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Byron Almén

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The study of poetic texts that appear in musical works occupies a limited position in the modern theory curriculum. Despite the intimate connection between music and the human voice that has existed as long as the human race, disciplinary divisions have tended to relegate poetic analysis to the applied voice studio and to isolated moments in the theory sequence—usually in conjunction with treatments of Romantic *Lieder*. Time constraints and the need to deal effectively with a large number of topics can lead to the marginalization of text analysis in the classroom. Yet at no time in recent history has the subject been more in need of attention than today. Students currently entering post-secondary institutions are less and less likely to have a solid grounding in the study of literature and writing than was the case in previous decades, when the study of classic texts formed the essential core of education. To a lesser degree, this trend, together with disciplinary specialization, has also resulted in many faculty lacking the expertise and experience to address issues of text and music, as evidenced by the relative paucity of scholarly literature on music and text in relation to other analytical issues. In a field where singers and instrumentalists alike encounter music with text on a frequent basis, the need for analytical facility with text is one of the great unfinished tasks in music pedagogy.

At the same time, these difficulties should not be overstated. Many instructors devote entire semesters to seminars or core classes devoted to text and music issues. New undergraduate theory textbooks devoted to expanding the traditional palette of approaches to music are increasingly giving greater emphasis to the analysis of texts. These initiatives go beyond the addition of another topic to the curriculum; they contribute to a comprehensive understanding of musical

meaning. Because language is more familiar to students as a vehicle for conveying meaning than is music, it provides a point of approach that can lead to discussions of the many other distinct ways that music conveys meaning—association, topic, narrative, symbol.

What is needed, however, is a more comprehensive analytical palette for analyzing text in musical works that balances the multifaceted character of musical analysis proper. What is required is an organizational scheme analogous to musical parameters—rhythm, harmony, melody, form, texture—that can provide clarity to the process of text analysis. Also needed is a realization that text analysis is an integral part of studying vocal and choral music. Not only will a musical setting be insufficiently understood without prior awareness of the subtleties of the text, but it is also dependent in many respects on that awareness. In truth, the process of attending to these issues is well underway, most notably with the publication in 1996 of *Poetry into Song: Performance and Analysis of Lieder* by Deborah Stein and Robert Spillman. This book, designed primarily for undergraduate performers and theory students, provides readers with an effective introduction to analyzing German Romantic *Lieder*, with equal emphasis given to poetry, music, and performance. With respect to poetry, it introduces several important approaches to text analysis, including an awareness of poetic imagery, dramatic progression, mood painting, the role of the persona and the constructed audience, the relationship between line and sentence length, scansion, and stanza division. This article will not abandon the foundation laid by Stein and Spillman. Instead, I hope to supplement and expand that approach where possible and place it within a larger analytical framework.

In the following pages, I will outline and illustrate a method of poetic analysis that can serve as the basis for an extended unit on text and music for graduate or upper-division undergraduate music majors. I have employed this method for several years in my graduate analytical techniques class and have found it to be both effective and well-received. The basis of the method is an elegant

classification of analytical techniques laid out by the poet and English professor Mary Kinzie in her book *A Poet's Guide to Poetry* (1999). This work stands out among recent treatments of the subject for its pedagogical effectiveness, its subtlety of insight, and its accessibility for non-specialists. In particular, I will appropriate her eight-fold scheme of poetic elements, and I will show how these elements form the foundation with which musical settings begin. Further, the choice of this single text also lends itself to classroom application, since the instructor can, at his or her discretion, choose to make use of it as a required or optional reference source. The following is a summary of the interrelated elements which constitute this approach to text analysis, with Kinzie's definitions given or paraphrased. Unfamiliar terms will be fleshed out later in the paper. Footnotes show where Kinzie's method parallels that of Stein and Spillman.

1. THEME: (the central element around which the other elements converge—a particular application of one element or another will tend to influence theme) the subject matter of the poem, which may be explicit or implicit in articulation, and simple or complex in character (Kinzie 1999, 5).

2. LINE: "the primary formal unit in poetry." Lines can either be "end-stopped to coincide with syntax or enjambed into the next line" (Kinzie, 459).[1] The speed at which one moves through lines is not constant, depending upon where sentences end in relation to lines.

3. SENTENCE: "a complete syntactical unit consisting of a subject and a verb. The normal order is subject-verb-object (s-v-o); any other sequence inverts the sentence. Word order also affects and is affected by meter" (Kinzie, 459). The relative length and complexity of the sentence or the employment of unusual sentence types (questions, commands, fragments) also contribute to their expressive effect.

[1] See also Stein and Spillman 1996, 33-34.

4. DICTION: "style viewed from the perspective of word formation (morphology), word length, and suggestive complexity" (404). Relevant issues include:

–the relative degree of concreteness or abstraction expressed by individual words,
–the use of monosyllabic or polysyllabic words for expressive purposes,
–figures of speech: the choice of words with respect to their sounds (Stein and Spillman, 29, 36-38) (alliteration, assonance, onomatopoeia, adnomination, preference for dark or light vowels), and
–the resultant stylistic register conveyed (high, middle, low, or mixed).

5. TROPE: "figures of thought"; "the element of poetry that includes all form of comparison and transfer of meaning by means of which language means doubly" (Kinzie, 475-77). Troping involves such devices as irony, punning, metaphor, simile, symbol, metonymy, allusion, archetype, and allegory (Stein and Spillman, 21-26). These devices differ with respect to the character of the double meaning or with respect to their degree of specificity or scope.

6. RHETORIC: "the art and style of persuasion when referred to speech generally rather than writing or poetry exclusively" (Kinzie, 454). Relevant issues include:

–the effect of positing an implied speaker (persona) and audience on the organization of the poem and its meaning,
–the way in which the listener is influenced by aspects of diction (such as figures of speech or stylistic register), trope, or other elements,
–the apparent degree of involvement (posture) of the poet in the poetic message—unobtrusive, self-dramatization, narrative or third-person dramatization,
–the use of tense in marking off important moments or setting a scene—past, present, future, or mixed,

–the evocation of a mood or sequence of moods as a means of expression.[2]

7. RHYTHM AND METER: Rhythm is "the accommodation of the poet's individual voice in its natural scope to the constraints and relaxations of the accentual-syllabic line. A particular poem or line's rhythm is created by variation from or adherence to the anticipated alternation of accent with nonaccent" (Kinzie, 457). Meter is the normative alternation of some scheme of accents and non-accents which forms a "fixed grid" against which the line's actual stress patterns work. These generally result in two- or three-syllable units with a single primary accent that recur continuously throughout the poem (438). (Not all poems are metrically organized, so this category is not universally applicable.) In practice, analysis of rhythm and meter involves determining the speech stresses of the lines, then placing them in comparison with the abstract pattern of metric feet that is only partially coincident with the speech stresses. The points of difference between the two levels (substitutions) cause that fragment of text to stand out, to be marked expressively.[3]

8. **STANZA AND RHYME:** Stanza is "a group of three or more lines, usually within a fixed rhyme scheme, which is repeated more than once. Stanzas are used additively, unlike a one-time pattern of rhymed lines such as the sonnet, which is complete in fourteen lines" (Kinzie, 453). Rhyme is "the agreement of two metrically accented syllables and their terminal consonants" (454-55). Relevant issues include:

–the relationship between the stanza divisions and thematic progression,

[2] With respect to this category in particular, Stein and Spillman provide an excellent summary of useful analytical techniques. See Stein and Spillman 1996, 26-33.

[3] Stein and Spillman 1996, 38-45 features a discussion of poetic meter that, not uncommonly in poetic treatises, conflates accent and stress such that the conjunction of the two cannot be clearly seen. Kinzie's approach, though less common, has the advantage of clearly separating the two levels, much as music analysis does with respect to meter and surface rhythm.

–the use of unusual or multiple line lengths at certain points within stanzas with respect to their expressive effects,
–the effect of the rhyming pattern (end-rhyme scheme) on the flow of the poem—possible patterns include adjacent rhymes (for example, aabbcc), alternating rhymes (abab), or interspersed rhymes (ababccb) (455).
–the use and relative frequency of strong (accented) or weak (unaccented) line endings and the effect of this on the flow of the poem (Stein and Spillman, 48-51).

As an illustration of these analytical techniques, I will examine a very different musical style from that discussed in Stein and Spillman, namely, the *War Requiem* of Benjamin Britten, and in particular a constituent text by the English poet Wilfred Owen. This music is less likely to be familiar to students, and the text and music analysis can serve as an entry point into this literature. The *War Requiem* is useful for several other reasons. First, its length and number of constituent poems allows for a varied and wide-ranging discussion of compositional choices within a single stylistic framework, and provides sufficient material for class discussion, individual assignments, and group projects. Second, in its employment of English poetry (along with Latin texts), it provides English-speaking students a chance to encounter poetic techniques on the familiar ground of their own language. Third, it features both great poetry—by the World War I era soldier-poet and pacifist Wilfred Owen—and text settings by a composer who is renowned for his sensitive and nuanced vocal writing. Finally, its subject matter—war and its human consequences—can provide an instructor with a opportunity to address social issues of concern to students and teachers alike in a way which is not always possible in a traditional theory curriculum.

This paper will focus primarily on analysis of the poetry and some of the implications of that analysis for understanding the piece as a whole. However, examples will be given which illustrate various ways in which insights gleaned

from the text analysis intersect with the musical setting by Britten. In the process, it will be seen that the relationship between poetic text and musical setting is complex. Aspects of this relationship should be carefully addressed in any classroom discussion of text and music. Some poetic effects, such as historical allusion, emerge clearly in any musical setting as long as the text is presented in the same order and with sufficient distinctness. Others are strongly affected by individual musical settings: patterns of word stresses from the poem can emerge clearly or be completely obscured by musical elements including, among others, meter, phenomenal pitch rhythm, pitch directionality, word repetition, melismatic writing, and agogic accent. Further, musical discourse sometimes creates a similar effect to that found in a poetic text, but only by using entirely different means—for example, a sense of "elevated" discourse can be represented textually by the choice of abstract, polysyllabic, unfamiliar words, and musically by the appropriation of certain musical topics or stylistic features. These elements can mutually reinforce each other, but textual meaning does not exist merely to support musical meaning or vice-versa. Poetic analysis and musical analysis should be undertaken separately to uncover their unique features, after which their interactions can be traced more effectively. Poetic interpretation will then be seen to reinforce, contradict, ignore, or inflect musical interpretation in various proportions. Although the poetic text is an integral part of the musical discourse, its contribution can and should be examined separately. The musical examples in this article do not comprise a detailed analysis of the score—they should be supplemented in the classroom by a more detailed look at the history of the work, the musical style of Benjamin Britten, and other analytical features of interest. They are provided to illustrate the various relationships that can exist between text and musical setting and to show how music analysis depends on a prior understanding of relevant poetic features.

This paper features an analysis of "Anthem for Doomed Youth," one of the Wilfred Owen poems contained in the *War Requiem*, with respect to the techniques described above. The poetic text is given below in Figure 1.

> What passing-bells for these who die as cattle?
> Only the monstrous anger of the guns,
> Only the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle
> Can patter out their hasty orisons.
> No mockeries for them from prayers or bells,
> Nor any voice of mourning save the choirs, –
> The shrill, demented choirs of wailing shells;
> And bugles calling for them from sad shires.
>
> What candles may be held to speed them all?
> Not in the hands of boys, but in their eyes
> Shall shine the holy glimmers of good-byes.
> The pallor of girls' brows shall be their pall;
> Their flowers the tenderness of silent minds,
> And each slow dusk a drawing-down of blinds.

