

The Cadence Of Counterbalance

BILJANA SCOTT
University of Oxford and Diplo Foundation
biscott@diplomacy.edu

Abstract

This paper explores how political rhetoric draws from poetry. In particular, it focuses on the ‘cadence of counterbalance,’ namely the expression of an antithesis using alliteration. It is suggested that political rhetoric, at its most rousing and memorable, is poetical both because it draws on the musical resources of language and because it appeals to a redressing vision which counterbalances current views of the world with a more desirable one. The cadence of counterbalance is identified as the common denominator of a selection of historical speeches, and is considered to possess the ‘ring of truth’ across centuries, continents and cultures.

Keywords: politics, poetry, rhetoric, speeches, chiasmus

Introduction

To ‘campaign in poetry, and govern in prose’ is a phrase which combines sound-harmony and semantic antonyms in order to create a memorable adage¹. In this paper, I suggest that some of the most famous historical speeches all capitalise on alliteration and antithesis² in order to be memorable. I refer to this effect as ‘the cadence of counterbalance’, which I define as the redress of perceived injustices and imbalances through an imagined alternative expressed through alliterative language. Chiasma³ epitomise the cadence of counterbalance, and are illustrated by the following two quotes from President Kennedy’s inaugural address: ‘Let us never negotiate out of fear. But let us never fear to negotiate’, and ‘Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country’⁴.

Political rhetoric is poetical both because it draws on the musical resources of language and because of its appeal to the vision of a better world. This redressive vision counterbalances what is going to happen with what we wish might happen. Following Seamus Heaney, I argue that the very notion of redress is central to the purpose of poetry, and that poetry in turn is relevant to politics because of the way in which it brings imagination and hope into the everyday of political life. It is this overlap between poetry and politics in the cadence of counterbalance which provides us with an insight into what it might mean to ‘campaign in poetry and govern in prose’, since campaigning is all about appealing to better worlds, whereas government is concerned with implementing them.

Political Rhetoric Illustrated

What makes a great speech? Is it the language, the event or the dynamics between speaker and audience? *Speeches that Changed the World* is a collection of over fifty speeches which ‘made history’, starting with the Ten Commandments and ending with George Bush’s one commandment uttered on 11 September 2001: to fight the enemy⁵. It seems clear that the first criterion for selection was the importance of the event at which the speech was made: King Charles I’s execution speech, Napoleon’s farewell to the Old Guard, Abraham Lincoln’s Gettysburg address, Franklin Roosevelt’s Inaugural address; Emperor Hirohito announcing the surrender of Japan. It could be claimed that the speeches did not change the world in themselves, but that they were made in order to mark a change that had, or was about to, take place.

Some of the speeches which have entered this canon are epoch-making not so much because of the event commemorated, however, but because of the language used. What distinguishes a great speech and makes it memorable is the use of heightened language, by which I refer to the use of images, rhyme, refrain and other poetic resources. It also includes the use of sonorous language in order to articulate an antithetical concept, usually in the form of an imagined alternative. In the following extracts from great speeches, I discuss these properties as they have been expressed across centuries and continents.

One of the most memorable speeches in living history is Martin Luther King's 'I have a dream', notable firstly for its powerful refrains 'I have a dream that one day' and 'let freedom ring'⁶. These set up a rousing rhythm which, as in the case of all refrains, whether musical, liturgical, rhetorical or poetical, creates a dynamic of alternating anticipation and affirmation, tension and release, thereby captivating attention. King's speech is also memorable because he ushers, with every dream, a vision of the future which redresses the reality of today, as in the following famous antithesis:

'I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.'

Here King counterbalances the present, in which racial discrimination still holds sway, with a glimpsed future in which judgment is made on character, not skin colour. This antithesis is expressed in alliterative language, each of the key words either starting with a /k/ as in 'color', 'content' and 'character', or in the case of 'skin', containing a /k/ in its onset cluster. The rhythm of the final clause 'the colour of their skin but by the content of their character' is strongly iambic up to the last word 'character', which takes a stress on every syllable for added emphasis. This built-in beat adds a sense of rightness and inevitability to his words, something that is often interpreted as a 'ring of truth,' as will be discussed later.

