one hand, and reveal an image of the individual subject, on the other?

Buata B. Malela is a Francophone Literature Professor at the University of Mayotte, and belongs to the Research Unit RIRRA21 at Université Paul Valéry Montpellier 3. His research focuses on global French Literatures (Africa, the Caribbean, the Indian Ocean), literary theory and contemporary urban pop music. He has published monographs related to these specialities, including:

- *Cover culture. La reprise dans la pop musique urbaine francophone*, Paris, éditions du Cerf, coll. « Patrimoines », 2022;

[FR] Les figures de la pop musique dans la fiction

Romanesque

by Buata Malela

La relation ancienne entre musique populaire et littérature peut s’envisager de diverses manières et en même temps soulever des questionnements propres à cette interaction. Ces questions à relever portent sur les modes de représentations sociales des musiques et des musiciens comme le note la musicologue Catherine Rudent, notamment des genres et de leur catégorisation, du sujet individu et de la manière dont il est investi dans le discours.

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6. “You Think This is Easy? Realism?”: How David Bowie Extends Romanticism

By Emily Bernhard-Jackson

For virtually all of his career as a popular musician, the late David Bowie was lauded as a pioneer of self-fashioning. Without doubt Bowie was indeed a pioneer in all these areas, but like all pioneers he built on the work and actions of forebears. This paper considers the ways in which David Bowie extends some Romantic philosophies of identity: in particular, it examines Bowie’s connection to similar explorations by the Romantic poet Lord Byron. Considering recent work on Bowie by Nick Stevenson, Shelton Waldrep, and Simon Critchley, among others, as well by Romanticists such as Jerome McGann, it argues that, like Byron, Bowie undermines the concept of stable identity. But whereas Byron builds on David Hume to suggest that “self” is actually multiple, Bowie uses the many personae of his career to push further and suggest that persona is self: that there is nothing essential beneath performed surface. The paper thus argues that one can trace a lineage from pre-Romantic philosophers such as Hume and John Locke to Bowie via Byron, but that Bowie plays a radical tune on the ideas of these forebears.

Emily Bernhard-Jackson is a Senior Lecturer in English Literature at the University of Exeter, in Great Britain. She has published on Lord Byron (the subject of her book, Certain in Uncertainty: The Growth of Byron’s Philosophy of Knowledge), as well as more widely in the nineteenth-century, and has recently begun to publish on David Bowie and his connection to the Romantics. In addition, she has published three mystery novels and is currently at work on a fourth. She teaches in Academic Writing, and in Romanticism.

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7. The poetic and ornithological lo-fi of Bill Callahan

By Grégoire Tosser

A major figure in lo-fi, a trend popularised in the field of American popular music at the end of the 1980s advocating a raw and experimental sound outside the major commercial circuits, musician Bill Callahan, born in 1966, first made a name for himself under the name of Smog in the early 1990s. With a discography of some twenty albums, recorded over a period of thirty years, he has become an important singer-songwriter who favours a minimalist aesthetic in his songs: sparse accompaniment, repetitive motifs, etc. But his blues and folk style, intimately linked to Leonard Cohen and Johnny Cash, is also remarkably free in its form, from the shortest songs to amplifications lasting several minutes. A musician of introversion, he unfolds through his lyrics a willingly enigmatic and melancholic image of America. Close to Bonnie Prince Billy, Cynthia Dall, Chan Marshall (Cat Power), David Berman (Silver Jews) or Stephen Malkmus (Pavement), associated with the Drag City label of which he is a figurehead, Bill Callahan has also written an epistolary novel, *Letters to Emma Bowlcut* (2010), in which the same obsessions as in his songs shine through: love and melancholy, desire and frustration, nature and birds.

It is this last aspect that the present paper intends to explore, as a gateway to Bill Callahan's poetic universe. Omnipresent in the titles and lyrics (for example in the songs "All Thoughts are Prey to Some Beast", "A Man Needs A Woman or A Man to Be A Man", "Blood Red Bird", "Honeymoon Child", "Palimpsest", "Ride My Arrow", "Seagull", "The Wind and the Dove" or "Too Many Birds"), the birds open up a semantic, metaphorical and sonic world that Bill Callahan visits in a plural and singular way.

Bibliography:

Grégoire Tosser is a lecturer in musicology at the University of Evry Paris-Saclay. His research and teaching focus mainly on twentieth and twenty-first-century American, Russian and Hungarian music. More recently, his research has focused on the analysis of pop and rock music, chanson, and the sound/music/image relationship in cinema.

