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Introduction

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ABSTRACT:

KEYWORDS: lyric community; shareability; individuation; indexicality; identification; translation; conviviality; sociability

Rethinking Lyric Communities

Introduction

IRENE FANTAPPIÈ, FRANCESCO GIUSTI, AND LAURA SCURIATTI

In listening as in speaking, both meaningfulness and meaning are at stake. To trace the lines of reciprocity through which they are established is to map a social space, a community.

Lyn Hejinian, 'Who Is Speaking?'¹

SHAREABILITY

In 1935, W. H. Auden opened his introduction to the anthology *The Poet's Tongue* with the oft-quoted words: 'of the many definitions of poetry, the simplest is still the best: "memorable speech"'.² From Sappho onwards, a defining feature of poetry in the Western tradition appears to be the availability of its language for repetition. This availability is particularly relevant for lyric poetry, both in the long history of the genre and in the current theoretical debate. Where the former is concerned, it suffices to think of the direct exchange of poems in a call-and-response dynamic in the Middle Ages, or the writing of sonnets

1 Lyn Hejinian, 'Who Is Speaking?', in *The Language of Inquiry* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), pp. 30–39 (p. 38).

2 W. H. Auden, 'Introduction', in *The Poet's Tongue: An Anthology*, ed. by John Garrett and W. H. Auden (London: Bell & Sons, 1935), pp. v–xxxiv (p. v).

in a poetic code shared across Europe for centuries in transnational Petrarchism. Lyric poetry, moreover, was employed in premodern times to build or strengthen several kinds of communities: ones of poetic filiation, social positioning, political grouping, religious bonding, affective engagement, and spiritual connection. According to W. R. Johnson, among others, lyric has lost its communal dimension in Western modernity, and for Virginia Jackson, the lyricization of poetry in the nineteenth century implied its reduction to ‘the genre of the person’ with its identification as the utterance of an individual.³ Yet modern and contemporary lyric poetry seems to have retained certain linguistic and rhetorical features that make it particularly shareable, as well as certain premodern modes of circulation and transmission, as is apparent, for instance, from the dissemination of poetry through social media in recent years, especially in the context of episodes of collective action and political resistance.⁴

Introducing the last chapter, titled ‘Lyric and Society’, of his influential 2015 book *Theory of the Lyric*, Jonathan Culler challenges Theodor W. Adorno’s claim that lyric poetry, in its utopian force, offers resistance to the language of commerce and alienation, as well as Jacques Rancière’s declaration that ‘the poet belongs to politics as one who does not belong there, who ignores its customs and scatters its words.’⁵ For Culler, the very fact that a lyric poem is meant to be repeated by different readers in a variety of contexts implies that it can be put to very different uses and enlisted in conflicting ideological projects. Whether in relation to the circulation of poetic forms across different languages and traditions globally, to the envisioning of local,

3 W. R. Johnson, *The Idea of Lyric: Lyric Modes in Ancient and Modern Poetry* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982); Virginia Jackson, *Before Modernism: Inventing American Lyric* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2023), and see also her previous *Dickinson’s Misery: A Theory of Lyric Reading* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2005).

4 For a comprehensive study of the circulation and use of poetry in the European tradition from ancient Greece to the Renaissance, see Derek Attridge, *The Experience of Poetry: From Homer’s Listeners to Shakespeare’s Readers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019). For an analysis, within a Rancièrian framework, of the use of poetry in the famous case of the Gezi Park protests, see E. Attila Aytekin, ‘A “Magic and Poetic” Moment of Dissensus: Aesthetics and Politics in the June 2013 (Gezi Park) Protests in Turkey’, *Space and Culture*, 20.2 (2017), pp. 191–208.

5 Jonathan Culler, *Theory of the Lyric* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015), pp. 296–97.

national, and transnational discourse communities, or to the negotiation of poetic filiations and social positions, lyric poetry has in recent years offered a favourable site for enquiry into community formation and its politics. Various theoretical approaches have cast poetry in this distinctive role, from French and French-oriented political philosophy (exemplified in the famous exchange between Maurice Blanchot and Jean-Luc Nancy begun in the 1980s) to the re-evaluations of poetry's roots in orality and performance in reader-response criticism and post-colonial and decolonial studies.⁶ Opening up the discussion to include non-Western traditions, this volume explores the possible relationships between lyric, community formation, and society at large, as well as asking whether lyric poetry might contribute, if not to the reformation of society, then at least to the formation of (minority, resistant) communities. Such communities may be based on the circulation and reperformance of particular poems and poetic codes, or on the representation and enactment of specific communities and collectivities within single poems or poetic corpora.