When Queen Elizabeth I rallied her troops at Tilbury in 1588, she uttered the following antithesis: 'I know I have the body of a weak and feeble woman; but I have the heart and stomach of a king, and a king of England too'⁷. Here the body of the 'weaker sex' is pitted against the organs, with all their metaphorical import of courage and strength, not just of a man, but a king of men, and not just of any men, but English men. This escalation from weakness to ever greater strength, which in the last clause includes the men being addressed, contributes essentially to what makes the speech rousing: rhetorical auxesis⁸ translates into physical and spiritual expansion – one can feel one's pride swelling as we imagine being addressed by these words. Language here serves both to trigger and to reflect a state of being. Another instance of auxesis occurs in the following tricolon⁹: 'we shall shortly have a

famous victory over those enemies of my God, of my kingdom, and of my people.’ The expected order of escalation would be from people to kingdom to God, but here the emphasis is reversed in order to make the people she is addressing of paramount importance. Queen Elizabeth’s vision projects imminent victory and lasting fame for the men she is about to send into battle.

King Charles I in January 1649, moments before his beheading, uttered the memorable words ‘I go from a corruptible to an incorruptible crown’, thus counterbalancing the flawed world of men with the purity of the divine¹⁰. Both the referent and the ownership of ‘crown’ changes, from a metonym for leadership in this world where the crown was his temporarily, to a symbol of God’s own dominion in eternity. His vision is that ‘the peace of the kingdom’ be secured despite the regicide he was subjected to: ‘my charity commands me to endeavour to the last gasp the peace of the kingdom.’ Indeed his last words, following the famous corruptible/incorruptible antithesis are ‘where no disturbance can be, no disturbance in the world.’ By escaping the world, he hopes to escape the trials and tribulations that it inflicts, but not before he has devoted his last breath to securing an equivalent peace on earth through his own death.

Oliver Cromwell’s speech ‘In the name of God, go!’¹¹ in which he dismisses the remains of Charles I’s parliament and directs a superb tirade of abuse at these ‘venal slaves’, contains the following antithesis: ‘Is there a single virtue now remaining amongst you? Is there one vice you do not possess?’ Here the contrast between the antonyms ‘vice’ and ‘virtue’ is reflected in the positive/negative form of the verbs: ‘remaining’ versus ‘not possess’. The second antithesis, ‘you were deputed here to get grievances redress’d, are yourselves become the greatest grievance’, involves both an auxesis and a chiasmus. The reversal occurs at the level of parts of speech with ‘grievance redressed’ (Noun – Verb) mirror-imaged in ‘become the greatest grievance.’ (Verb – Superlative – Noun).

Several propositions are counterposed in Abraham Lincoln’s Gettysburg address: the bringing forth of a new nation over eighty years prior versus the testing of that nation’s endurance today (then/now, emergence/endurance); the contrast between death and life, and the growth of life from death: ‘those who here gave their lives that the nation

might live.’ The fittingness of the current ceremony of consecration as opposed to the impossibility of doing so adequately in a larger sense is expressed in the following tricolon: ‘we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground.’ Possibly the most memorable anithesis is: ‘The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here.’ Here language and action are pitted against each other, and action deferred to, though in fact the battle is best remembered because of the commemoration speech, not despite it. Another powerful antithesis, expressed as an auxesis, is: ‘from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion’. Here the antonyms ‘take’ and ‘give’ are counter posed in order to enhance the contrast between ‘devotion’ in its two states: the ever-growing devotion of the living and the final act of devotion that characterises the dead. Lincoln’s concluding resolution reads: ‘we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain, that this nation under God shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, for the people shall not perish from the earth.’ It contains two tricolons, the famous of/by/for the people embedded within the larger one involving a purposeful death, the birth of freedom, and the endurance of democratic government, with all three verbs drawn from the same semantic field of life and death.