His publications include a collective work on György Kurtág (PUR, 2009, co-edited with Pierre Maréchaux), an issue of *Volume! on the Beatles* (2016, with Olivier Julien), an issue of Circuit on Björk (2022, with Martin Guerpin) and an issue of *Filigrane* on music and sound design in contemporary audiovisual productions (2022, with Chloé Huvet).
[FR] Le lo-fi poétique et ornithologique de Bill Callahan
Grégoire Tosser

Figure majeure du lo-fi, courant populaire dans le domaine de la musique populaire américaine à la fin des années 1980 prônant un son brut et expérimental en dehors des grands circuits commerciaux, le musicien Bill Callahan, né en 1966, s’est fait d’abord connaître sous le nom de Smog au début des années 1990. Fort d’une discographie d’une vingtaine d’albums, enregistrés sur un intervalle d’une trentaine d’années, il est devenu un auteur-compositeur-interprète important qui privilégie, dans ses chansons, une esthétique minimaliste : accompagnement épuré, motifs répétitifs, etc. Mais son style blues et folk, relié intimement à Leonard Cohen et Johnny Cash, est aussi d’une liberté formelle remarquable, depuis les chansons les plus courtes jusqu’aux amplifications de plusieurs minutes. Musicien de l’introversion, il déploie à travers ses paroles une image de l’Amérique volontiers énigmatique et mélancolique. Proche de Bonnie Prince Billy, Cynthia Dall, Chan Marshall (Cat Power), David Berman (Silver Jews) ou Stephen Malkmus (Pavement), associé au label Drag City dont il est une figure de proue, Bill Callahan a écrit également un roman épistolaire, *Letters to Emma Bowlcut* (2010) où transparaissent les mêmes obsessions que dans ses chansons : amour et mélancolie, désir et frustration, nature et oiseaux.


**Bibliographie indicative :**

**Biographie**
8. Letter to You: Character, Masking, and Fixing the Narrative in the Work of Bruce Springsteen

By Marian Jago

While Springsteen was famously something of a late bloomer when it came to mining the richness of the American literary tradition for inspiration in his song writing, he has nonetheless frequently been compared to the likes of Whitman, Steinbeck, and O’Connor (these last two early and significant influences once Springsteen did start to read seriously) for his work in advancing what one might consider ‘the great American rock song’. Since the mid-1970s Springsteen’s literary, narrative approach to song writing and his regular and detailed development of character(s) in his songs has allowed him to explore the particularities of the American condition across lines of class, race, and gender more usually limited by the normatively auto-biographical stance of rock. This frequent use of character and third-person approach to storytelling has at times lead to tension and misappropriation of meaning, particularly in cases where the musical elements of the song are to some extent incongruous with its lyric. While at times this has lead Springsteen to reconfigure the musical elements of a composition (see ‘Born in the USA’), more recently we can perhaps observe Springsteen as essayist engaged in a process of sifting and in some ways ‘fixing’ the various narrative constructions that constitute his career.

Marian Jago is currently Senior Lecturer in Jazz & Popular Music Studies at the University of Edinburgh, where she also chairs the Jazz & Popular Music Study Group.

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By Asa Williams

The poetry and myth of Arthur Rimbaud, Father of Symbolism, of Surrealism, LGBTQA+ trailblazer, iconoclast and Anarchist, casts a long shadow over the counterculture of the 20th century. From Bob Dylan to Crass, through clothing, hairstyles, lyricism and motivation, his presence in the subcultures of the century after his death is undeniable and leaves a complex legacy. In his own life (1854-1891), he was unknown, too avant-garde for his era, and constricted by the stifling society and art forms of his era. Rimbaud travelled extensively across three continents and roamed from Scandinavia to Java. His poetry and infamous life were preserved by his former partner, Paul Verlaine, who lived with the adolescent poet throughout Rimbaud's teenage years.

My research focuses on the subcultures that would adopt him, The Beats, the Surrealists and Symbolists, who would push him into the focus of a young singer-songwriter called Bob Dylan. When Dylan acknowledged his fondness of Rimbaud, it would be the first in a long line of musicians who would express their admiration of the poet, Jim Morrison, Patti Smith, Leonard Cohen, Richard Hell, amongst others.