Commenting on the way of being together in the events of May 1968, Maurice Blanchot wrote in his *Unavowable Community*:

It was not even a question of overthrowing an old world; what mattered was to let a possibility manifest itself, the possibility — beyond any utilitarian gain — of a being-together that gave back to all the right to equality in fraternity through a freedom of speech that elated everyone. Everybody had something to say, and, at times, to write (on the walls); what exactly, mattered little. Saying it was more important than what was said. Poetry was an everyday affair. 'Spontaneous' communication, in the sense that it seemed to hold back nothing, was nothing else than communication communicating with its transparent, immediate self, in spite of the fights, the debates, the controver-

6 Maurice Blanchot, *The Unavowable Community*, trans. by Pierre Joris (Barrytown, NY: Station Hill Press, 1988); Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Inoperative Community*, trans. by Peter Connor and others (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991); Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Disavowed Community*, trans. by Philip Armstrong (New York: Fordham University Press, 2016). On the antecedents to this discussion, see Nikolaj Lübecker, *Community, Myth and Recognition in Twentieth-Century French Literature and Thought* (London: Continuum, 2009). For a critique of the loss of collective frameworks in Derrida, Lyotard, and Nancy based on literature by writers of North African immigrant origin, see Jane Hiddleston, *Reinventing Community: Identity and Difference in Late Twentieth-Century Philosophy and Literature in French* (London: Legenda, 2005).

sies, where calculating intelligence expressed itself less than a nearly pure effervescence (at any rate an effervescence without contempt, neither highbrow nor lowbrow).⁷

In this passage, Blanchot links the manifestation of the possibility of being together to the possibility of saying, and this in turn to poetry as an everyday affair. Poetry, for Blanchot, has to do with spontaneous communication, with the very possibility of communicating, beyond the use of language as a means of conveying specific messages. Community formation has been described variously, in different fields, as being based on mutual identification among individuals as members of an imaginary group; on communal systems of knowledge, values, and beliefs; on shared interpretive strategies and responses to culturally selected objects; on joint goals or interests; and on collective affects and moods.⁸ However, with his idea of a spontaneous coming together, Blanchot seems to be pointing to a form of community that precedes or temporarily escapes an identity to be shared by its members, such as a knowledge system, an interpretive strategy, an interest, a position, or a practice.

Blanchot's suggestion was the basis for the two workshops that led to this volume, held at the Christ Church Research Centre (Oxford) on 23 June 2022 and at the ICI Berlin Institute for Cultural Inquiry on 5 July 2022. These two workshops aimed to bring the investigation of historical poetic communities into dialogue with theories of community and recent developments in the theory of the lyric. While discussing a variety of phenomena in modern European poetry that have been at the centre of the critical debate — the poetics of the frag-

7 Blanchot, *Unavowable Community*, p. 30.

8 Sara Ahmed, 'Collective Feelings; or, The Impressions Left by Others', *Theory, Culture & Society*, 21.2 (2004), pp. 25–42; Sara Ahmed, 'The Skin of the Community: Affect and Boundary Formation', in *Revolt, Affect, Collectivity: The Unstable Boundaries of Kristeva's Polis*, ed. by Tina Chanter and Ewa Plonowska Ziarek (New York: SUNY Press, 2005), pp. 95–111; Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, rev. edn (London: Verso, 2006); Roberto Esposito, *Communitas: The Origin and Destiny of Community*, trans. by Timothy Campbell (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2010). For historical overviews of feminist debates on community, see e.g. Kathryn Gleadle, 'The Imagined Communities of Women's History: Current Debates and Emerging Themes; A Rhizomatic Approach', *Women's History Review*, 22.4 (2013), pp. 524–40; *Feminism and Community*, ed. by Penny A. Weiss and Marilyn Friedman (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 1995).

