Displaced Persons: Conditions of Exile in European Culture

Sharon Ouditt

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edited by
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General Editors' Preface

The European dimension of research in the humanities has come into sharp focus over recent years, producing scholarship which ranges across disciplines and national boundaries. This new series provides a major channel for this work and unites the fields of cultural studies and traditional scholarship. It will publish in the areas of European history and literature, art history, archaeology, language and translation studies, political, cultural and gay studies, music, psychology, sociology and philosophy. The emphasis is explicitly European and interdisciplinary, concentrating attention on the relativity of cultural perspectives, with a particular interest in issues of cultural transition.

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Notes on Contributors

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Daniel Cordle is a Lecturer in American and English Literature at Nottingham Trent University. He is the author of *Postmodern Postures: Literature, Science and the Two Cultures Debate*, and has published widely on the relationship between literature and science, and postmodern American literature.

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Carla Dente is Professor of English at the University of Pisa. Her research area is mainly in the field of drama studies and ranges from essays on English and Australian contemporary theatre to essays on Renaissance theatre (mainly Shakespeare). She is the author of a volume on Pinter and of a reading of *The Merchant of Venice* based on the study of rhetoric/theory of argumentation, and has edited several collections of essays.

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Martin Halliwell is a Lecturer in English and American Studies at the University of Leicester. He has published articles and essays on modern American and European literature, intellectual history and literary adaptations. He is the author of *Romantic Science and the Experience of Self* (Ashgate, 1999) and *Modernism and Morality* (Macmillan, 2001).

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Alex Keller is University Fellow at Leicester University, having been Senior Lecturer in the History of Science there until 1997. Since publishing *The Infancy of Atomic Physics* (Oxford University Press, 1983) he has been teaching courses on the involvement of modern scientific technologies in warfare, primarily atomic weapons. His interest in the Hungarian dimension was awakened by participation in conferences in Budapest in 1994 and 1996. He is presently completing an account of the discovery of nuclear fission.

Lynne Long teaches at the University of Warwick in both the Centre for British and Comparative Cultural Studies and the English Department. Her main interests are in translation studies, particularly translating the Bible, and medieval and Renaissance literature. Her book *Translating the Bible: From the 7th to the 17th Century* will be published by Ashgate, and she is presently working on translations of the plays of Oscar Wilde.

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Yvette Rocheron is Lecturer in Modern French Studies at the University of Leicester. She has held teaching posts in secondary and higher education in France and Britain. As a sociologist, she has been researching issues related to health and ethnicity in Britain, and has published articles on French television culture, immigration, mixed race families and multiculturalism.

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Acknowledgements

Introduction
Dispossession or Repositioning?

Sharon Ouditt

This volume of essays, in the series Studies in European Cultural Transition, had its moment of origin in a colloquium on the subject of 'Exile', held at Leicester University in 1999. While its final version may appear to be in something of a fallen and exiled state from that originating meeting (that is, fallen into formal essays, and exiled by time), its spirit is nevertheless informed by the papers delivered, and the discussions and debates that accompanied them, whether formal or informal.

The subject of exile is perennially topical. We hear almost daily reports of the experiences of refugees, immigrants or exiles through the media, and the situations in Northern Ireland and Israel provide a constant reminder of the contingency of the terms 'homeland' or 'native soil'. On the other hand, the topic has a lengthy historical and mythical dimension: the exile of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden, the wanderings of Odysseus, the diaspora of the Jews all speak to a fundamental sense of loss, displacement and a desire to regain a paradisaical sense of unity and wholeness, whether spiritual or secular. For many, though, that loss is transformed from the pain of dispossession into an alternative way of seeing. For Joyce's Stephen Dedalus the 'silence, exile and cunning'[1] of his self-imposed expatriation provides the means to express untrammelled his artistic vision. For Salman Rushdie, the idea of a homeland is intrinsically 'imaginary'.[2] For scholarly émigrés such as Edward Said and Julia Kristeva, exile is the necessary condition of the intellectual.