Figure 1: Wilfred Owen, "Anthem for Doomed Youth" (Britten 1997, viii)

This poem appears in the opening movement of the *War Requiem*, positioned between two texts from the Latin Requiem Mass: the 'Requiem aeternam' verse and the 'Kyrie eleison' from the Ordinary of the Mass. Both texts are prayers of supplication, the former seeking eternal rest for the dead, the latter seeking mercy for the living. The Owen poem, as with all such interpolations in the *Requiem*, concretizes these supplications by focusing them on the subject of war and its consequences. In each movement, Britten's choice of interpolated English text is motivated by a conceptual link with the Latin text, causing it to function as a commentary on the traditional verses. In this case, that link is prayer: the 'Requiem aeternam' text contains a plea for God to "hear our

prayer" ("exaudi orationem meam"), while the "Anthem" poem laments the remoteness and insufficiency of ritualism and prayer from the realities of battle and loss—"no mockeries for them from prayers or bells."

Analysis of the poetic text reveals the ways in which the thematic argument is strengthened and clarified at individual moments and in the poem as a whole. To illustrate the poetic analysis elements described above, let us examine each in turn in the context of their employment in "Anthem for Doomed Youth." Because *theme* is implicated in the activity of all the other elements, it will be treated in tandem with those elements rather than separately.[4] The elements described in this article do not lend themselves to complete and rigid separation, even in a pedagogical setting. At every turn, these elements interpenetrate and mutually influence each other: diction affects rhetoric, meter affects trope, etc. In classroom discussions, it is important to clarify the distinctions between elements for the sake of preserving the usefulness of the tool, while at the same time revealing that no clear division is possible in practice.

Line: Most lines in "Anthem for Doomed Youth" are end-stopped—that is to say, the line ending coincides with a sentence or phrase ending to mark a significant punctuation point. This in itself is significant, in that the frequent coincidence of sentence and line lends greater clarity to features like rhyme and meter. There are, however, two significant moments in which end-stopping is eschewed, resulting in the listeners' attentions being drawn to them. The first moment features an enjambment at the end of line 3: the phrase from this line carries over without punctuation to the end of line 4. The resultant two-line phrase "only the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle can patter out their hasty orisons" acquires a rushed,

[4] Since the thematic effect of a particular effect frequently involves the coordination of several elements, it will occasionally be necessary to discuss the effect of certain elements out of the order established above. When this occurs, the element name will appear in parentheses and italicized in order to keep the conceptual boundary lines clear.

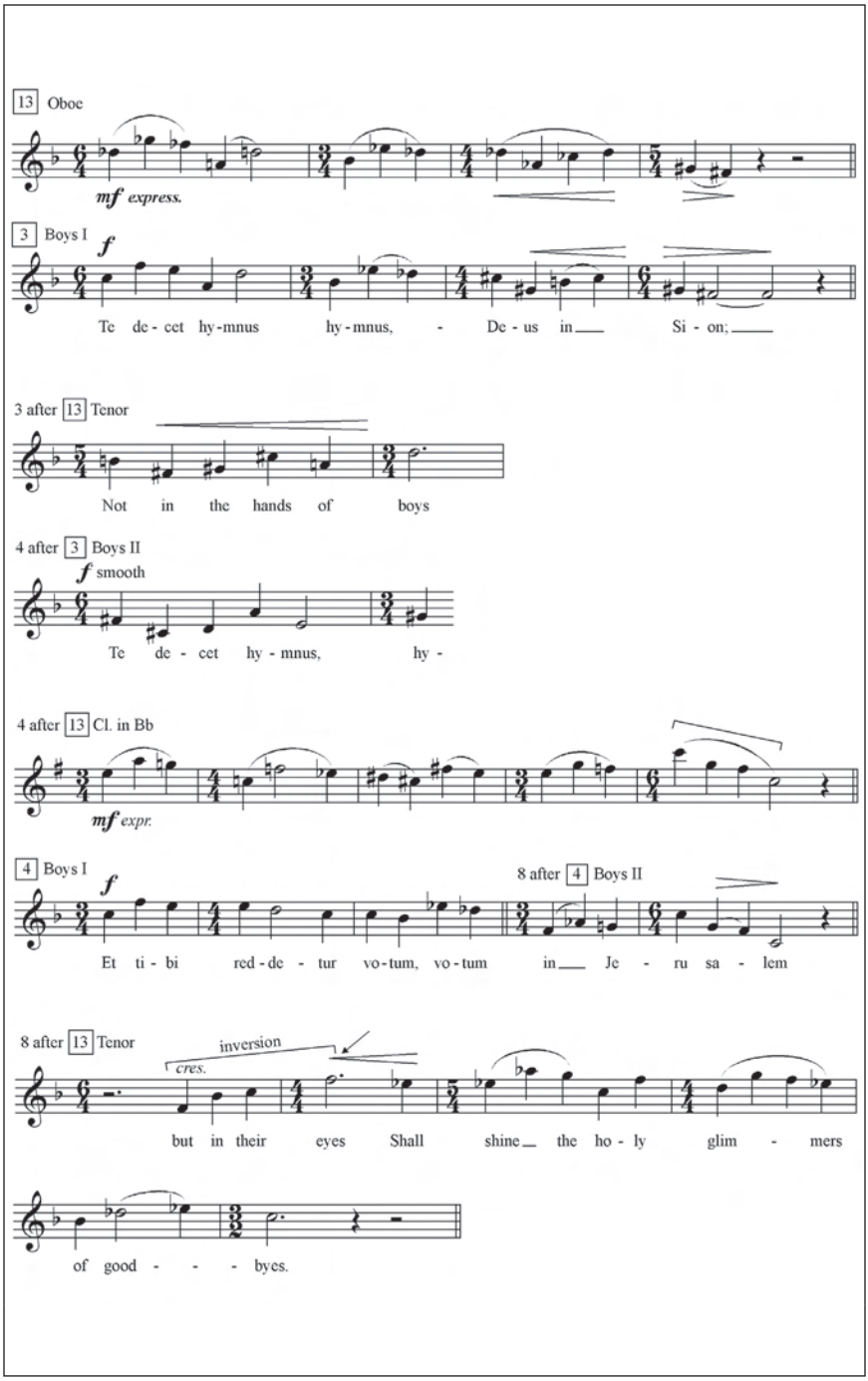
headlong character in relation to the surrounding lines as a result of the enjambment. The thematic purpose of this effect cannot be completely explained by the enjambment alone. As we will see, lines 3-4 engage a rhetorical device which recreates the sound of gunfire in the unfolding of the text. This device is complex in construction, resulting from the coordination of irregularities of line, sentence, diction, trope, rhythm, and meter.[5] This moment will be examined more fully below.

The second moment lacking an end-stopped line involves lines 10 and 11: "Not in the hands of boys, but in their eyes shall shine the holy glimmers of good-byes." The momentum of line 10 is arrested after three of the line's five metric feet by a caesura, then continues without punctuation through the remainder of lines 10 and 11. The effect of the caesura is to call attention to the dual connotations of the shining light (*trope*) that is the primary image of the final sestet: the light shining through the tears of bereaved children is more authentically sufficient to mourn the departed loved one than the ritualized light of a candle carried in the hands of funeral celebrants. The caesura works together with syntactic inversion (*sentence*) to place the word "eyes" at the end of the line where it will receive greater prominence as befits its thematic status. Frequently, an enjambment will have the effect of de-emphasizing the line ending, but this effect is mitigated here by the caesura earlier in the line and by the shift in rhyme scheme from alternating (abab cdcd) to interspersed (effegg) which brings the rhymed words "eyes" and "good-byes" closer together (*stanza and rhyme*).

Britten's setting reinforces both the caesura after "boys" and the syntactic emphasis on the world "eyes" in line 10. The vocal phrase featuring the text "Not in the hands of boys" is separated from the phrase containing the remainder of line 10 and line 11 by a full three measures. This is the only moment in

[5] Britten mitigates the effect of this enjambment by introducing destabilizing rests into the phrase after "rattle." However, as will be described below, Britten is attempting to achieve an analogous effect to the poetic re-creation of gunfire in specifically musical terms. This results in a blurring of the poetic effect in this instance

the entire setting where Britten separates any part of a line into separate phrases. The separation also allows for an extended musical trope to be exploited. Beginning at Rehearsal 13, a new formal section is initiated, featuring melodic material derived from earlier in the movement: namely, a portion of the *Reqiuem aeternam* text sung by boys' choir. The oboes and first violins at Rehearsal 13 play a transposed version of the boys' choir line "Te decet hymnus" from Rehearsal 3. This is followed by a variant of the consequent phrase from the "Te decet" passage, sung by the tenor to the text "Not in the hands of boys." Here Britten sets up an association between the poetic image of "boys" in the Owen poem and the boys' choir which was employed to sing the Latin verses. This serves to reinforce the textual link between the Latin text "hear my prayer" and the "prayers and bells" of the Owen poem. After the caesura, the three-measure interlude between vocal phrases is used to reprise further boys' choir material, this time a variant of "et tibi redetur votum in Jerusalem" from Rehearsal 4, played by the clarinets and second violins. When the tenor enters again, singing the remainder of lines 10 and 11, Britten uses an inversion of the previous phrase ending to set the text "but in their eyes"—the previously descending gesture now ascends to a local high point (F5) on the word "eyes," where it remains for three beats, the longest note in the entire vocal phrase (see Example 1). Britten thus emphasizes "eyes" through register and agogic accent, and with it the rhymed words "eyes" and "good-byes," while still allowing the phrase to continue through all of line 11 without a break. Thus, the Owen poem's emphasis on "boys" and "eyes," set up by the poetic manipulation of line and sentence, is preserved and expanded in Britten's treatment through phrase shaping and through the melodic recalling of the boys' choir passage.



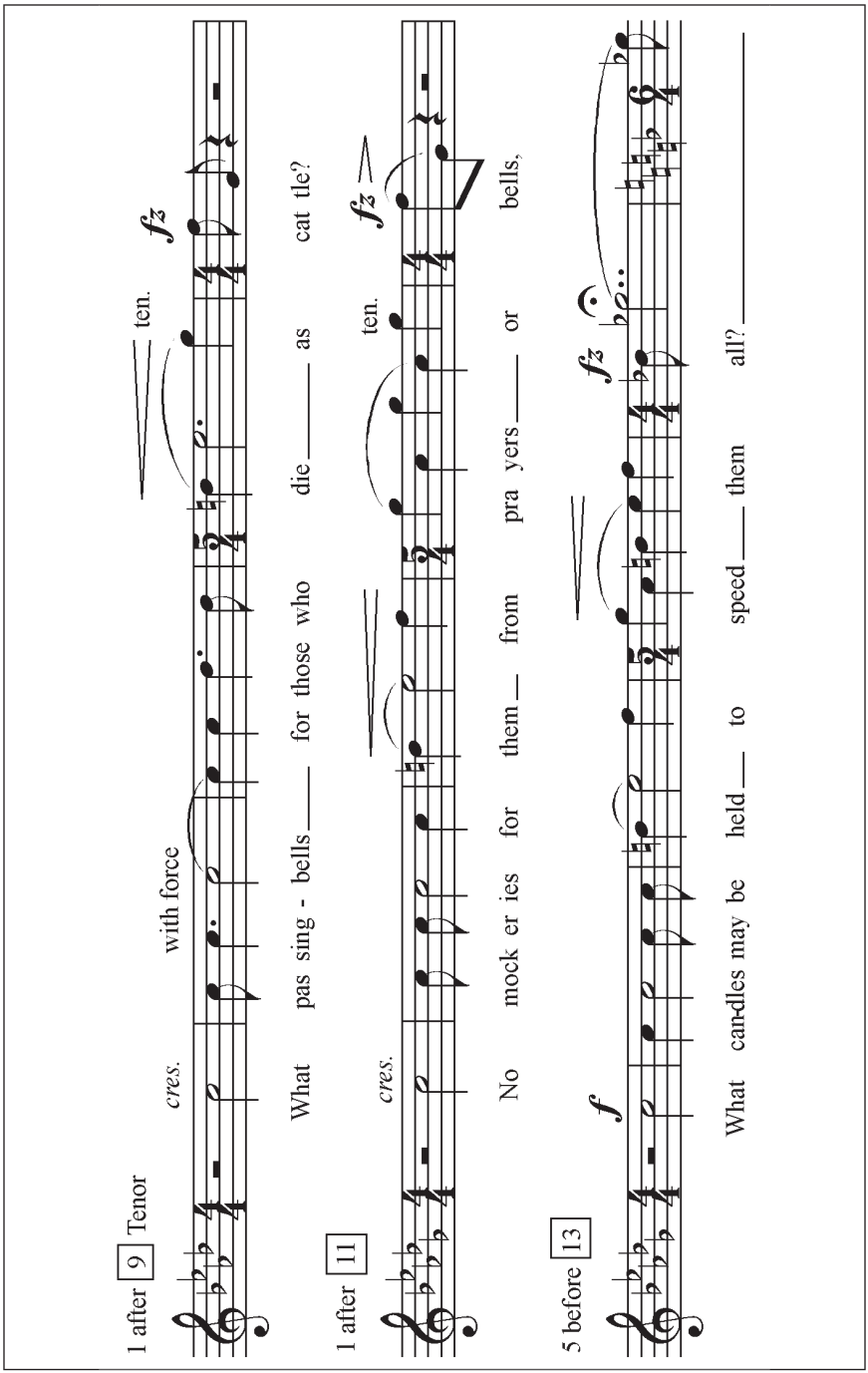
Example 1: Comparison of phrases from Rehs. 3-5 and 13