ment, the obscurity or polysemy of language, Blanchot's and Nancy's unworking (*désœuvrement*) of the work, Jacques Rancière's change of aesthetic regime⁹ — the workshops also explored the lyric, in its longer history and transnational features, as a particular mode of discourse that may offer alternative models of community formation. The Oxford workshop also included a conversation with the poet Vahni Anthony Capildeo; the Berlin workshop concluded with an evening event with Christian Hawkey, Daniel Tiffany, and Capildeo, who read a selection of their poems and offered their reflections on poetry, community, and translation.¹⁰

The volume includes six chapters by participants in the workshops (Derek Attridge, Philip Ross Bullock, Jonathan Culler, Francesco Giusti, Peter D. McDonald, and Laura Scuriatti), with the addition of four chapters by scholars who became involved in the research project at a later stage (Toby Altman, Hal Coase, Sabine I. Gözl, and Wendy Lotterman). The volume closes with a conversation between the editors and Vahni Anthony Capildeo about community formation and a communal dimension in general in their poetic practice and theoretical reflection. Bringing the investigation of historical poetics into dialogue with lyric theory and debates on community formation, this volume explores a set of fundamental questions. What is it that makes the lyric particularly shareable? How was (or is) it actually shared in its social and cultural contexts? What kind of community formation did (or does) it enable, facilitate, or envision? How are communities formed by the ways in which the texts are shared? How are these communities shaped and imagined through dialogues between poets, sometimes centuries apart from one another? And finally, can similarities in these phenomena be traced across languages, epochs, and traditions?

9 Jacques Rancière, *The Politics of Aesthetics: The Distribution of the Sensible*, trans. by Gabriel Rockhill (London: Continuum, 2004); Jacques Rancière, *Dissensus: On Politics and Aesthetics*, trans. by Steven Corcoran (London: Continuum, 2010); Jacques Rancière, *The Flesh of Words: The Politics of Writing*, trans. by Charlotte Mandell (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2004); Jacques Rancière, *Politics of Literature*, trans. by Julie Rose (Cambridge: Polity, 2011).

10 *Poetry, Community, Translation*, staged reading and discussion with Vahni Anthony Capildeo, Christian Hawkey, and Daniel Tiffany, moderated by Irene Fantappiè, organized by Irene Fantappiè, Francesco Giusti, and Laura Scuriatti, 5 July 2022, ICI Berlin Repository <<https://doi.org/10.25620/e220705-1>>.

INDEXICALITY

One of the main ways in which lyric poems make themselves repeatable, and thus shareable in each 'now' of reading, is through their use of indexicals: from pronouns such as *I*, *you*, *this*, and *that*, to spatial and temporal adverbs such as *now* and *then*, *here* and *there*.¹¹ Through the open referentiality of indexicals, lyric poems allow for their reperformance by different individuals in a variety of contexts. As Bonnie Costello writes in her book on the poet's use of the first-person plural *we*, 'poetic address can be considered as practice or paradigm, then, for social and ethical engagement'.¹² Looking at the ambiguous use of *you* in a range of texts from songs sung at sporting events to lyric poems from Petrarch to John Ashbery, Jonathan Culler's opening chapter discusses how the *you* 'can implicate the reader, as addressee of the poem, but when the reader voices the poem, can also evoke others, singular or many, as well as serving as a general pronoun',¹³ and warns us against taking it as a given that the formation of lyric communities is inherently good. Indeed, through circulation in their historical context and transhistorical transmission, poems can also iterate and crystallize perspectives and values around which readers can coalesce to the exclusion of others.

Towards the end of his chapter, Culler introduces Sabine I. Gözl's investigation, also included in this volume, of the ways in which Baudelaire's 'L'Invitation au voyage' invites its readers to iterate and thus ratify a masculinist perspective on a feminized *you*, and how this 'misogynist poetics of control' is repaired in Edna St Vincent Millay's 1936 retranslation, 'Invitation to the Voyage'. For Gözl, the two poems present not only two different poetics but also two radically divergent subject positions and ways of reading. If the textual strategies of a poem tend to close the referentiality of its indexicals by defining the

11 Indexicality in lyric poetry has been studied extensively, focusing on different periods, traditions, and phenomena; it also plays an important role in Culler, *Theory of the Lyric*. On its relation to diction, see Daniel Tiffany, 'Lyric Poetry and Poetics', in *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020) <<https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190201098.013.1111>>.