There are many more examples of the cadence of counterbalance in ‘Speeches that Changed the World.’ Indeed chiasma and antitheses provide a notable common denominator of this collection of speeches, and it is this, I believe, which makes them memorable. J F Kennedy’s ‘Ich bin ein Berliner’ speech is remembered for the rhetorically repeated challenge ‘Let them come to Berlin’ issued to those who do not understand the shortcomings of Communism. Why, one asks, if Berlin epitomises what is wrong with Communism¹², would Kennedy present himself as a Berliner? Because, as he explains: ‘Freedom is indivisible, and when one man is enslaved, all are not free.’ Here again we find an antithesis at play in ‘one man’ / ‘all’; ‘enslaved’ / ‘not free’. There are also strong allusions made to similar redressive sentiments, namely to *civis Romanus sum* in the statement ‘I am a Berliner’, and to John Donne’s poem ‘No man is an island’ in the claim that the lot of one man is the lot of all¹³.

Clarence Darrow's famous summing up in the Henry Sweet trial 'I believe in the law of love' contains both the antithesis prefigured in the title, and the following vision of a better world:

'I do not believe in the law of hate. I may not be true to my ideals always, but I believe in the law of love, and I believe you can do nothing with hatred. I would like to see a time when man loves his fellow man, and forgets his color or his creed. We will never be civilized until that time comes¹⁴.'

Finally, the concluding speech by George Bush in his 9/11 speech, is similarly replete with rhetorical devices such as rhyme, repetition, alliteration, antonyms, antithesis, literal and metaphorical usages of the same word:

A great people has been moved to defend a great nation. Terrorist attacks can shake the foundations of our biggest buildings, but they cannot touch the foundation of America. These acts shatter steel, but they cannot dent the steel of American resolve. America was targeted for attack because we're the brightest beacon for freedom and opportunity in the world. And no one will keep that light from shining. Today, our nation saw evil -- the very worst of human nature -- and we responded with the best of America¹⁵.

It finishes with Bush's appeal for unity to achieve his vision for the future, one in which justice, freedom and peace prevail:

This is a day when all Americans from every walk of life unite in our resolve for justice and peace. America has stood down enemies before, and we will do so this time. None of us will ever forget this day, yet we go forward to defend freedom and all that is good and just in our world.

I hope that these examples of antitheses and chiasma illustrate what I have called the 'cadence of counterbalance.' In so far as rhetoric represents the attempt to persuade others of one's vision by means of memorable language, what makes the language memorable in each of these examples is the musicality of alliteration and the rhythm of refrains, repetitions and tricolons. What makes the vision memorable

is the redressive force it contains, a notion I explore in greater detail next.

Redress in Poetry and Politics

Seamus Heaney, in his book *The Redress of Poetry*, asks whether poetry is of any use, especially of any use to politics¹⁶. He ponders ‘how poetry’s existence as a form of art relates to our existence as citizens of society – how it is “of present use”’ (1995:1). He says elsewhere that ‘In one sense, the efficacy of poetry is nil – no lyric has ever stopped a tank. In another sense, it is unlimited¹⁷.’ The relevance of poetry, he argues, lies in the redressing power of imagination, which provides ‘a glimpsed alternative, a revelation of potential that is denied or constantly threatened by circumstances.’ As such, imagination is necessary to both poetry and politics, since ““useful” and “practical” responses ... are derived from imagined standards too: poetic fictions, the dream of alternative worlds, enable governments and revolutionaries as well’ (1995a:1).

The difference between poets on the one hand, and governments and revolutionaries on the other, is that the latter ‘would compel societies to take on the shape of their imagining, whereas poets are typically more concerned to conjure with their own and their readers’ of what is possible or desirable or, indeed, imaginable’ (1995a:2). To the activist, poetry fails by remaining in the realm of the imaginary rather than harnessing its force to direct action. Mere images ‘– no matter how inventive or original –’ are not sufficient for activists who ‘will always want the redress of poetry to be an exercise of leverage on behalf of *their* point of view; they will require the entire weight of the thing to come down on their side of the scales’ (1995a:2).

As adherents of a particular ideology and advocates of a party line, politicians are clearly partisan. They are more likely to appeal to the imagination in order to promote their *own* cause rather than a more abstract countervailing force. Why then do I claim that they resemble poets rather than activists? I would like to suggest that politicians are at their most poetical when they are appealing to their audience to envisage an imagined alternative, one seen in a dream, or anticipated after victory, or promised on election. It is indeed when campaigning

that imagination is appealed to most, for it is in the appeals made when *aspiring* to power rather than exercising it that the notion of redress comes into play most forcefully.