The caesura-enjambment combination in lines 10-11 has one further effect. After the irregularities of rhyme scheme shift, line flow, and sentence structure, the return of end-stops in lines 12-14, combined with the repetitive list of contrasts between actual and ritualized offerings (pallor/pall, tenderness/flowers, dusk/drawing of blinds), gives the ending of the poem a character of tragic finality. The slow succession of regular phrases piles up the contrasted concepts inexorably, suggesting the weight of grief that cannot be assuaged. Britten emphasizes this character in his setting by "slowly relaxing" the tempo of the ending and by presenting in augmentation the setting of the final poetic line, with its gradually descending "Te decet" motive.

Sentence: This category is concerned with the degree of syntactical simplicity or complexity that characterizes the poem under discussion. The simplest sentences are generally those that feature the most normative word ordering (subject-verb-object) combined with few additional phrases or clauses and a shorter overall length. By contrast, more complex sentences are formed through alteration of the normative word order, the addition of further phrases or clauses, the use of unusual sentence types—fragments, exclamations, interrogatives, etc.—and/or greater overall length. Further, the degree of sentence complexity tends to correlate in some manner with thematic aspects. For example, long sentences often create tension by overrunning the ends of poetic lines. Likewise, complex sentences that are more difficult for the reader/listener to untangle may suggest a more cerebral, intellectualized persona than simple sentences with few obstacles to comprehension. Sentence structure may also be adjusted in order to place significant words at the beginnings or endings of lines, either for greater emphasis or to suggest a partial meaning ('half-meanings') at a line ending that is contradicted or inflected by the unexpected continuation of the sentence into a subsequent line.

The structure of the sentences in "Anthem for Doomed Youth" is relatively complex, reflecting both conceptual weight

and emotional intensity. An important interaction with form is the use of interrogative sentences to initiate the two unequal segments of the sonnet (lines 1 and 9). These sentences ("What passing-bells for these who die as cattle?" and "What candles may be held to speed them all?") determine the content of the sonnet's two sections by requiring answers which the remaining lines supply. Britten provides these interrogative lines with special emphasis and hints at the emotional intensity of the poem by giving them a unique phrase shape. In the first case (line 1), the tenor sings an incantatory C5 reciting tone, then slowly ascends by step to a measure-long melismatic climax on the word "die." Immediately thereafter, the line plunges downward in an explosive release on the word "cattle." The overall effect is one of great tension barely contained. A similar profile characterizes the phrase containing the second question (line 9), except that the climax on "speed" is followed by a double unfolding of a G♭-C tritone, the work's most pervasive symbolic motive (atypically standing for the heavenly world in contrast to the suffering world below). This phrase achieves a similar intensity to the first by ending with a powerful *sforzando*. Only one other line in the setting shares this characteristic phrase shape, and that is the critical line 5 ("No mockeries for them from prayers or bells"), in which the questions are denied a conventional response and through which the poem's bitterness emerges most strongly. Here the word "prayers" is emphasized through an instance of word-painting: the pitches of the G♭-C tritone alternate several times, both reflecting the symbolic object of prayer (God and the divine realm) and imitating the melismatic chanting of celebrants in worship (Example 2). Musically, of course, this positioning of similar lines in the first, fifth, and ninth vocal phrases, each separated from the next by three contrasting phrases, lends a pleasing symmetry to the first part of the poem.



Example 2: Britten's setting of lines 1, 5, and 9

The initial question immediately confronts the reader/listener with a primary clause that lacks a verb—one must infer a fuller construction like "What passing-bells *are rung* . . ." or "What passing-bells *suffice* . . . ." The truncated syntax of this sentence, combined with the obscure term "passing-bells" (*diction*) and the uncertain referent of "these"—who is dying like cattle?—creates an eerie effect, as though the speaker were too overwrought to express himself clearly, or were escaping from strong emotion into rhetorical distance. The immediate answer to this question (lines 2-4) excessively emphasizes the sentence's subject through two parallel lines beginning with the word "only." (Britten reinforces this parallelism by shaping the vocal phrases corresponding to lines 2 and 3 in a similar manner, just as was the case with lines 1 and 9.) In these lines, we are not simply given more context—the dead are soldiers in battle—but are also made aware of the insufficiency and inappropriateness of the weapons of war as a suitable dirge for the dead. The answer is unexpected because it shifts the poem's setting from church to battlefield, and the repetition in lines 2-3 provides the necessary emphasis to underline that shift while simultaneously revealing the emotional force behind the poet's words. By delaying the verb-object sequence until line 4, the poet increases the expressive tension through the initial lines of the poem.

The remaining lines of the octave (eight-line passage) also comprise a single, complex sentence, and again the sentence lacks a verb. Parallel phrases further develop the correlation of battlefield sounds with the sounds of ritualistic memorial—"no mockeries . . ." followed by "nor any voice of mourning . . . ," "the shrill, demented choirs" paired with "bugles." The repetition of syntactic units here becomes a rhetorical gesture (*rhetoric*) which lends grandeur and force to the poem's message through re-emphasis.[6]

[6] Britten's setting of these lines is less concerned with overt parallelism, although there are motivic similarities between lines 6-8 and 2-4. Instead, he focuses on word-painting and trope, illustrating "wailing shells" by a long, melismatic line and the "sad shires" by a sudden slowing of the phrase at its conclusion

The closing sestet begins in a similar fashion as the initial octave: a question is answered through the successive accretion of detail *via* parallel lines. Here the imagery relates to visual images rather than sound (*trope*), however, and the verb is present in the interrogative line. Mention has already been made of the sentence inversion in lines 10-11 that focuses attention on the word "eyes" at the expense of the poem's true subject, "glimmers." A more normative word order would be: "The holy glimmers of good-byes shall shine in the eyes of boys, not in their hands." Apart from the fact that this sentence wreaks havoc with the rhyme scheme, it lacks the expressive force of the actual, inverted version (comprising the sequence object-verb-subject), which, like lines 2-4, forces the reader/listener to wait until the end of the sentence to untangle its sense. Because all these lines are set by Britten without interpolations or repetitions, the expressive effects derived from syntactic rearrangement come through clearly in the setting.

The syntactical devices set up by Owen through the first eleven lines abruptly give way to a new strategy in the final three lines; only the principle of repetition remains as an important link to the earlier text. Here the syntax becomes comparatively simple and phrase lengths coincide precisely with line lengths. As previously mentioned, this passage has the effect of conveying the inexorable advance of grief. The sequential elaboration of martial and religious correlations and the coincidence of line and phrase are reinforced by the regularity of syntax: for the first time in the poem, the sequence subject-verb-object unfolds within a single poetic line, and this effect is repeated twice more, functioning both as a sign of closure and as an intimation of tragedy through the yoking of expressive flexibility into the deathly correspondence of meter, line, and phrase. As mentioned above, Britten sets these lines with musical material from the earlier boys' choir passage in Latin. Lines 12-13 refer back to the two inverted unfoldings of the tritone C-F♯ on the text "exaudi orationem meam" ("hear my prayer") from Rehearsal 5; the parallelism of these phrases reflect the parallelism of the sentences themselves. Line 14

features the augmented variant of the "Te decet hymnus" phrase mentioned above.

Diction: This category invokes all the effects of word choice upon the meaning and unfolding of the poem. The degree of concreteness or abstraction of the chosen words helps to characterize the thematic and rhetorical content of the poem, as does the choice of a more unfamiliar, or complex, word in place of a more familiar, or simple, word. Further, an increase in the number of monosyllabic words in a line increases the number of word stresses, which in turn slows the flow of that line. By contrast, larger words with fewer stressed syllables cause the line to move forward more rapidly, or possibly more uncertainly due to the larger gaps between stresses. The use of multiple words with the same initial consonant sound (alliteration) or medial vowel sound (assonance) or quality of lightness or darkness of vowel gives a greater emphasis to the lines in which these words appear or groups those lines together. Finally, the choice of particular words invokes a stylistic register that implicates particular social strata or social functions—elevated discourse suggests the upper classes, ritualized expression, or a rhetorically-heightened expressive voice, while simple discourse suggests the working classes, informal conversation, or a neutralized narrative voice. Whatever the relevant aspect, diction is as closely tied to thematic expressivity as any poetic element.

Paradoxically, "Anthem for Doomed Youth" achieves its pointed commentary on religion and war through an almost obsessive focus on things. The energy of this poem arises from the placing of one object against another, substituting the sounds and sights of battle for the sanitized ritual objects that purport to explain them, achieving the physical and moral separation of the two worlds that they inhabit. Prayers and bells give way to guns and rifles, singing voices to "wailing shells" and bugles, candles to tear-filled eyes. Owen's directness of word choice reflects the immediacy of war even as he injects the poem with tension through syntactic complexities and rhetorical flourishes. The few words that

reach beyond the accessible and immediate are those that evoke the solemnized vocabulary of liturgy—passing-bells, orisons—in order to emphasize their remoteness in the face of war. As Owen writes: "no mockeries for them from prayers or bells." The stylistic register of this poem largely inhabits a middle range, eschewing lofty language in favor of realistic immediacy, but nevertheless retaining a religious tone that elevates the moral force of its message.

The result is a largely monosyllabic text in which extra stresses seem to drag the momentum of individual lines to a halt. In particular, the last line of the octave renders grief immediate through excessive stress: "and **bug**-les **cal**-ling for **them** from **sad shires**." Britten largely preserves the effect of piling up monosyllables, especially in the setting's first section (Rehs. 9-13). In the second section (Rehs. 13-16), the vocal lines are derived from the boys' choir section, so the phrases more frequently sacrifice their monosyllabic character in order to fit the poetic lines into pre-existing musical phrases. In the first section, however, most phrases are largely set syllabically. Only three words ("prayers," "wailing," and "sad") receive more than two notes per syllable, and in each case the melisma calls attention to a moment of word-painting (discussed above). As a result, the density of the text with all its expressive power comes through strongly in Britten's setting.

Polysyllables are not uncommon in the text, but they stand out among the shorter words in particular ways: (1) they give way to monosyllables to mark the boundary line of the two constructed worlds ("passing-bells for those who die as cattle"); (2) they inject emotional outbursts into the battlefield descriptions, humanizing the starkness of the comparisons ("monstrous anger of the guns," "shrill, demented choirs," "the tenderness of silent minds"); (3) they participate in the creation of effects involving multiple poetic elements (the two- and three-syllable worlds in the phrase "only the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle can patter out their hasty orisons" cause the text to gallop along like the event it describes).