Exile, according to Said, is one of the saddest fates.[3] Whether an individual, exposed and humiliated for social transgressions, or a member of a tribe or ethnic minority, deracinated for political or economic reasons, the exile is inconsolable – nostalgic, bereaved of family and community, forever shadowed by the absence of stability. Yet, once established elsewhere, this experience of lack may be accompanied by something more. The exile is resistant, uncoopted, aloof from the structures and demands of his or her new residence.[4] The exile – and we are talking here specifically of the intellectual exile – is thus in the borderland position of being neither seduced by the comfort of familiarity, nor ensnared by subjugation to

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[1] James Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916; reprint London: Granada, 1977), p. 222.
[2] Salman Rushdie, *Imaginary Homelands: Essays and Criticism 1981–1991* (London: Granta, in association with Penguin, 1991).
[3] Edward W. Said, 'Intellectual Exile: Expatriates and Marginals', *Grand Street*, 12/3 (1993), p. 13.
[4] Cf. ibid., p. 116.

civil and political decorum, but free from discomforting loyalties, capable of reflecting, and reflecting in particular on the gaps between cultures. In Said's view:

> An intellectual exile is like a shipwrecked person who learns to live in a certain sense *with* the land, not *on* it, not like Robinson Crusoe, whose goal is to colonize his little island, but more like Marco Polo, whose sense of the marvelous never fails him, and who is always a traveler, a provisional guest, not a freeloader, conqueror, or raider.[5]

The condition of the intellectual exile need not be consequent on the literal event of relocation: it may also, as Said makes clear, be metaphorical. In other words, any intellectual community may be made up of insiders and outsiders: those who feel at ease with the structures they inhabit, and those who are driven by a sense of dislocation, of dissonance.[6] Essays in this volume by Martin Halliwell, Nicoletta Caputo, Carla Dente and Marina Spunta reflect on just this sense of dissonance. One is reminded also of Virgina Woolf's 'outsider', 'alien and critical' of her governing culture[7] – and also of Julia Kristeva's thoughts on the inevitability of dissidence in writing: '[h]ow can one avoid sinking into the mire of common sense, if not by becoming a stranger to one's own country, language, sex and identity? Writing is impossible without some kind of exile.'[8]

The essays in this volume analyse renditions of exile over centuries and across disciplines. They range from the thirteenth to the twentieth century, and cover English literature, translation studies, cultural history, museum studies, history of science, French cultural studies and Italian literature. The collection begins with the story of a mythical but neverthless unwanted, enforced exile, and ends with exile as little more than an occupational hazard – the conjunction of economics, globalization and personal, political choice. In the process the condition loses its original power dynamic and, from being a form of punishment, becomes imbued with an element of autonomy and an almost utopian degree of optimism. Abdul JanMohamed suggests that we be wary of an all-encompassing use of the term 'exile', which tends to be charged emotionally with the plight of the unfortunate individual.[9] He identifies four modes of border-crossing that permit distinctions to be made in terms of volition and stance towards the host culture. These are those used by the exile, the immigrant, the colonialist and the scholar. The conditions of the exile and the immigrant are differentiated by the fact that the exile experiences

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5   Ibid., p. 121.
6   Ibid., p. 117.
7   Virginia Woolf, *A Room of One's Own* (1929; reprint London: Granada, 1977), p. 93. The concept of the female 'outsider' is, of course, more fully developed in *Three Guineas* (1938; reprint Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977).
8   Julie Kristeva, 'A New Type of Intellectual: The Dissident', in Toril Moi (ed.), *The Kristeva Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986), p. 298.
9   Abdul R. JanMohamed, 'Worldliness-without World, Homelessness-as-Home: Toward a Definition of the Specular Border Intellectual', in Michael Sprinker (ed.), *Edward Said: A Critical Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), p. 101.

an unhappy or unwilled rupture with his or her original culture, while the immigrant leaves voluntarily, with the desire to become accepted as a member of the new society. The essays by Lynne Long and Alex Keller reflect these perspectives in interesting combinations. The colonialist and the scholar (or anthropologist, or traveller), according to JanMohamed, are less troubled by any disruption to their subjectivity. The colonialist maintains a steady, objective gaze on the new culture and applies to it his administrative, economic or military skills (see Andrew Hammond's essay.) The scholar is equally driven by the requirements of objectivity: the new culture is there to be mastered and to be analysed, but not to impinge on the subjectivity of the individual, for fear that he or she might 'go native' (an equally important injunction for the colonialist) and thus relinquish professional status.[10] While these distinctions are useful and can be applied in part to, or in partial conjunction with, most of the situations under discussion in this volume, they omit two crucial states: exile as a fall (from grace, from a metaphysically-conceived state, from time) and exile as exemplification of the uncanny. In this volume the borders that are crossed are not limited to the geographical, and, although the structuring of subjectivity is central to the concerns of both Said and JanMohamed, neither (by election) considers the spiritual condition which, in the premodern age, provided the metaphysical rationale for a sense of being, or not being, at home.