By the '80s the academic Wallace Fowlie claimed that Rimbaud was the most read poet across the globe. For the centennial of his death, France held nationwide readings of his poetry and a celebration of his life and works. He is now firmly established on the academic curriculum, he is mentioned in the assemblée, and his interment in the Pantheon has even been discussed. From the pariah of his youth to the iconic figure of today the shift of Rimbaud is a remarkable demonstration of how we understand artists and what counterculture means. Can one lose their 'countercultureness', and become part of the establishment? Does 'selling-out' change how we view Rimbaud? And did the musicians who were inspired by him, take his poetry or his life as their reason for loving him so?

What my paper has attempted to focus on is the balance of Rimbaud as a counterculture icon and his undeniable place in a modern consumerist society.

Asa Williams is a Franco-British PhD student at the University of East Anglia. Alongside his time in academia he has spent time as a spoken word poet and punk musician activist, playing throughout England.
10. Chinese Heavy Metal and Chinese Poetry

By William Spok

From its very beginnings, Chinese Metal has developed a unique relationship with their national poetry, expressing both idealisation and protest. The pioneers of the genre, the heavy metal band Tang Dynasty, have woven poetry into their music. Their debut album blends heavy metal and Han Chinese music with lyrics inspired by traditional poetry, praising the beauty of China and its culture. Chinese poetry as a source of inspiration for Metal did not stop with these precursors. From that point on, the anthropological perspective allows us to grasp the issues (identity, politics, social) raised by this interplay between Heavy Metal and traditional Chinese poetry. It also shows how Metal is changed and updated when Satanism and the Nordic gods give way to Chinese poetry. The form of the latter is in turn changed, both forms are altered by their interaction. This is the case with Zuriaake, who sees the use of poetry as a way of understanding and reappropriating a "blurred" Chinese identity. The group’s staging evokes Liu Zongyuan’s poem “Snow on the River”. Chinese poetry does not have a single, unique and total meaning. Other groups, such as JaJaTao, draw on the tradition of Chinese poetry to construct a metaphorical discourse. Using the connection between myths and symbols inherent in the Chinese way of writing poetry, they use double meanings to develop a political critique.

Spok William is a PhD candidate in anthropology at Nice University and his research focuses on the construction of identity and collective imaginary in the Chinese Heavy Metal sub-culture. After a 9 month-field investigation in Beijing’s Metal scene, his research interrogates identities and local, national and transnational imaginaries which underlie Chinese Metal. He has presented his research in his published Master’s Thesis, as well as through various articles and conference papers in museums, universities and music labels.
[FR] Metal chinois et poésie chinoise

Dès ses origines, le Metal chinois a développé une relation singulière avec leur poésie nationale, servant à exprimer tout autant l’idéalisation que la contestation. Les pionniers du genre, Tang Dynasty ont tissé un lien privilégié avec celle-ci. Leur premier album mêle le Heavy Metal, la musique chinoise han à des paroles inspirées de la poésie traditionnelle où est louée la beauté de la Chine et de sa culture. La poésie chinoise comme source d’inspiration pour le Metal ne s’est pas arrêtée à ces précurseurs. Dès lors, la perspective anthropologique permet de saisir les enjeux (identitaires, politiques, sociaux) soulevés par cette rencontre. Mais aussi comment le Metal se voit changer, actualiser lorsque satanisme et dieux nordiques laissent leurs places à la poésie chinoise. La forme de cette dernière se voit à son tour changée, l’un et l’autre s’actualisant par leur interrelation. C’est le cas de Zuriaake qui voit dans l’utilisation de la poésie un moyen d’appréhender et de se réapproprier une identité chinoise « brouillée ». Le groupe cherche avec sa mise en scène à évoquer le poème de Liu Zongyuan « Neige sur le fleuve ». Dans la poésie chinoise il n’y a pas qu’un seul sens, unique et total. Ainsi, d’autres groupes comme JaJaTao en s’inscrivant dans la tradition de la poésie chinoise construisent un discours métaphorique. Utilisant le lien entre mythes et symboles inhérents à la façon d’écrire de la poésie en Chine ils usent du double sens pour développer une critique de la politique.

Doctorant en Anthropologie au LAPCOS à Nice sous la tutelle d’Arnaud Halloy. Spok William étudie la construction d’une identité et d’un imaginaire dans la sous-culture musicale qu’est le Metal chinois. Après une enquête de terrain de neuf mois dans le milieu du Metal pékinois son travail interroge les identités et imaginaires – à la fois locaux, nationaux et transnationaux – qui se font et se défont dans le Metal chinois. Il a eu l’occasion de présenter ses recherches au travers de la sortie en livre de son mémoire de Master, de différents articles ainsi que de conférences faites dans des cadres variés (université, musées, label de musique).