This last example, taken from lines 3-4, partly explains the first two remarkable multi-parametric poetic effects in the poem.[7] Here Owen creates an extended metrical onomatopoeia, in which not only individual words but also their succession in time imitates the rhythmic, percussive pulsing of gunfire that is the impromptu equivalent of a funeral drum. Several "figures of speech" combine here to create this effect. The alliteration in "rifles' rapid rattle" combines with the regular alternation of stress in the successive two-syllable words to establish a consistent speech rhythm. A similar repetition of the medial consonant "tt" in "stuttering," "rattle," and "patter" highlights the onomatopoeia effect of each of these words. One, therefore, hears both the individual sounds of gunfire and its regular alternation when taken together. Finally, the assonant "a" vowel in the words "**a**nger," "r**a**pid," "r**a**ttle," and "p**a**tter" give this passage a particular integrity, particularly as this vowel largely gives way to darker vowels in the immediately succeeding lines.[8]

Other figures of speech in this poem are more subtle, highlighting individual moments. The brief alliteration at "**s**ad **s**hires" helps to emphasize the overstressed quality of this poignant line ending. The parallel medial vowels of "candles" and "hands" suggests the kinship of ritual object and function which is then denied when "hands" give way to "eyes" at the end of the line.

Trope: We have already had occasion to discuss the primary trope in "Anthem": the repeated metaphorical assumption of religious symbols into the images and sounds of the battlefield. For the guns, rifles, shells, and bugles that accompany death in battle and the emotions and complexions of the bereaved are not simply set against religious objects in a contrast of the real vs. the ideal. Rather, the former come to acquire the function of the latter. The battlefield symbols are doubly meaningful in that they serve as both the byproducts of war and its memorial. It is in this duality that the poem's

[7] The other being lines 11-12, discussed above.

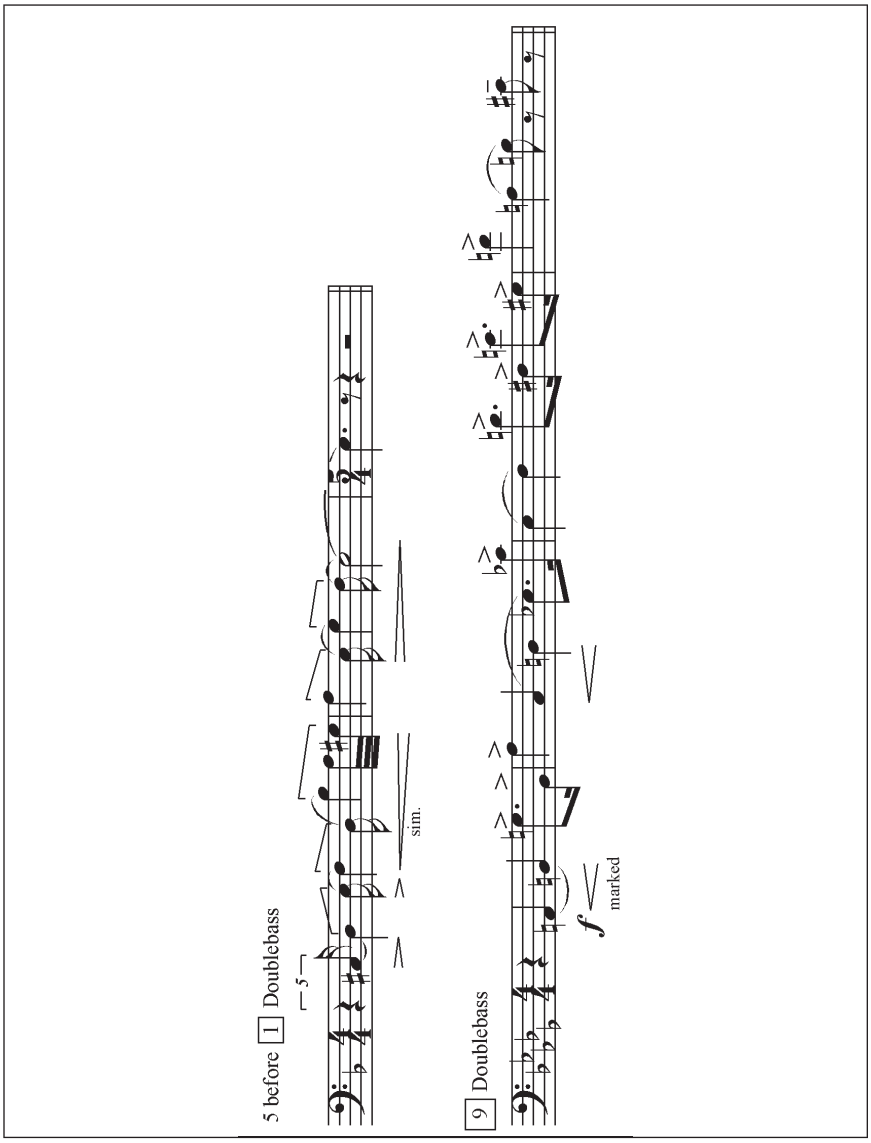
[8] The other important aspect of this passage, the striking alternation of triple and duple meters, will be discussed below

meaning resides; it forces the reader/listener to consider the ways in which war shatters the consolatory power of religion through the sheer force of its inhumanity, scope, and impact. The poet's—and reader/listener's—stance on religion and war is a question of rhetoric, but the symbol of the battlefield that rejects any consolation not on its own terms is a complex one worthy of explanation. It is not clear from the poetic text what message we might draw from this extended trope: does it call for a more authentic and consistent religious impulse that does not allow war to arise, or is it a rejection of religion in the face of man's inhumanity to man. The symbol is thus paradoxical: it is both a more honest anodyne to suffering and a rejection of any possible consolation.

A further connection between trope and rhetoric in this poem, between the symbol per se and its function in the discourse, is the use of simile and personification to reveal the poet's stance and to bring the perception of war's consequences into sharp relief. In the first line of the poem, the casualties of war are compared to cattle slaughtered for food. This comparison suggests both the scale of the killing and the lack of remorse that accompanies it. War acquires a moral dimension when the poet attributes human qualities to the objects of war: guns fire with a "monstrous anger," artillery shells are "shrill" and "demented." Owen does not allow the reality of the events he describes to be sanitized into universalizing platitudes. The human emotions attributed to the inanimate forces of war reveal both the culpability of human actions in their use of this force and the passion with which the poet, and presumably the reader/listener, confronts the consequences.

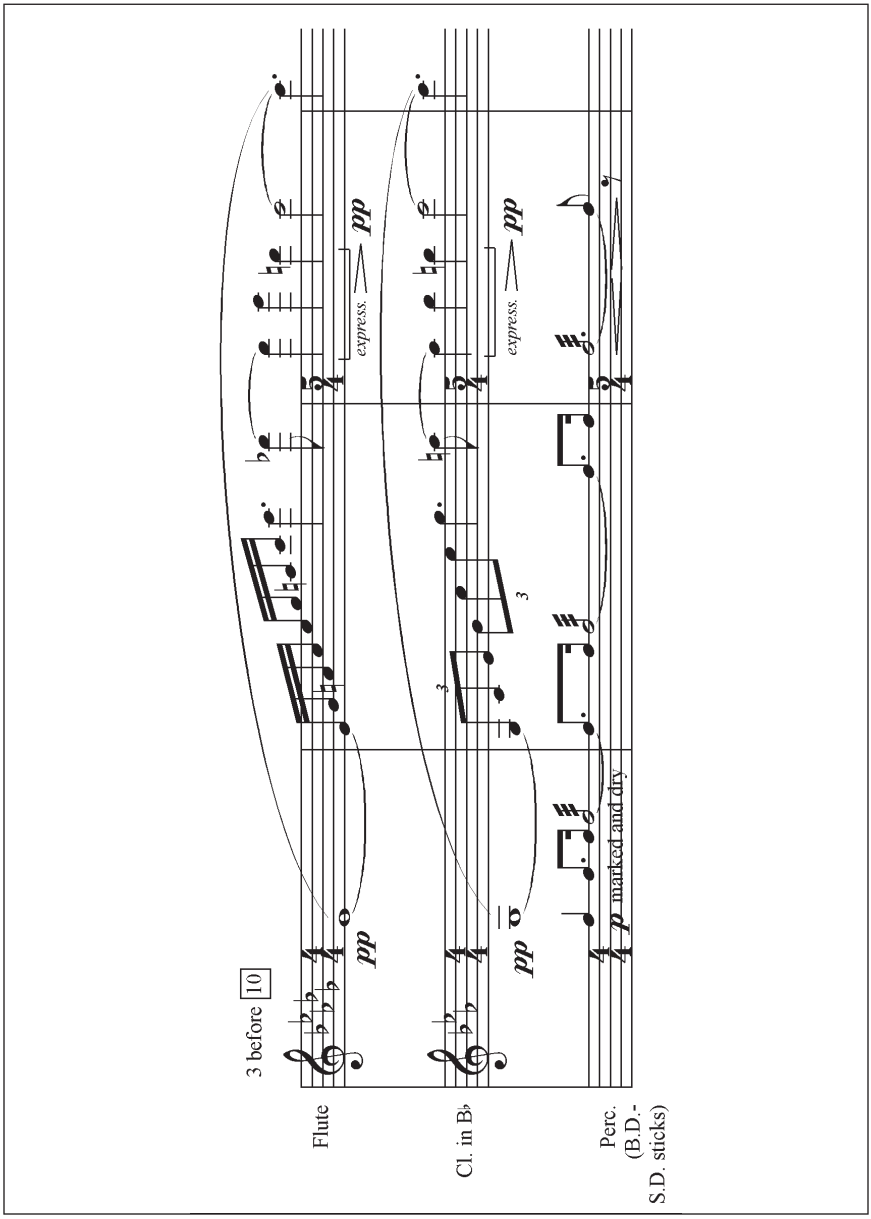
The musical analog of the poetic trope is the principle of association. Because both categories often focus their attention on the work's primary symbols, the latter can be employed to lend even greater force to the associational network of the text. Britten's setting of "Anthem for Doomed Youth" is a marvelous example of text and music both signifying in ways unique to themselves to achieve a powerful synergistic result. Musical association is densely employed throughout the

entire setting, beginning with its first measure. The opening harp figuration consists entirely of the now symbolically resonant G♭-C tritone (mentioned above), and the initial string lines feature a dotted rhythm characteristic of the orchestral opening of the *War Requiem*, a passage that accompanies the supplication "Lord, grant them eternal rest" (Example 3).