The collection opens with Enrico Giaccherini's analysis of two versions of the Orpheus experience. According to the ancient myth, Orpheus is blessed with outstanding abilities as a poet and musician. He can outsing Sirens, pacify Cerberus, tame wild animals and can even animate trees and rocks. He loses his beloved Euridice twice: first she dies and then, when he attempts to rescue her from the underworld, he makes the fatal error of looking back to ascertain that she is there, just before reaching the threshold. That lack of faith causes her to be lost to him forever, and he takes to the wilderness, exiled from the possibility of love, and tames the natural world with his tragic yet exquisite lamentations, until he is set upon, dismembered and flung in a river, his mouth on his severed head still crying out for Euridice. The details of that myth are treated rather differently by the anonymous thirteenth-century author of *Sir Orfeo* on the one hand, and Robert Henryson in *Orpheus and Eurydice* on the other. Giaccherini's analysis focuses specifically on the episode of exile in both, reading the differences between them as indicative of a changing world view: Sir Orfeo, following a period construed as penance, rediscovers his 'Dame Heurodis' and begins his return journey towards being a legitimate sovereign. Henryson, on the other hand, far from being concerned with the traditional conventions of Christian divine rights, shows himself to be more interested in the Greek origins of the character and the classical doctrines of appropriate leadership, embodied in a disquisition on the planets and the music of the spheres. The suggestion is that Henryson's version is heading away from

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[10]   Ibid., pp. 101–2.

romance and the medieval concerns of courtly love and divine grace, and moving towards a concern with the changing intellectual climate, which was to be dominated by humanism and the Renaissance.

The next three essays deal variously with politics and religion in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Lynne Long provides a lively account of translations of the Bible from Latin into the vernacular. Over the period of the Reformation both Protestant and Catholic groups found themselves in exile and, consequently, in a position to provide a translation of the Bible that might get through to a population as yet unfixed in its religious practices. The reign of Mary Tudor (1553–58) saw the exile of a group of Protestants, including John Knox and William Whittingham, to Geneva. Whittingham, an excellent scholar, set about producing a translation of the Bible that was both accurate and accessible to the 'simple lambs partly wandering astray by ignorance'.[11] A Bible that was portable, divided into chapters and verses and very popular with the general public made a virtue of exile at the same time as being a propaganda success. The Rheims New Testament, published in 1582 by a Catholic group, bore the signs of defensiveness. There was considerable resistance among educated Catholics to translations at all, but the fact that the holy text had been so fully appropriated by 'the enemy' meant that a translation became inevitable. Lynne Long analyses some of the doctrinal motivations behind elements of the translations and their successes or otherwise in becoming incorporated into common understanding. Her conclusion is that while the Protestant group were invigorated by their pioneering visionariness, the Catholic group in Rheims 'just wanted to go home'.

Douglas Burnham's reading of *Macbeth* considers the uncanniness of exile at home. Macbeth, initially a heroic figure, is rapidly cast out of a sense of time and politics as noble, divine and governed by communicable sense, and into a confusion of delayed and misinterpreted messages, Machiavellian temporality and diseased desire. Macbeth's fall is thus metaphysical and is only redeemed by the recapturing of 'noble time', the 'measure, time and place'[12] that enacts the restoration of the righteous kingly lineage. The play is thus seen as one in which Machiavellian machinations and emphasis on power over virtue, represent the full horror of exile from God's kingdom.

Michael Davies' essay is concerned with literal and rhetorical exile over the period of the Restoration. The rhetoric of exile in this period, he argues, is complex and deployed by royalists and Nonconformists alike, signalling political divisions and allegiances that are not always clear. The piece begins with a brief discussion of Milton's *Paradise Lost*, one of the most profound works of literature to deal with the theme of exile, and to deal with it through the issues of non-conformity

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[11] William Whittingham, 'Preface to the New Testament', in Alfred Pollard (ed.), *Records of the English Bible* (London: Henry Frowde, Oxford University Press, 1911), p. 276.
[12] William Shakespeare, *The Tragedy of Macbeth*, ed. Nicholas Brooke (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), V.vii.103.

and liberty of conscience which are central to this essay. It proceeds with an account of the return of the king from a literal exile, and his eventual and reluctant enforcement of a spiritual exile upon all Nonconformists who were imprisoned and faced other hostile forms of intolerance. Davies sets out to provide a more complex account of the royalist/Anglican/Nonconformist Puritan split that is so commonly seen as the paradigm of this period. Through his account of what are, in effect, prison narratives, of the appropriation and reappropriation of the biblical tropes of exile by royalists and dissenters, and through a reappraisal of the conciliatory attitude of Charles II and the instances of dissenters who were also royalists, Davies sets out to restore to the period a proper understanding of the history of Nonconformist persecution and suffering.