Heaney suggests that individual poems may well come down on one side or another of a political division, they may well become a partisan mouthpiece. But the benefit of poetry more generally is that it acts as a counterbalancing force, along the lines of Simone Weil's admonition in *Gravity and Grace*, where she says: 'If we know in what way society is unbalanced, we must do what we can to add weight to the lighter scale ... we must have formed a conception of equilibrium and be ever ready to change sides like justice, "that fugitive from the camp of conquerors".' (1995a:2).

The campaigning orator, on a mission to win hearts and minds, is similarly sensitive to the need for a higher justice and a rebalancing of current injustices in order to level the scales and give scope for hope. The power of imagination as a counterbalancing force resides in its relationship with hope. To hope is to set one's sights on the possibility of ameliorative change, and hope can therefore be a powerful force in bringing about change, but in order for that to happen, one must first envisage what it is one hopes for, one must imagine an alternative. And if one is to go still further upstream, before even envisaging a better world, one must have 'hope within oneself' – the inclination towards hope, towards optimism, in the first place (1995a:3).

Citing several poets, including Osip Mandelstam and Czeslaw Milosz, Heaney suggests that for them:

'the redress of poetry comes to represent something like an exercise of the virtue of hope. Indeed what Havel has to say about hope can also be said about poetry: it is "A state of mind, not a state of the world. Either we have hope within us or we don't; it is a dimension of the soul, and it's not essentially dependent on some particular observation of the world or estimate of the situation...."' (1995a:4)

To conclude, in so far as orators aim to win over their audience, they do well to appeal to our sense of hope, since this seems to be a fundamental human attribute. An appeal to hearts and minds is in large part an appeal to hope. Hope, in turn, is best addressed through

the imagination, by offering visions of a desirable and possible world. But in order that these visions do not appear as empty promises, good orators must anchor their rousing rhetoric in the particular circumstances of the here and now. The precise nature of the action required in order to achieve redress depends on the actual political and historical conditions, and these are usually made manifest in the speech. Indeed, they often provide the context of the speech. At the time of delivery, ‘the gravitational pull of the actual’ adds to the power of rhetoric since it provides a justification for the speech. However, the reason political rhetoric is at its most poetic where antitheses are involved is, I believe, because it draws on the countervailing power of poetry at these moments. Although good rhetoric is always anchored in the here and now, it soars into the lyrical when it detaches itself from the actual, and it is these lyrical passages that become most memorable because they become universally applicable.

The Ring of Truth

In each of the examples cited from *Speeches that Changed the World*, we witnessed a thesis and antithesis which were as complementary and seemingly necessary as inhalation and exhalation. This balance and counterbalance resonated at several levels – phonological, lexical, rhetorical and conceptual. The effect was to produce a melody and harmony which I referred to as the cadence of counterbalance. In the preceding section on redress I applied Heaney’s notion of redress to the heightened language of political rhetoric and argued, following Heaney, that imagination and hope are as relevant to poetry as to politics. In this section I would like to discuss the way in which the cadence of counterbalance ‘rings true’.

The musicality of language has the ring of truth to it, says Heaney: ‘in lyric poetry, truthfulness becomes recognizable as a ring of truth within the medium itself. ... it is this which keeps the poet’s ear straining to hear the totally persuasive voice behind all the other informing voices¹⁸.’ It is also for this reason no doubt that we find that every passage which contains the notion of counterbalancing is a particularly sonorous passage, resonant with alliteration and assonance, and enriched with antonymic yet commensurate concepts – concepts

which have the potential to balance each other out, and which it is the task of visionaries, whether politicians or poets, to lever against each other in an effort towards redress. This is as true of Heaney's own writing as it is of the political speeches cited above¹⁹. It is no doubt because of this ring of truth that we recognise the cadence of counterbalance as the epitome of good rhetoric, maybe even as an expression of wisdom itself.