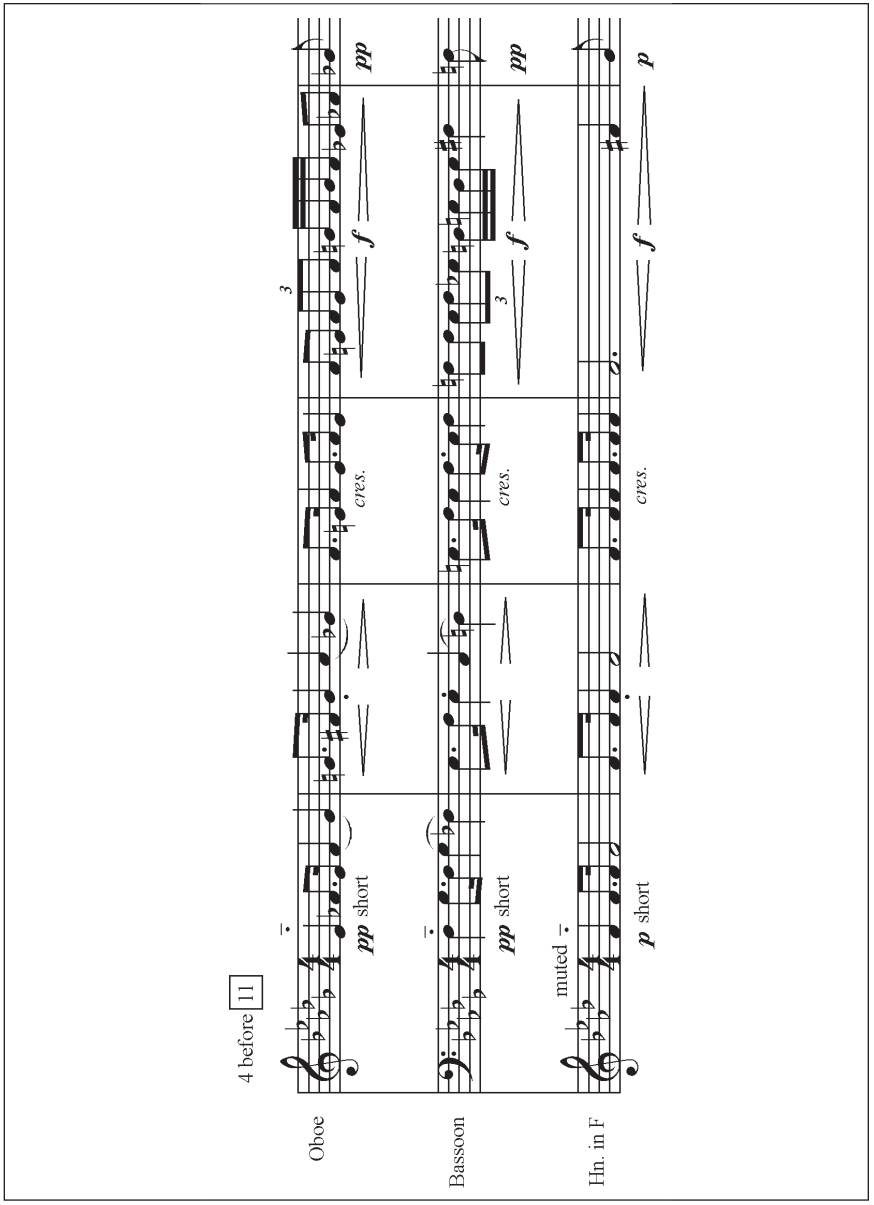
Example 3: Comparison of string parts—6 before Reh. 1, Reh. 9

Two orchestral passages interpolated between vocal lines in Rehs. 9 and 10 imitate the "monstrous anger of the guns" (bass drum played by snare drum sticks) and "wailing shells" (flutes and clarinets) (Example 4).



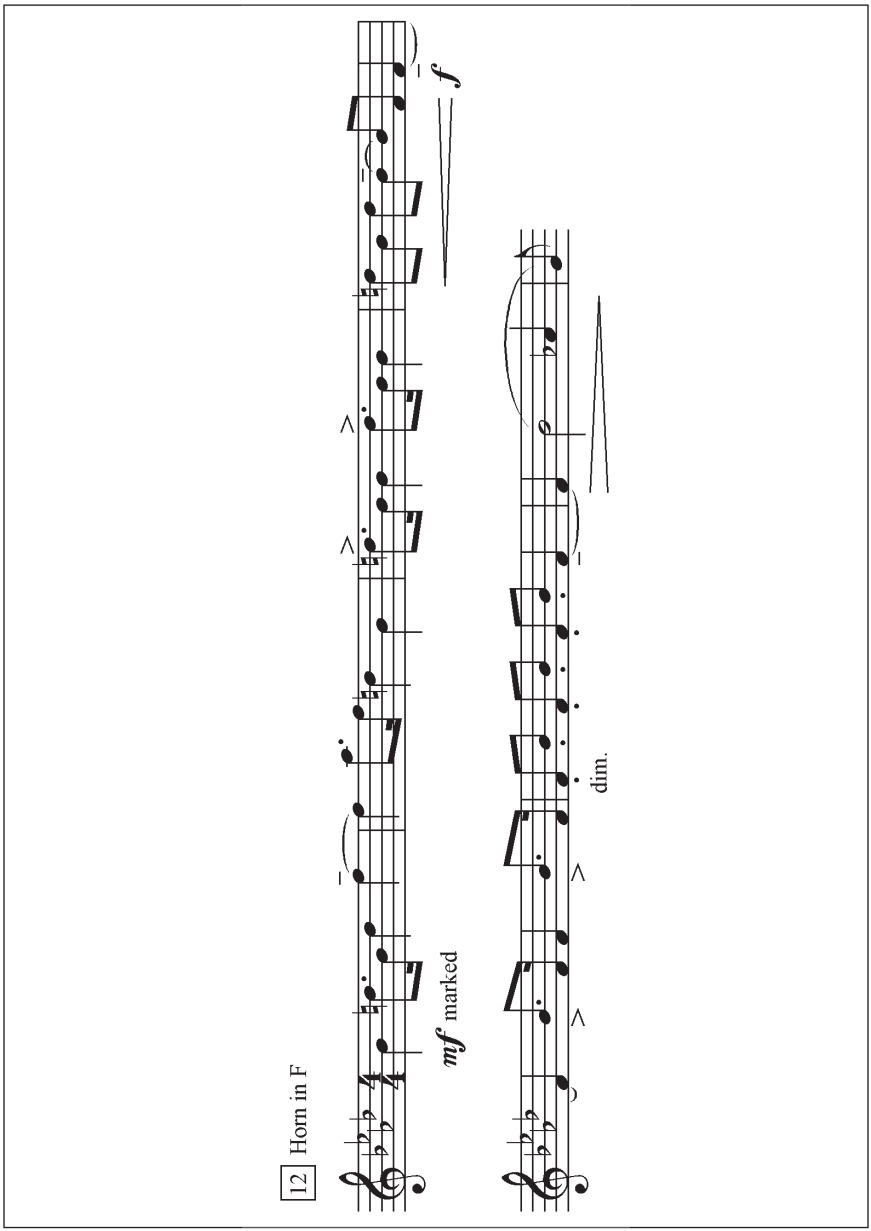
Example 4: Gunfire and "wailing shells"—3 before Reh. 10

The "stutt'ring rifles' rapid rattle" is suggested by dry, dotted figures in the oboes, bassoons, and horns before Reh. 11 (Example 5).



Example 5: "Stutt'ring rifles' rapid rattle"—4 before Reh. 11

Bugle calls are suggested by triadic dotted figures in the horns as the line "And bugles calling for them from sad shires" is sung (Example 6):



Example 6: Bugle calls at Reh. 12

The vocal imitations on "prayers," "wailing," and "sad" have already been mentioned, as has the imitation of the boys' choir music at Reh. 13. All of these instances of word-painting and association have the effect of enriching the associations already present in the Owen text and of calling attention to parallels with the *Requiem aeternam* text from earlier in the movement.

Rhetoric: This category is concerned with the description of a persona that speaks through the poem and the devices through which this persona influences the reader/listener. The persona may or may not convey the belief, thoughts, ideas, and perceptions of the poet; it is frequently impossible to know for certain. A rhetorical analysis involves uncovering the qualities of this constructed voice. Does "he" speak objectively, or with great personal concern? Is "she" flamboyant and excessive in her use of metaphor and elaborate figures of speech and thought, or is she direct and lacking in overt artifice? Many of the poetic elements discussed above reveal the character of the persona, so it will not be necessary to cover the same ground again in every case.

Rhetoric is also the art of persuasion. Just as there are many different qualities that a persona may possess, there are also many different strategies and techniques that can be employed by a poet to persuade and influence the reader/listener. A poem can be presented like a miniature drama, with characters interacting and developing a plot. It can be a narrative description, tracking fundamental changes in its constituent elements from one point in time to another. It can be a lyric description of a memory or perception that largely eschews interpretation. It can be a philosophical disputation, an oration, a polemic. The manner in which the message is conveyed in a poem reveals much about the message itself and about the character of the poem as a whole.

"Anthem for Doomed Youth" most closely resembles an impassioned sermon in its emotional appeal and subject matter. The speaker-persona does not remain aloof from his subject, but uses his words as an appeal to impart a signal truth to his listeners. The unfolding of the poem is crafted

like an oration to instill insight and shock. The first device used to employ this strategy is the rhetorical question in the opening line: "What passing-bells for these who die as cattle?" We are meant to understand that this question goes beyond mere inquiry. It might be translated as "What passing-bells can possibly be sufficient to reckon the loss of these who die as cattle?" The answer is emphasized through repetition at first (lines 2-3), delaying the listener's full awareness of the speaker's extended metaphorical project until line 4. The parallel lines beginning with "only" and, later, with "no" and "nor" embody a common oratorical technique of increasing the force of a point through iteration.[9] Indeed, as we have seen, the building-up of comparatives throughout the sonnet gives it the force of conviction, a force which concentrates in the final three lines as the comparisons arrive one after another, line by line.

It has also been observed above that the persona goes beyond description to express a particular position. This emerges most strongly in line 5 ("No mockeries for them from prayers or bells") where it becomes clear that the speaker is invoking religious imagery in order to convey its insufficiency. Ironically, the mode of presentation itself—poem as sermon—is an acerbic commentary on the countless other sermons delivered in times of war that ring hollow with platitudes. The overall tone of the poem is one of not-quite-resigned bitterness, a recognition of the enormity of loss that cannot be reconciled with a superficial spirituality.

The shift of tense in this poem is also employed to rhetorical effect. I have remarked upon the forcefulness of the final three lines due to their unexpected concatenation of line-sentence coincidence, straightforward syntax, reiteration of imagery, and overstressed word successions. To this can be added a shift from present to future tense at the volta (the dividing line

[9] The rhetorical tradition is replete with descriptions of Figuren, characteristic devices used to achieve a particular effect. For the purposes of a music class, however, anything but a cursory discussion of these figures would be a significant diversion. It is likely to be more fruitful to treat this subject more informally by discussing what characteristics make the poetic argument most effectively

between the octave and the sestet in a sonnet). The final lines of the poem serve as a warning of grief to come. While the first lines of the poem describe the present realities of death on the battlefield, the ending reveals that this reality will soon spread beyond its point of origin to affect all those who hear the speaker's words. This subtle device joins with the others already mentioned to intensify the attention and emotion of the listener to its highest pitch.

Several of the musical effects that Britten used to rhetorically embody the persona have been discussed above: the tension-building climb to an explosive release in lines 1 and 5, the forceful parallel phrase construction of the answering lines (2, 3), and the slow decline in tempo in the last line. To these might be added other rhetorical devices. Note, for example, the placement of a registral high-point at the very end of the phrase containing line 9 (see Example 2). This sudden ascent has three obvious functions: (1) to complete the C-G♭ tritone which bookends the phrase (a *troping* function), (2) to suggest the uncertainty of the interrogative in that line (a *rhetorical* function), and (3) to set up, by way of the final sustained G♭, a large-scale question for which the contrasting section will serve as answer (a *rhetorical* function).

The rhetorical "making real" of a poem's characters and their emotions and ideas can also be enacted by the inflections given to each line by musicians during performances. The famous recording directed by the composer (Britten 1963) features Peter Pears as the soloist for "Anthem for Doomed Youth." Pears convincingly conveys the shifting emotional resonances of each line. For example, the plaintive legato of "Nor any voice of mourning, save the choir" gives way to brittle, clipped singing at "The shrill, demented choirs" and then to an eerie wavering of intensity level at "wailing shells." His voice becomes distant and ruminating on the line "And bugles calling for them from sad shires," only to burst forth passionately at "What candles may be held to speed them all," leading to a long, resigned dying away on the last syllable. The importance of analyzing specific performative realizations can not be understated, particularly with respect to the rhetorical

elements of poetry, concerned as these elements are with embodying the notes on the page as human utterances.