In many ways, Susan Pearce's account of the nineteenth-century exhibition of Egyptian mummies lies at the centre of this collection. It deals with the politics of exhibition, and with the psychic effects consequent on the wresting of these exhibits from their original context and their placement in a consumer milieu bent on amassing material goods as a form of defiance against death. Pearce tells of nineteenth-century explorers tearing mummies from their tombs to display them in London, the imperial centre. In a later development some of those mummies were unwrapped, first in private, later as a public spectacle, masquerading as scientific inquiry but displaying more than a hint of the striptease in performance. The human viewers are thus faced with exiled humans on display. The dead human body becomes fetishized as the other, and the viewer begins to recognize the other in the self, which uncanny recognition opens the way towards the place of final exile – death itself.

Travellers to the Balkan states might be seen to have more in common with Milton's Satan than the unsettled Victorian viewers of Egyptian mummies as, for them, '[t]he mind is its own place',[13] and provided it is replete with the customs and practices redolent of 'Englishness', it can survive the 'inhospitable ... and desolate'[14] manifestations of south-east Europe. Andrew Hammond's account of English travellers to the Balkans counterbalances Edward Said's concept of the 'border subject' with that of the 'inflexible exile' – one who remains closed to the possibilities of hybridity, transgression and non-allegiance. An account of the writings of travellers as diverse as Robert Graves, Flora Sandes and Robert Carver provides an indication that an exilic identity, bolstered by a history of practices such as 'clustering', 'routine' and the maintenance of 'personal authority', and based on an Englishness as profound as it is patriarchally inflexible, continues to perpetuate an image of the Balkans as Europe's internal 'other' and remains oblivious to the self-estrangement and consequent discursive violation that the experience of exile can provide.

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[13] John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, ed. Alistair Fowler (London and New York: Longman, 1968; reprint 1971), Book I, l. 254, p. 59.
[14] Ibid., Book XI, l. 332, p. 578.

The subject of Alex Keller's essay is a group of Jewish scientists, who originated in Budapest and whose extraordinary expertise in atomic physics coupled with the small scale of their place of origin, earned them the nickname, the 'martians'. These men, displaced by restricted employment opportunities which were later exacerbated by the First World War and then the rise of Nazism, ended up in America (having variously alighted in Germany, England and elsewhere) where hospitality was warm, receptivity to their 'theoretical' ideas considerable, and employment prospects promising. They carried with them the apparently 'universal' language of atomic physics, but were dependent on national politics in their search for some kind of a 'home'.

America, was, of course, the destination of thousands of exiles and émigrés towards the beginning of the twentieth century. Martin Halliwell, in his essay, argues that exile, whether real or imagined, initiates in modernist writing an impulse to grapple with what, following Richard Rorty, he calls the 'blind impress' of modernity. Both Lorca and Kafka – the former following his own experience and the latter imaginatively – seek to embrace the other, not by means of a synoptic, empathetic visionariness, but via a kaleidoscopic sense of visual limitation in the case of Lorca, and a labyrinthine disorientation in Kafka's protagonist.

W. H. Auden, unlike Lorca and Kafka, did not set out to identify with lower socioeconomic order experience. His exile, again to America, was of course voluntary, but in the context of a possible Nazi invasion of Britain. Kathleen Bell compares his position on exile to that of Hannah Arendt, another exile, but a political philosopher. While Arendt's point of view is overtly political and concerned with the articulation of human rights, Auden appears anti-political. But, according to Bell, in his poetry we might read features of the condition of exile that he was more free to express, as his exile was voluntary and he was not estranged from the language of America. Arendt's view is that human endeavour is confirmed by interacting politically, by making things and by engaging in repetitive labour. Auden, on the other hand, conceives of human development as a series of exiles and is conscious of the necessity of freedom to the growth of the poet. Their views on exile, while they do not add up to a consolidated position on the subject, are complementary and share a commitment to, and interest in, the human voice.