Wisdom is not associated with the upheaval of revolution so much as it is with a finer and subtler retuning of perception. The stoic Greek philosopher Epictetus believed that it is not so much what we experience that troubles us but how we react to our experiences ('We are disturbed not by events, but by the views which we take of them'). To adapt one's views of events in order to temper passion and enhance equanimity may indeed provide a definition of wisdom. Often, this exercise in re-perception involves a fine-tuning of one's sensibilities, such as might be expressed in a subtle but significant retuning of a sentence. The chiasmus 'not to see new things but to see things new' illustrates the way in which wise words appear to retune the world itself, and thereby ring true. Heaney's antithesis similarly illustrates the ring of truth through retuning: 'Yet there are times when a deeper need enters, when we want the poem to be not only pleurably right but compellingly wise, not only a surprising variation played upon the world, but a re-tuning of the world itself.'²⁰

When we look at instances of antitheses from across the ages and around the world, we find a shared wisdom, namely the call to recognise complementary forces and to either reconcile ourselves to their inevitability, or redress the balance where it might have been lost. For instance, a traditional Buddhist scripture says:

What is born will die,
What has been gathered will be dispersed,
What has been accumulated will be exhausted,
What has been built up will collapse,
And what has been high will be brought low.

Similarly, the King James Bible says in the Ecclesiastes:
To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven.

A time to be born and a time to die; a time to plant and a time to pluck up that which is planted:

A time to kill and a time to heal; a time to break down and a time to build up.

A time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance.

A time to get and a time to lose, a time to keep and a time to cast away.

A time to rend and a time to sew; a time to keep silent and a time to speak.

A time to love and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.

The peace prayer attributed to St Francis of Assisi of the 12th century similarly consists of a string of antitheses admonishing us to redress imbalance for the sake of peace:

Lord, make me an instrument of Thy peace;

where there is hatred, let me sow love;

where there is injury, pardon;

where there is doubt, faith;

where there is despair, hope;

where there is darkness, light;

and where there is sadness, joy.²¹

This prayer, quoted by Mother Teresa in her 1979 Nobel Prize Speech, and by various other public figures Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Bill Clinton, Nancy Pelosi, was perhaps most famously paraphrased by Margaret Thatcher in her victory day address from the steps of 10 Downing Street as: ‘Where there is discord, may we bring harmony. Where there is error, may we bring truth. Where there is doubt, may we bring faith. And where there is despair, may we bring hope.’²²

Similar appeals to redress can be found in Old English alliterative verse, as in the following example:

Hige sceal þe heardra, || heorte þe cenre,

mod sceal þe mare, || þe ure mægen lytlað

[Our] Will must be the harder, courage the bolder,

spirit the greater, as our might lessens.²³

Parallel structures involving complementary couplets characterise many Taoist texts as well as Tang poems²⁴. In all of these examples and many others of a similar ilk from very different ages and places, we see an often alliterative antithetical expression offering us an insight about the world that rings true, and this ring of truth, I believe, can be explained both with reference to the musicality of the phrase and the redressive balance of its propositional content. A third factor may come into play as well, and that is context. When memorable phrases are extracted from context and collected in a book of quotations for instance, they sometimes seem to get cheapened. Winston Churchill was a productive coiner of chiasma, and although each one carries a ring of truth when considered in the context in which it was spoken, wisdom is at risk of being devalued to wit and word-play when compiled. The ring of truth starts to smack of falsity and vanity, as the following list reveals:

- Prosperity is essential to peace, and peace is no less essential to prosperity
- I have taken more out of alcohol, than alcohol has taken out of me
- We shape our dwellings, and afterwards our dwellings shape us
- All babies look like me, but then I look like all babies
- I am ready to meet my maker, is my maker ready to meet me
- He has to conceal what he would most wish to make public, and make public what he would most like to conceal
- In finance everything that is agreeable is unsound, and everything that is sound is disagreeable
- The whole history of the world is summed up in the fact that when nations are strong they are not always just, and when they wish to be just they are no longer strong.

We might conclude that the ring of truth found in individual chiasma does not translate well into a peal of clever witticisms, even though the cadence of counterbalance is retained in each.