Rhythm and Meter: In music we are familiar with the interplay of rhythm and meter, though tension is generated between predictability and stability on the one hand, and flexibility and freedom on the other. Musical meter embodies a more-or-less unchanging grid of strong and weak accents. This metric regularity is created by the overall effect of every pitch in the piece—a pattern emerges from the phenomenal stresses that occur. However, metric regularity is not universally displayed by every line in the musical texture or at every point. Only a significant fraction of the musical events are required to engage the listeners' perceptions of a meter. The metric succession of accents and non-accents remains in our memory to organize our listening, even when particular melodic lines or accompaniment figures place stresses on weak beats or neglect to put stresses on strong beats (or even set up a rival metrical pattern for a brief time). Once set up, a metric pattern will tend to be retained by the listener until the musical evidence for a different pattern is strong enough. Rhythm is thus more irregular, more natural in its flexibility than meter, and much temporal interest in music is derived from the way the rhythmic *stresses* interact with the more regular *accents* of the metric grid.

Poetry uses the same phenomena, but traditional approaches to scansion have tended to overemphasize the role of meter. Indeed, this is the primary reason why poetry read badly sounds bad: readers often cause their speech pattern to conform to the metric stress at all times, resulting in a monotonous regularity of cadence, akin to pounding out musical downbeats. If, instead, the natural stresses of a poem are emphasized, a more irregular, flowing line emerges that does not always coincide with metric accents but, nevertheless, recovers much of the interesting interplay between rhythm and meter. The key to reading poetry well is to bring out this balance between stress and accent without giving too much emphasis to one or the other.

The analogy with music can be taken further. In much

music, metrical units tend to form naturally into groupings of two or three regular pulses arranged around a single accent. It is difficult for listeners to hear groupings of larger numbers of pulses without mentally subdividing them into smaller units—note the tendency to subdivide even quadruple meters into two duples (with the accent of the first being slightly stronger than the accent of the second). In English-language poetry, this effect is if anything even more restrictive. Duple meters tend to sound most natural, while even triple meters sound unusual,[10] and meters with more than three syllables are not used. The most common English *foot* (metrical unit akin to a measure) consists of a weak syllable followed by a strong syllable—an *iamb*. Poems whose meter is based around it employ an iambic meter. In practice, the only other foot that is metrically viable is also duple in construction: the *trochee* comprises a strong-weak accentual combination. Other feet are possible, but are reserved for isolated moments or unusual effects. So, the foot is analogous to the musical measure and is usually duple.

Just as a poet can reinforce meaning by combining the effects of line, sentence, diction, trope, or rhetoric, that poet can also use the interplay of rhythm and meter to reinforce meaning. However, poetic scansion as treated in the classroom is typically limited to determining the metric feet. Apart from establishing the accentual foundation of the poem, this isn't very interesting, and doesn't get at the critical feature of scansion, which is the uncovering of the moments where natural speech rhythms work against the metric pattern. In other words, *there are two layers to poetic scansion, the meter and the rhythm* (the accents and the stresses), and these two layers need to be discussed separately.[11]

[10] One can experience this phenomenon by noticing the comic effect of triple meter in limericks. Even when spoken with nonsense syllables, the limerick seems to trip along too excessively.

[11] Failure to separate these layers is the other most common problem in many classroom applications of scansion. The result is a single layer in which accent becomes confused with stress, so that the two become indistinguishable and useless as analytical parameters.

The following approach to poetic scansion illustrates the two-layer method, and requires a printed text of the poem in which all syllables within words are separated by hyphens:

1. Speak the poem as if it were prose, and identify the points where you naturally would provide a stress to a syllable. It is important not to speak artificially or with too great an awareness of the meter at this point. Place an apostrophe above each stressed syllable, leaving enough space between the stress mark and the word for metrical markings to be added later. Not everyone will agree on the same pattern of stress, since it is somewhat dependent on how the reader chooses to render meaning through emphasis.

2. Determine the prevailing metrical foot from the overall pattern of stresses. Since duple meters are most prevalent, begin by reading through the poem again, placing an accent on the second, fourth, and all subsequent even syllables of each line (suggesting an *iambic* meter). Next, read the poem again, placing an accent on the first, third, and all subsequent odd syllables of each line (suggesting a *trochaic* meter). If the iambic reading results in many accents coinciding with stressed syllables, then the iambic meter is likely to be the prevailing one. The same would apply to the trochaic reading. If neither reading achieves this goal, then it is likely that one of the triple feet is being used. Some lines will be more regular, with a greater accent-stress coincidence than others. The most appropriate meter will probably feature more such lines. Once you have decided on the appropriate meter, indicate accented syllables with a "—" and unaccented syllables with a "⏑" directly above the text and below the stress marks. In some

duple-meter poems, an occasional triple foot must be shown on the accent line when an extra syllable breaks the prevailing pattern. Also, an extra weak syllable is occasionally found at the beginning or ending of a line; this syllable is incorporated into the nearest foot. In all other cases, all metrical feet in the poem should be the same.[12]

3. Set off each metric foot visually by placing a vertical line at the boundary points. These lines need not coincide with word endings. Place a double vertical line after any caesura. Compare the locations of the metric accent and any rhythmic stresses in each foot. If there is only one stress mark, and that mark coincides with the metric accent, then that foot is said to be "regular." Its rhythmic character is derived unproblematically from the prevailing metric foot type.

4. If, however, (1) there are no rhythmic stresses in a particular foot, or (2) there is more than one rhythmic stress in that foot, or (3) there is one rhythmic stress in that foot that does not correspond to the location of the metric accent, then that foot is said to be a *substitution*, in that its rhythmic character derives from a foot that differs from the prevailing meter. This does not erase the effect of the meter, but adds a simultaneous and contradictory layer to it. Show all substitutions by italicizing (or, in the classroom, circling) the relevant foot. These events are primarily responsible for reinforcing thematic effects (although excessive regularity can also have that effect).

These steps have been performed on "Anthem for Doomed Youth," as shown in Figure 2.

[12] Obviously, these restrictions do not apply to poems which are not accentual (organized by metric principles).

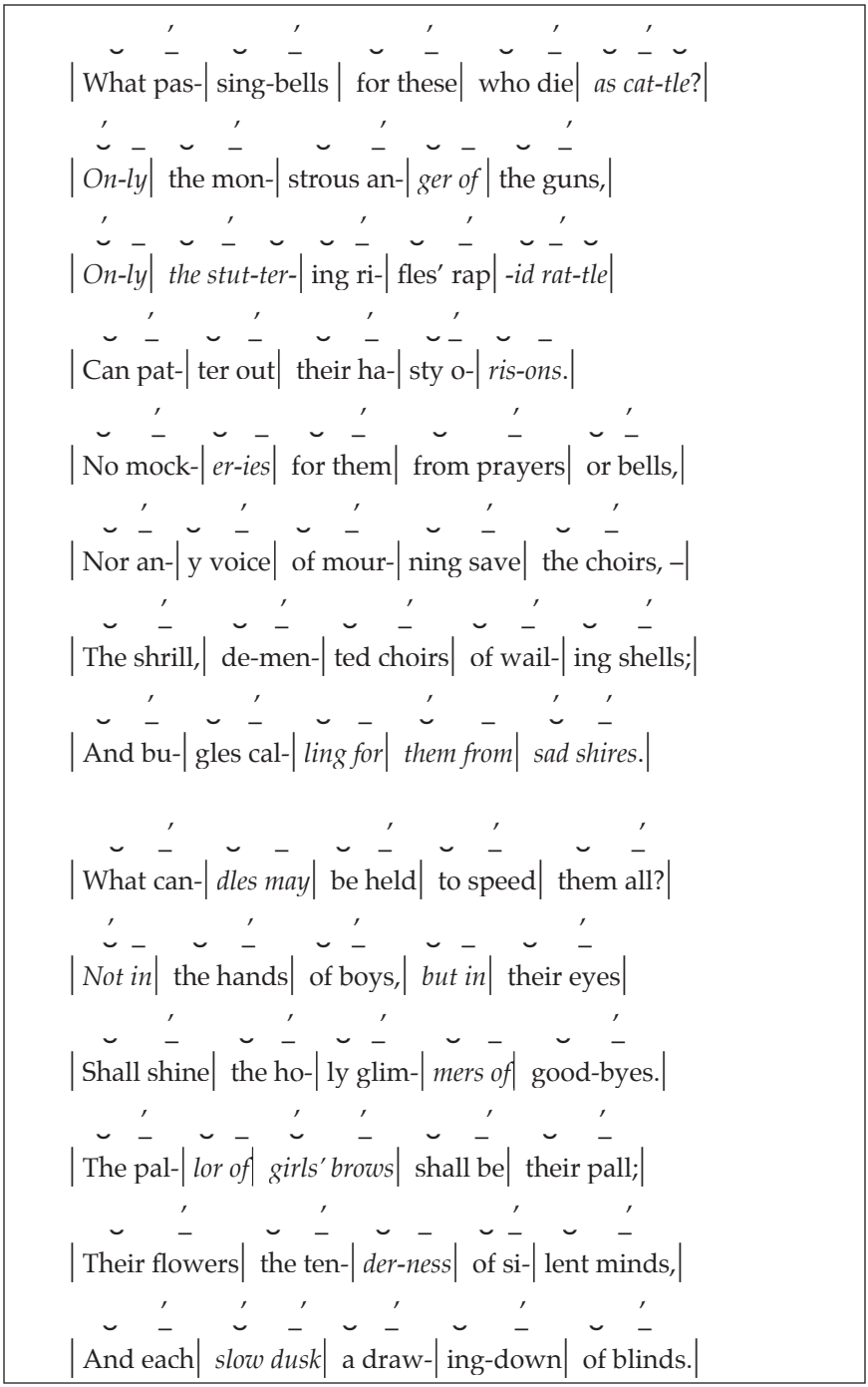


Figure 2: Rhythmic and metric scansion of "Anthem for Doomed Youth"

The metric label for the poem is derived from the prevailing metric foot, but any substitution will briefly suggest a different *substituted foot*, determined by the pattern of stresses and non-stresses rather than the pattern of accents and non-accents. Substituted feet typically reveal moments of interest, since they draw the reader/listener's attention to the non-coincidence of meter and rhythm at that point. The effect of a particular substitution varies with context, but as a general rule, lines with extra stresses (*overstressed lines*) slow the momentum of the line or provide greater emphasis, while lines with fewer stresses (*understressed lines*) move the line along more smoothly. The use of many substitutions creates uncertainty or tension, while extremely regular lines can be placid or overly rigid. Occasionally, substituted feet will appear in groups which momentarily suggest an alternative meter. This effect does not appear visually on the metrical level of the scansion, but remains on the level of stress and non-stress. Substituted feet are labeled using the same terms that apply to metric feet (*iambic*, *trochaic*, etc.), but more labels are required, since the number of possible distinct patterns of stress and non-stresses is larger than the number of viable metric feet.[13]

The prevailing meter for "Anthem for Doomed Youth" is *iambic* (weak-strong). Examining the pattern of stresses, we see that two lines are completely regular (lines 6-7), and that half of the poem's fourteen lines—lines 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11, and 13—are either regular or deviate by only a single unstressed (*pyrrhic*) foot. No other prevailing meter, when applied to this poem, results in even a single such line. In at least three places (line 1: "as cattle"; line 3: "the stutter" and "-id rattle") an extra syllable requires the use of an *amphibrach* (weak-strong-weak) foot on the metric line, since triple feet cannot otherwise be

[13] Below are listed the most common labels for substituted feet. Both the noun and adjective versions of the term are given, along with their corresponding patterns of stress and non-stress. Note that, of these labels, only iambs, trochees, and (occasionally) the triple feet are viable possibilities for metric organization: iamb(ic): weak-strong; trochee (trochaic): strong-weak; spondee (spondaic): strong-strong; pyrrhus (pyrrhic): weak-weak; dactyl(ic): strong-weak-weak; anapest(ic): weak-weak-strong; amphibrach(ic): weak-strong-weak; cretius (cretic): strong-weak-strong; bacchius (bacchic): weak-strong-strong.

shown in a prevailing duple meter. In two of these instances, the *amphibrach* occurs in the final foot of a line. This position is frequently altered in such a manner to allow for the interplay of strong and weak line endings.