Daniel Cordle's reading of Milan Kundera sees exile as a temporal, rather than spatial, condition. Circumventing the more obvious readings of Kundera's exile from his native Czechoslovakia, Cordle looks at *The Joke*, which pre-dates Kundera's exile, and considers the borders between states of being (metaphysical borders) and between Enlightenment and postmodernist sensibilities (temporal and philosophical borders). Cordle takes on what appears to be a search in Kundera's writing for a cultural home, a place in the past that was uncontaminated by the fractiousness, noise and speed of modern technology, and characterized instead by a common, human cultural project. He does not argue, however, that Kundera is a cultural reactionary: the ideas of authenticity for which he apparently seeks are problematized, revealed as illusory, but desired nevertheless. What we have, then,

is metaphysical exile – exile from the self in which borders in identity and meaning are revealed, and in which an originating cultural moment is both sought and shown to be imaginary.

Both Nicoletta Caputo and Carla Dente provide readings of exile from the self that emphasize sex and gender. Caputo analyses Angela Carter's novel *The Passion of New Eve* in which exile takes the form of a search for a kind of sexual or gendered identity that might be liberating for women. The protagonist, who starts the novel as a man, undergoes exile from the phallocentric security of masculine identity: in seeking his 'self' he is forced to discover a history of brutality, carelessness and violence that he re-enacts in the role of victim rather than perpetrator. This character can never, and never wants to, get 'home' in the sense of returning to how things were. A feminist allegory, the novel insists that exile from the sex–gender system can only be a good thing.

Carla Dente's analysis of Patrick White's *The Twyborn Affair* also reveals a quest novel – this time a quest for fullness of unity across genders and lifestyles – in an exploration of sexual and national identities that entails anguish and fear. The male/female narrator is in a constant state of self-exile, in which the 'I' is permanently exiled from a part of itself, an exile that is figured in terms of gendered identity, time and location.

In Yvette Rocheron's interviews with Algerian men who have emigrated to Britain, national identity, ethnic identity and religious identity are all open for renegotiation. Economic rather than political exiles, these men have now married, which removes the implicit tragedy in the narrative of migration. A core condition of Muslim migration is the betrayal by and of the native groups. But these men signal that the supposed unity between past and present is illusory, that they diffuse fixed definitions of ethnic identification by deploying strategies of resistance against it, and that, mostly detached from Algeria, they have entered into a form of pluralism that has turned into a narrative of no return.

Francesca Duranti's novel *Sogni Mancini* is similarly a narrative of no return. Rather like Auden, the protagonist is in voluntary exile in America, the land of opportunity. She has more in common, though, with Eve/lyn or the Algerian male exiles in that she seeks to embrace an inclusive subjectivity, a hyphenated identity, which is part of a dream of the creation of new forms of national identity. An Italian university professor, the protagonist declines the offer of a political 'opportunity' with a Berlusconi-style party for a freer world, in which community is hard to find, but at least professionalism is not based on patronage. The allusions to split subjectivity, to flexible self-definitions, all speak to the stuff of postmodernity, where travel, micro-narratives, displacement and self-fracturing create new possibilities for the marginalized or dispossessed. Lest this dream of exile appear too utopian, the protagonist is all too conscious of the effects of global capitalism, of local problems such as homelessness and of the difficulty in negotiating an identity for herself. But she buys into the dream of individual freedom nevertheless.

This volume thus considers a considerable range of exile experiences. From the tragic isolation of Orpheus to the optimistic flexibility of Duranti's protagonist, the condition is considered via a range of interpretive mechanisms: spirituality, temporality, nobility, openness, non-allegiance and hybridity. Exile is, above all, seen to be the condition of the traveller – alert, anxious perhaps, questing, at once nostalgic for the place of departure, yearning for the closure of arrival yet attracted by the ambivalence of unbelonging.

From *Sir Orfeo* to 'Schir Orpheus': Exile, and the Waning of the Middle Ages

Enrico Giaccherini

In the following considerations I will assume, for brevity's sake, that the reader is familiar both with the classical Orpheus myth and, at least to some extent, with the treatment to which the theme was submitted by the unknown author of the late thirteenth/early fourteenth-century *Sir Orfeo*, and, later, by Robert Henryson in his *Orpheus and Eurydice* of the last third of the fifteenth century.[1] These authors, in turn, would have been familiar with the Orpheus tradition from the three main sources of the story for medieval audiences, Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (Books X and XI), Virgil's *Georgics* (Book IV), and Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy* (Book III, meter xii), in the latter case directly and/or through Boethius's medieval commentators (Rémy of Auxerres, Guillaume de Conches, Nicholas Trivet and many others).