Conclusion

I started this article by quoting Governor Cuomo's adage 'we campaign in poetry but govern in prose.' The subsequent argument should make

clear that the antithesis this statement contains, the alliteration of the word initial gutturals /k/ and /g/ and of voiceless bilabial /p/ epitomise the cadence of counterbalance. With regard to the propositional content, although it might *appear* that what is being said concerns the contrast between the pie-in-the-sky of electoral promises (poetry) as opposed to the down-to-earth reality of practical politics (prose), I hope to have demonstrated that what is *actually* at issue here is the contrast between the necessary vision of a better future, the promise of a glimpsed alternative, the life-sustaining force of hope (poetry) as opposed to the contaminated moral environment, the ‘life-waste and spirit-waste, the hardening attitudes and narrowing possibilities’ (Heaney, 1995b) of political practice (prose). One might add that neither of these genres, poetry and politics, is inclined to tell the truth straight, but prefers to tell it slant, each in its own way, but both finding common ground in the cadence of counterbalance.

References

- Bush, G. (2007). 9/11 Address to the Nation. In S.S. Montefiore (Ed.). *Speeches that Changed the World*, (pp 220-223). London: Quercus Publishing Plc. Available online at <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/gwbush911addresstothetnation.htm>
- Cromwell, O. (2007). In the name of God, go! In S.S. Montefiore (Ed.). *Speeches that Changed the World*, (pp 30 - 32). London: Quercus Publishing Plc. Available online at http://encarta.msn.com/sidebar_781540267/cromwell_%E2%80%9Cin_the_name_of_god_go%E2%80%9D.html
- Darrow, C. (2007). I believe in the law of love. In S.S. Montefiore (Ed.). *Speeches that Changed the World*, (pp 71-74). London: Quercus Publishing Plc. Available online at <http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/frtrial/sweet/darrowsummation.html#I%20Believe%20in%20the%20Law>
- Donne, J. (2007). *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. Available online at http://www.poetry-online.org/donne_for_whom_the_bell_tolls.htm
- Heaney, S. (1995a). *The Redress of Poetry*. London: Faber and Faber.
- Heaney, S. (1995b) ‘*Crediting Poetry*’ 1995 Nobel Prize speech. Available online at http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/1995/heaney-lecture.html

- Heaney, S. (1988). *The Government of the Tongue*. London: Faber.
- Kennedy, J.F. (2007). Inaugural address, Friday, 20 January 1961. In S.S. Montefiore (Ed.). *Speeches that Changed the World*, (pp 140 -145). London: Quercus Publishing Plc. Available online at <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/jfkinaugural.htm>
- Kennedy, J.F. (2007). Ich bin ein Berliner Speech, 26 June 1963. In S.S. Montefiore (Ed.). *Speeches that Changed the World*, (pp 146-147). London: Quercus Publishing Available online at <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/jfkberliner.html>
- King Charles I. (2007) Speech on the scaffolds, 30 January 164. In S.S. Montefiore (Ed.). *Speeches that Changed the World*, (pp 23-25). London: Quercus Publishing Plc. Available online at <http://anglicanhistory.org/charles/charles1.html>
- King, M.K. (2007). I have a dream, 28 August 1963. In S.S. Montefiore (Ed.). *Speeches that Changed the World*, (pp 149 -155). London: Quercus Publishing Plc Available online at <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/mlkihavedream.htm>
- Lincoln, A. (2007). Gettysburg Address, 19 November 1863, In S.S. Montefiore (Ed.). *Speeches that Changed the World*, (pp 48-50). London: Quercus Publishing. Available online at <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/gettysburgaddress.htm>
- Liu, D.J. (1983). Parallel Structures in the Canon of Chinese Poetry. *Poetics Today* 4.4 , 639–653.
- Montefiore, S.S. (2007) *Speeches that Changed the World*, 2nd ed. London: Quercus Publishing.
- Queen Elizabeth I (2007). Speech to the English troops at Tilbury. In S.S. Montefiore (Ed.). *Speeches that Changed the World*, (pp 23 -25). London: Quercus Publishing Plc. Available online at http://en.allexperts.com/e/s/sp/speech_to_the_troops_at_tilbury.htm
- Renoux, C. (2001). *La prière pour la paix attribuée à saint François, une énigme à résoudre*. Paris: Editions franciscaines. Also online at <http://www.franciscan-archive.org/franciscana/peace.html>
- Thatcher, M. (1979). *Remarks on becoming Prime Minister*. Available online at <http://www.margareththatcher.org/speeches/displaydocument.asp?docid=104078>
- Treharne, E. (Ed.). (2008). *Old and Middle English c.890-c.1400 An Anthology* 2nd Ed. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