Although not all of the substituted feet contribute in any significant way to the thematic expressivity of the poem, several instances are worthy of comment:

1) The *amphibrach* at the end of line 1 reinforces the question mark by forcing a pause in the poem's unfolding. There is no comfortable way to read through line 1 to line 2 without a pause, since the added final syllable disrupts the metric weak-strong pattern, requiring a hesitation to supply a silent accent before beginning line 2 with its metrically weak (though rhythmically strong) syllable. The *amphibrach* also has the effect of separating out the question line from its answer in lines 2-4.

2) The *trochaic* substitutions on the word "only" in lines 2 and 3 cause these lines to begin more forcefully than the surrounding lines. Like the weak ending of line 1, these *trochees* effect a separation of the question and the answer. The sharp initial attacks reinforce the rhetorical heightening of emotion in these lines arising from the personification of "guns" and "rifles."

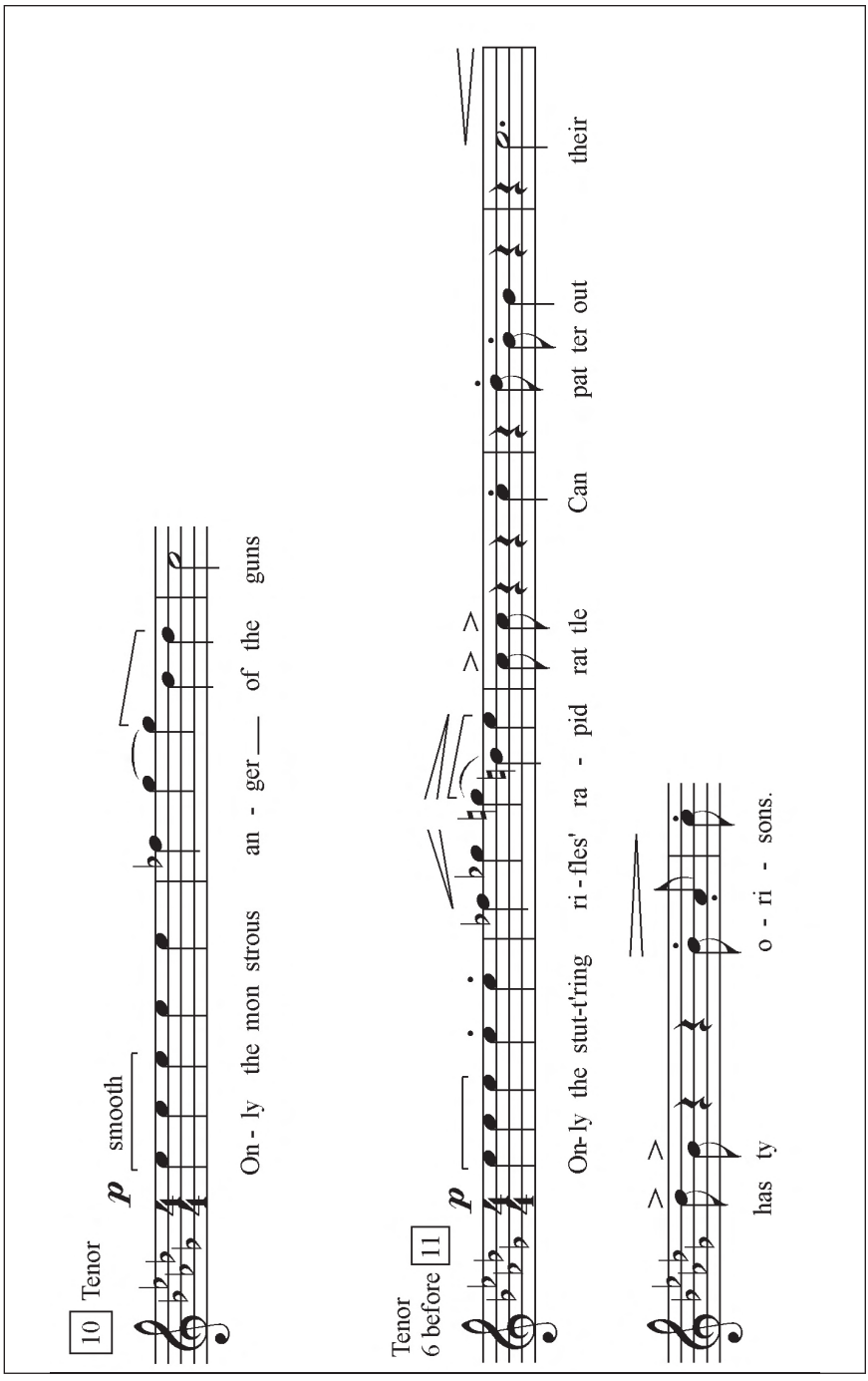
3) The striking episode of extended onomatopoeia in lines 3 and 4 discussed above has a crucial rhythmic component. In effect, the substitutions in these lines create a marvelous moment in which the poetic rhythms imitate musical rhythms—the pattering of the "hasty orisons." The enjambment at the end of line 3 causes lines 3-4 to be heard as one unit, which Owen exploits by creating a drum pattern out of the interplay of triple and duple patterns of stresses. Although this pattern generally adheres to the prevailing meter, especially toward the end of the pair of lines, the effect can be more clearly seen by displaying the stress pattern as a musical succession, with the stressed syllables functioning as the strong portions of individual beats. Notice how the alliteration, assonance, and repeated "tt" sounds enhance the word-painting in this passage:

(triplet) (triplet) (triplet)
1 & a 2 & a 3 & 4 & 5 & a 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 5
On-ly the stut-ter-ing ri-fles rap-id rat-tle can pat-ter out their ha-sty o-ris-ons.

Figure 3: The drum-pattern rhythm in lines 3-4

Although the resultant five-beat "musical" meter is a bit unusual, the initial stress in line 3 and the triple substitutions clearly contribute to the sound-effect realized by trope, sentence, line, rhetoric, diction, and theme.

Britten, in setting the line, both exploits and rejects this poetic rhythmic device. As with the text alone, the vocal phrase at first exhibits an alternation of triple and duple meter, but the succession is slightly different. The word "stuttering," a triple substitution in the poem, is compressed to "stutt'ring" and sung on two quarter notes, which sound duple in relation to the previous quarter-note triplets. On the other hand, the duple foot "rapid" is set to a quarter-note triplet, adding an extra triple unit that was lacking in the poetic stress. The musical rhythm of line 2 thus creates the following succession of subdivisions of the half note: 3 + (2) + 2 + (3) + 2. The numbers in parentheses indicate where the subdivisions contradict the poetic stress pattern. The overall effect is slightly more irregular, or unstable, than the pattern in Figure 3, which initially groups triple and duple units into pairs. The vocal phrase corresponding to line 3 obscures the poetic stress patterns to an even greater degree, due to the presence of rests inserted in an irregular manner throughout the phrase. The syllabic spasms that result nevertheless reflect the spirit of Owen's text even as it departs from the particular devices emphasized by the poem. Britten has chosen another, more exaggerated, approach to illustrating rifle fire by imitating its apparently random composite rhythm. This passage is an excellent example of how music and poetry can achieve convergent aims with divergent means (Example 7).



Example 7: Britten's setting of lines 2-3

4) In three instances, *spondaic* (strong-strong) substitutions slow the pacing of the poem, resulting in greater emphasis and emotional weight. In each case, the *spondees* occur near the end of a formal unit, concentrating the reader/listeners' attentions on those moments. The first instance concludes the final line of the octave ("sad shires"), the second appears in line 12—the first of three final lines featuring atypical regularity of phrase ("girls' brows"), while the third is found in the poem's final line, joining with the previous foot to display three consecutive stressed syllables ("each slow dusk"). This latter instance is clearly a moment of word-painting, since we hear the slowness of each dusk in the rhythmic slowing of the line.

5) Like lines 2-3, line 10 features the response to a question posed in the previous line, and, as in the earlier case, a *trochaic* substitution at the beginning of the line (on the word "not") sets off the answer from the question while simultaneously emphasizing the force of the denial suggested in the text. The *pyrrhic* substitution later in the line has the opposite effect of pushing the line's momentum forward to "eyes" the delayed true object of the sentence.

In each of the above five examples, substitutions reinforce and confirm the effect of poetic devices from other categories.

The musical realization of a text can significantly influence perception of that text's metric and rhythmic patterns. Because music has its own such paradigms, musical rhythm and meter create a further layer of temporal patterning that interact in complex ways with poetic rhythm and meter: the two can mutually reinforce each other, or one can mitigate the effect of the other. Alternately, both might project partially independent patterns through which one or the other will increase or recede in the listener's awareness. Composers frequently try to be sensitive to the poetic meter and succession of stresses unless there are good reasons to supersede them (as, for example, when motives are recalled for associative purposes that fit imperfectly with the stress patterns of the text). However, this is not always a simple matter—realizing

poetic meter through an exact correspondence with musical meter or setting stressed syllables in the same way can lead to a sort of metrical-rhythmic doggerel that is as unpleasant as its poetic counterpart. Instead, one frequently sees a variety of musical strategies used to project the stress and metric pattern of a text when such is desired.

The beginning of Britten's setting of "Anthem for Doomed Youth" is a good example. In the first section of the piece (Rehs. 9-13), Britten is very careful to bring out the stress patterns of the text without being formulaic. In the first line (see Example 2), the stress on the first syllable of "passing" is realized through its location on a strong beat and through the unusual emphasis given by the short-long rhythmic unit. The word "bells," by contrast, is held for three beats and overlaps the barline, providing that word with agogic emphasis. The word "these" is gently emphasized by a stepwise ascent (by contrast with the phrase's beginning) and by the relative metrical strength of the third beat of the measure. The melisma on the word "die," the first of its kind in the phrase, gives that word a particular force, after which the climax on "**cat**-tle" receives a strong metrical accent and a *sforzando* marking and is followed by an extreme registral leap. Thus, five distinct musical devices are employed in this first line to convey the poem's pattern of stresses. Although metric accent contributes to some degree to this process, the metrical feet are not aligned precisely with the measure boundaries or with the musical metric pattern. As a result, the line achieves a pliability and naturalness that is characteristic of Britten's style. The same approach might be taken with any of the phrases in the first section. In the second section (Rehs. 13-16), as indicated above, a careful attention to projecting the natural stresses gives way to the demands of musical association—the melodic lines here are derived from the earlier boys' choir passage, which occasionally rub against the natural stresses. Two such moments are the melismatic emphases given to the weak final syllables of "tenderness" in line 13 and "drawing" in line 14.

Although meter and rhythm are perhaps the most elusive poetic elements to grasp intellectually, their interplay is among the most viscerally obvious to the listener. In "Anthem

for Doomed Youth," we feel the ebbing and flowing of energy through the poem as the gradual *accelerando* and drum patter of lines 1-4 give way to the slow regularity of lines 5-8, the hesitation of lines 9-11 and the poignant *ritardando* in lines 12-14. Since these divisions of the poem also figure in its formal organization, the preceding discussion forms a useful segue into a summary of stanza and rhyme.

Stanza and Rhyme: This category is concerned with the grouping of lines in a manner analogous to musical form. This can be accomplished in several ways: (1) through organization into *stanzas*—"a group of three or more lines, usually with a fixed rhyme scheme, that is repeated more than once"(Kinzie, 463)[14]—or some other paradigmatic arrangement of lines (such as a sonnet, which, though not composed of stanzas, involves a small number of complex rhyme schemes and a shift in emphasis, tone, or theme after lines 8 or 9 that divides the poem into two unequal parts); (2) through an *end-rhyme scheme* based on using the same sounds for the final accented syllable of groups of two or more lines in a particular pattern; (3) through the manipulation of *line lengths* as determined by the number of feet per line; and (4) through the interplay of *strong and weak line endings* as determined by the presence or absence of a metric accent in the line's final syllable. Any or all of these techniques may be present, and each contributes to the articulation of meaning and to the overall effect of a poem.