This tradition is, in itself, a composite one. Indeed, the myth owes its popularity with modern listeners and readers to what might be called its romantic, almost Tristanian quality: the tragic fate of a pair of lovers separated by death, and Orpheus's subsequent failure to rescue his beloved from the underworld due to his inability to resist the impulse to rest his eyes on Eurydice for an excess of love ('avidus ... videndi', 'eager to see her' (*Metam.*, X, 56), as Ovid put it)[2] – a perfect combination of *eros* and *thanatos* if ever there was one. However, both Ovid's and Virgil's versions (with Virgil, not surprisingly, much more attuned than the former to the socio-ethical implications of the myth, as Charles Segal,[3] among others, has shown) still retain visible traces of a different, more ancient tradition, centred on the magic or, better, shamanic dimension inherent in the Greek Orpheus, gifted as he is with the supernatural powers of the singer and poet who brings order to the world especially through music.[4]

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[1]   Quotations and line numbers refer to the editions of the poems contained respectively in *Fourteenth Century Verse and Prose*, ed. K. Sisam (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975); and in R. Henryson, *The Poems*, ed. D. Fox (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987).

[2]   Quotations of, and translations from, classical texts are drawn from *The Loeb Classical Library*.

[3]   Charles Segal, *Orpheus. The Myth of the Poet* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989).

[4]   In the ocean-wide bibliography on Orpheus I found especially helpful the collection of essays *Orpheus: The Metamorphoses of a Myth*, ed. J. Warden (Toronto/Buffalo/London: University of Toronto Press, 1982).

The clearest traces of this tradition are to be found in the episode of Orpheus's retirement into the wilderness, and of the solitary life he leads there, accompanied only by the inhabitants of the forest, before he is dismembered by the Cyconian women. But while Ovid limits himself to a passing hint at this stage of the protagonist's existence, concisely reminding the reader that Orpheus 'betook himself to high Rhodope and wind-swept Haemus' (X, 76–7), where he 'with such songs ... drew the trees, held beasts enthralled and constrained stones to follow him' (XI, 1–2), Virgil insists, at some length, not only on the divine singer's capacity to tame tigers and move trees with his art, but also on the pathos of the forlorn hero's wanderings in the harsh winter landscape of a nature turned hostile:

> Month in, month out, seven whole months, men say beneath a skyey cliff by lonely Strymon's wave, he wept, and, deep in icy caverns, unfolded this his tale, charming the tigers, and making the oaks attend his strain; even as the nightingale, mourning beneath the poplar's shade, bewails the loss of her brood, that a churlish ploughman hath espied and torn unfledged from the nest: but she weeps all night long, and, perched on a spray, renews her piteous strain, filling the region round with sad laments. No love, no wedding-song could bend his soul. Alone he would roam the northern ice, the snowy Tanais, and the fields ever wedded to Rhipaean frosts, wailing Eurydice lost, and the gift of Dis annulled. (IV, 507–19)

Boethius, on his part, while slightly more diffuse than Ovid, did not quite follow Virgil, in that he made no mention of nature's reflection of Orpheus's despair – that Orpheus, Boethius says,

> ... who before had made the woods so nimbly run
> And rivers stand
> With his weeping measures,
> And the hind's fearless flank
> Lay beside the savage lions,
> Nor was the hare afraid to look upon
> The hound, made peaceful by his song (ll. 7–13)

Rewriting the myth at the end of the thirteenth century or shortly after, the poet of *Sir Orfeo* strategically removed the description of his griefstricken hero's life in the woods to an earlier phase of the story, following the abduction of Dame Heurodis at the hands of the King of Fairye, but prior to Sir Orfeo's meeting with the group of 'sixty leuedis' amidst which he recognizes his queen, whom he then follows into the celtic-type Otherworld she now inhabits. Given the radical (but not wholly original, as I and others have shown elsewhere[5]) reshaping of the myth's conclusion worked by the Middle English poet, he did not have much choice: Dame Heurodis *not* dying a second death, Orfeo's dismissal of his public role and withdrawal into

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[5]   See especially P. Dronke, 'The Return of Eurydice', *Classica et Medievalia*, 23 (1962), pp. 198–215; also the introductory section to my *Sir Orfeo*, ed. and trans. E. Giaccherini (Parma: Pratiche, 1994).