Notes

- ¹ Used by Hilary Clinton during the 2008 US presidential election campaign, this adage was originally coined by Governor Mario Cuomo. http://www.dmiblog.com/archives/2007/09/campaign_in_poetry_govern_in_p.html
- ² By ‘antithesis’ I mean the juxtaposition of contrasting ideas in balanced phrases.
- ³ By ‘chiasma’ I refer to a sentence or sequence in which the second part is balanced against the first, with the order of key words reversed.
- ⁴ Delivered on Friday, January 20, 1961. Available online at <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/>
- ⁵ Montefiore, Simon Sebag (introduction), 2007 edition, *Speeches that Changed the World*, London: Quercus Publishing.
- ⁶ Delivered at the Lincoln Memorial, Washington DC, 28 August 1963. *Speeches that Changed the World* 2007:149-155, and available online at: <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/>
- ⁷ *Speeches that Changed the World* 2007:25
- ⁸ By ‘auxesis’ I refer to a sequence of words which increase in intensity, in this case ‘grievance’ to ‘greatest grievance.’
- ⁹ By ‘tricolon’ I refer to a series of three parallel words, phrases, or clauses.
- ¹⁰ *Speeches that Changed the World* 2007:29
- ¹¹ *Speeches that Changed the World* 2007:32
- ¹² *Speeches that Changed the World* 2007:146
- ¹³ Available online at: http://www.poetry-online.org/donne_for_whom_the_bell_tolls.htm
- ¹⁴ *Speeches that Changed the World* 2007:71
- ¹⁵ *Speeches that Changed the World* 2007:222 and available online at: : <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/>
- ¹⁶ Seamus Heaney *The Redress of Poetry* London: Faber and Faber. 1995:1.
- ¹⁷ Seamus Heaney, *The Government of the Tongue*, London: Faber 1988:108.
- ¹⁸ Seamus Heaney, ‘*Crediting Poetry*’ 1995 Nobel prize speech. Available online at: http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/1995/heaney-lecture.html
- ¹⁹ Examples from Heaney’s Nobel speech include:

- ... transmitting from beyond and behind the voices of the adults in the kitchen; just as we could often hear, behind and beyond every voice....
 - The violence from below was then productive of nothing but a retaliatory violence from above, the dream of justice became subsumed into the callousness of reality.
 - One of the most harrowing moments in the whole history of the harrowing of the heart ...
 - Attending insufficiently to the diamond absolutes, among which must be counted the sufficiency of that which is absolutely imagined.
- ²⁰ Seamus Heaney, 'Crediting Poetry' 1995b Nobel prize speech
- ²¹ For a discussion of the origins and authorship of this poem, see Christian Renoux, *La prière pour la paix attribuée à saint François, une énigme à résoudre*, Paris, Editions franciscaines, Paris, 2001. See also: <http://www.franciscan-archive.org/franciscana/peace.html>
- ²² 4 May 1979, available online in the Margaret Thatcher archives: <http://www.margaretthatcher.org/speeches/displaydocument.asp?docid=104078>
- ²³ Extract from the Battle of Maldon, the 10th century heroic poem that commemorates the failure of Byrhtnoth and the men of Essex to hold their land against Viking invasion. Elaine Treharne (ed) *Old and Middle English c.890-c.1400 An Anthology* (2nd edition). Oxford: Blackwell Publishing. 2008:152 lines 312-13.
- ²⁴ Liu, David Jason (1983) 'Parallel Structures in the Canon of Chinese Poetry' in *Poetics Today* 4.4 pp639–653,

Biodata of author

Biljana Scott was trained as a linguist (BA in Chinese, M.Phil and D.Phil in Linguistics, University of Oxford). From 1990 to 2001 she taught at the Department of General Linguistics at Oxford University, and she continues to lecture in Chinese Linguistics at the Oriental Institute, Oxford University. Since 2002 she has been lecturing for Diplo Foundation (www.diplomacy.edu) on Language and Diplomacy and Public Diplomacy. She runs international workshops on diplomatic language and public speaking. All of Dr Scott's interests, from linguistics to photography and poetry, revolve around language, cognition and categorization.