"Anthem For Doomed Youth" is a sonnet, and therefore lacks stanzaic organization. The sonnet's typical thematic and formal division into two unequal units can, however, be found here. The division into 8 + 6 (or, with the rhyme scheme, (4 + 4) + 6) lines is articulated in this case through sentence and rhetoric (a question followed by an answer appears in lines 1-8 and 9-14), through theme and trope (aural symbols give way to visual images beginning in line 9), and rhyme scheme

[14] Stanza labels reflect the number of lines per stanza. In ascending order from a two-line stanza to an eight-line stanza, some of these labels are couplet, tercet, quatrain, cinquain, sestet, and octave..

(see below). Additionally, the two sections of the poem have a similar energic curve, with complex sentences and rhythmic variety being answered by simpler sentences and a rhythmic slowing. This curve engenders, through isomorphism, a dramatic progression from outrage and bitterness to resignation and hopelessness. Interestingly, Britten's formal divisions slightly diverge from Owen's stanza divisions. He replaces the 8 + 6 pattern with a 9 + 5 pattern. The effect is to place both question lines (1, 9) in the first section, allowing the answer to the final question to have its own musical coloring.

The rhyme scheme of "Anthem" [*abab cdcd effegg*], in which identical small-case letters stand for lines in the same end-rhyme group, both reflects the thematic-formal divisions of the poem and directs their degree of momentum. The two four-line groupings of alternating lines correspond to the first question-and-answer sequence (lines 1-4) and to a subsequent sentence (lines 5-8) which adds detail, focus, and context to the previous grouping. The alternating rhyme scheme of these eight lines establishes a moderate level of connectedness between lines: adjacent lines are not grouped as closely together or as distinctly as an *aabb ccdd* scheme, but are not as complexly interconnected and globally encompassing as an *abba cddc* scheme. This pacing of the rhyme scheme is most thematically relevant in comparison to the pacing of the final sestet (*effegg*). The sestet's interspersed rhyme scheme is more effective than an alternating scheme in support of the reiterated phrases in lines 13 and 14, and it ties together a larger number of lines—the pattern is not completed after four lines, but extends through six lines, an effect which causes the listener to suspend closure for a longer period, increasing the level of tension and anticipation.

"Anthem" does not make use of varying line lengths as an expressive feature, although two other Owen poems used in the *War Requiem*, "Futility" and "Strange Meeting," use a small number of *reduced lines* to articulate formal stanza boundaries or to provide emphasis at key moments. "Anthem" is one of many poems that uses a constant number of feet per line, in

this case five, the most common line length in English. The Greek terms *dimeter*, *trimeter*, *tetrameter*, *pentameter*, *hexameter*, *heptameter*, etc. are used to indicate the prevailing line length of a poem. "Anthem" is, therefore, said to be written in *iambic pentameter*, in that its prevailing meter is the *iamb* and its prevailing line length is five feet per line. Since this poem does not feature any change in the line length from beginning to end, the parameter functions more as a global organizing principle than as an expressive element, although its regularity does contribute on some level to the inexorability of the poem's impact.

Finally, "Anthem" makes nearly continuous use of *strong endings*—endings of lines accompanied by a metical accent. This is a consequence of the prevailing meter, since *iambic* feet end with a accent. Such endings place the weight of the line at the final syllable, as opposed to *weak endings*, which feature an unaccented syllable at the line ending, and which, therefore, evoke a subtler effect. We have already mentioned the pair of instances—lines 1 and 3—in which Owen uses weak endings in place of strong endings. The latter ending, on the word "rattle," participates in the drum pattering of lines 3 and 4, while the former sets off the initial question from the answer.

The preceding analysis, which serves as an introduction to our element-by-element approach to poetic texts, can be adapted for class lecture or discussion, using "Anthem for Doomed Youth" as an example piece to illustrate the relevant concepts. Because the analytical project encompasses a large conceptual terrain, a summary of pertinent questions to be addressed by students is given below in Figure 4.

Theme:

1. Expand on the meaning of the poem
   –What is the poem about?
   –What is its central message?
   –What historical or biographical context is needed to understand this text?
   –Does the text have hidden or implicit meanings?
2. Continuously attempt to discern links between particular uses of the other elements and the poem's theme

Line:

3. Look for caesuras and for instances of enjambment
   –What are the effects of these occurrences?
   –Is there a reason why one or the other was used?
4. Look for significant half-meanings

Sentence:

5. Look for uses of syntactic inversion
   –What words were emphasized?
   –Why was this technique used?
6. Look for other unusual sentence types (interrogatives, imperatives, fragments, etc.)
   –What effect does this usage have?

Diction:

7. Examine the use of concrete, abstract, monosyllabic, and polysyllabic words in the poem
   –How does this reflect the theme?
   –Is more than one style found in the poem (such as the use of a coarse word out of context, or a conflict between two thematic "worlds")?
   –What is the effect of these usages?
8. Look for significant instances of alliteration, assonance, adnomination, and onomatopoeia
   –What is the effect of these word choices?
9. Look for passages that emphasize bright or dark vowels
   –What does this emphasize in the poem?
10. Examine the stylistic register(s) in which the poem is written
    –What are the implications of this usage?

Figure 4: Summary of topics for poetry analysis

Trope:

11. Examine the objects, concepts, images, etc. used in the poem with respect to their tendency to suggest other meanings
    –How do these meanings reflect, reinforce, or work against the theme(s) of the poem?

Rhetoric:

12. Describe the persona of the poem, the relationship of the persona to the poet and his/her message, and the apparent audience
13. Describe the level of involvement of the persona in the unfolding of the poem and the means by which this is conveyed
    –Is the persona objective? passionate? flamboyant? removed?
    –How does this influence the theme of the poem?
14. Indicate the nature of the poetic discourse
    –Does it resemble a drama, a lyric description, a narration, a philosophical argument, an oration, etc.?
15. Describe the temporal frame of the poem
    –Is it static or does it change?
    –How does this influence the theme of the poem?

Rhythm and Meter:

16. Scan the poem: use the actual stress pattern to determine the prevailing meter
    –Where do the stresses work against the metric pattern?
    –How are these substitutions significant with respect to the theme or to other parameters of the poem?

Stanza and Rhyme:

17. Determine whether or not the poem is organized into stanzas and, if not, whether there are non-stanzaic formal divisions within the poem (based on traditional formal types or rhyme patterns
    –How do these stanzas or rhymed groupings reflect a meaningful division of the poem with respect to theme, trope, or other parameters?
18. Determine the end-rhyme scheme, the number of feet per line, and the use of masculine or feminine endings
    –How do these elements contribute to a more comprehensive organization of the poem (with respect to theme, trope, etc.)?

Figure 4: Summary of topics for poetry analysis *(Continued)*

Analyses of poetic texts should be followed by a treatment of the music independent of the text using whatever methods are considered appropriate, by a discussion of the historical and stylistic context of the work under discussion, and, most importantly, by an examination of the ways in which musical details reinforce, contradict, highlight, ignore, alter, or in some way inflect the characteristics of the poetic texts. Some examples of this latter process have been described above, although such insights are better achieved in the classroom after a separate study of the music itself has been undertaken. In this way, the relationship between the poetic and musical details can be informed by a thorough appraisal of each aspect taken separately before they are brought together. By way of methodological summary, we observe that certain musical elements are more likely to remain relatively unaffected by translation into a musical medium, while others are strongly dependent on the composer's distinctive setting. The various degrees of analytical integrity can roughly be organized into three categories:

1. *Sentence*, *diction*, *trope*, and *rhyme*: Unless the composer chooses to omit portions of the poem, to add interpolated material, or to change the ordering of that material, these elements will be least affected by any musical setting. A complex sentence is complex, no matter how it is set to music. The poet's choice of words will still be manifested clearly in most musical settings, as will the inherent symbolic relationships that exist. The primary role of the composer in shaping these elements is one of calling greater or lesser attention, of minimizing or maximizing their impact. For example, Britten uses melodic word-painting techniques to highlight particular verbal images in his setting of "Anthem for Doomed Youth." The word "prayers" is sung to a motive that alternates pitches a tritone apart, both evoking an association to melismatic chant and foregrounding the tritone as the primary symbolic embodiment of the sacred in the *War Requiem*.

2. *Theme* and *rhetoric*: The composer has a greater freedom to adjust these elements than was the case with the three in the first category, although essential elements of the poet's original conception are likely to remain. Here a composer can not only minimize or maximize thematic and rhetorical effects, but can also suggest alternate readings, even to the extent of contradicting the poetic analysis. For example, a composer might choose to employ associative techniques in a vocal accompaniment that cast doubt on the veracity, sincerity, or reality of the sung text, even if this layer of meaning was not present in the original poem. Likewise, a persona can be made, through musical stylistic associations, to possess a different or altered set of characteristics than those established by the poem. Such extreme alterations are not necessarily common, but they are possible theoretically. On the other hand, the composer can emphasize thematic or rhetorical aspects of the poem through the choice of musical setting. In the case of "Anthem for Doomed Youth," Britten allows the passionate involvement of the persona to emerge clearly even in the melody of the first poetic line, which strains upward by step through the small registral compass of a tritone—again, the symbolic association is deliberate—pausing excruciatingly on a brief ascending melisma on the word "die," before violently closing the phrase on an explosive descent of a seventh on the world "cattle." Here Britten uses musical techniques to underpin and support the rhetoric of the poem.

3. *Line*, *rhythm*, *meter*, and *stanza*: These elements are most susceptible to alteration by the composer, since they partake most of the shared temporality between music and poetry. It is difficult, and probably undesirable, to retain every original effect of line, rhythm, meter, or stanza, since important musical effects involving melodic association, vocal phrase shaping, formal patterning, and dramatic development may take precedence. As a single example, consider Britten's melodic fidelity to Owen's rhythmic and metric patterns in "Anthem for Doomed Youth." With respect to the significant drum-patter rhythm set up by Owen in lines 3-4, Britten generally follows Owen's lead. Through all of line 2, he faithfully

conveys the triplet/duplet pattern indicated in Figure 3 above, in one case expanding Owen's intention by adding an extra melodic syllable to the word "rapid," turning it from a duplet into a triplet, and compressing the word "stuttering" into "stutt'ring," creating the opposite effect. Britten clearly intended to highlight the sound-imagery first suggested by Owen. In line 3, however, Britten went his own way, although the effect is similar. Instead of retaining the rhythmic-metric regularity of the original, Britten actually foregrounded the word-painting in line 4 to an even greater degree by introducing pauses and syncopations into the melodic line so as to suggest the "hasty orison" indicated by the text. On the other, in the contrasting formal section of the setting (Reh. 9 to 7 mm. after Reh. 15), Britten largely eschewed the rhythmic patterns of the poetic text. His setting of lines 10-14 at first seem willfully skewed, with unusual stresses appearing on the weak final syllables of "glimmers," "tenderness," and "drawing," until it is discovered that Britten transplanted previous melodic material to evoke an association: the melody derives from the earlier boys' choir passage "Te decet hymnus," and he evoked not only a symbolic link between the performing forces of the choral passage and the boys in the poem, but also a poignant association between the previous text—"all flesh shall come before thee"—and the implied fate of the memorialized victims of the Owen poem. As a final note, it is also interesting to observe that Britten contradicted the formal division of the sonnet into 8 + 6 lines by placing his contrasting section after line 9. The effect of this change, however, is to use the interrogatives in lines 1 and 8 as a framing device for the A section, rather than as the initiating gesture between two different section. As a result, the final response in lines 10-14 achieves a special emphasis through being set in a more abstract, hieratic style than was the case with the passionate emotionalism of lines 1-9.

The *War Requiem* is a work rich in potential for exploring the relationship between text and music, and I have found it useful for introducing students to the intricacies and details of

poetic analysis as described above in an effective and engaging way. Instructors who wish to make use of this approach may choose to use other pieces as befits their goals, while still reaping the benefits of a nuanced, multifaceted analysis of poetic texts bequeathed to us by our sister discipline.

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