12 Bonnie Costello, *The Plural of Us: Poetry and Community in Auden and Others* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2017), p. 66.

13 Jonathan Culler, 'Lyric Address and the Problem of Community', in this volume, p. 28.

characteristics of its *I* and *you*, a subsequent translation or rewriting can reopen them and redefine its boundaries of inclusion and exclusion. The poetry of Mina Loy, as Laura Scuriatti's chapter illustrates, also makes use of various forms of textual instabilities — from multilingualism to shifting pronouns — to propose 'a feminist stance that refuses participation in patriarchal or oppressive forms of togetherness, aiming instead to imagine possible alternatives'.¹⁴ Engaging with the question of shareability, Francesco Giusti proposes a notion of gesture, developed from Bertolt Brecht, Walter Benjamin, and Giorgio Agamben, that links the deictic power of language deployed by the lyric to the reperformance of cultural gestures. Poems preserve gestures as 'suspended' actions, and readers can turn those gestures into actions by performing them in their own context — or refuse to do so. These gestures available for repetition open up the potential for the formation of what Giusti dubs 'gestural communities' — a form of community that is not based on pre-established identities.

IDENTIFICATION

The association of the lyric *I* with a specific identity has been strongly contested, not only in the various forms of experimental poetry of the twentieth century but more recently in poetic practices that, while not fully rejecting the lyric as such, question the very premise of a presupposed individuation. If the seeming openness of the first person singular that appears to be a dominant characteristic of the lyric can invite readers to occupy that position, it is also true that it tends to be associated with a relatively defined identity in the tradition; this has prompted poets and critics to question both the processes of community formation associated with the form and the types of community thus produced or invoked. Virginia Jackson, for example, has recently argued that 'lyricization', as a way of reading developed in the nineteenth century, relied upon the merging of different forms of address 'into one big genre of address associated with the genre of the person rather than with the genre of the poem', and that the type of

14 Laura Scuriatti, 'Mina Loy's Interrupted Communities', in this volume, p. 136.

subjective expression made possible or denied by this process involved the erasure of racialized subject positions and voices.¹⁵

On the other hand, (Anglo-American) modernist poetics tended to reject the kinds of individuation and subjectivities associated with earlier and traditional lyric forms, and also to rethink modes of reception. This involved debates about the role of poetry and its dialogue with selected groups or a broader public — a choice which was also connected to concerns about the waning of the ‘legitimacy of poetry’ in post-World War I society.¹⁶ Questions of reception also involve the kinds of institutions in the public sphere that make circulation and reception possible: particularly in the early twentieth century, little magazines, informal publications, and salons became fundamental vehicles for the circulation of poetry and for the creation of receptive audiences and communities of readers, generating widespread debates about the desired and suitable audiences for experimental modernist poetry.¹⁷ Sociability, conviviality, and the type of conversations cultivated in salons have not only been practised by poets but also evoked in poetic texts as spaces where (utopian) literary or lyric communities were possible. In their chapters, Philip Bullock and Laura Scuriatti explore the significance of the practices of conviviality, illegal gatherings, and salons in the Soviet Union of the Khrushchev Thaw and in Anglo-American modernism respectively, pointing to the potential political impact of poetry (and music) in the public sphere.

Modernist authors who were interested in poetry’s interventions in the public sphere initiated debates about the relationship between genres of modernist poetry and the different types of voices and situ-

15 Jackson, *Before Modernism*, pp. 3, 9–10.

16 David Ayers, ‘Modernist Poetry in History’, in *The Cambridge Companion to Modernist Poetry*, ed. by Alex Davis and Lee M. Jenkins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 11–27 (pp. 12, 23).

17 For accounts of some of the debates concerning the types of audiences envisaged for modernist poetry in the American and transatlantic context in the 1910s, see Ezra Pound and Harriet Monroe, ‘The Audience’, *Poetry*, 5.1 (October 1914), pp. 29–32; David Ben-Merre, “‘There Must Be Great Audiences Too’ — *Poetry: A Magazine of Verse*”, *Modernist Journal Project*, esp. section 3 (n.d.) <<https://modjourn.org/there-must-be-great-audiences-too-poetry-a-magazine-of-verse/>> [accessed 9 March 2024]. Whenever they address community, these debates do so mostly indirectly, as they are centred on the role of poetry and poets in societies marked by crises, rather than on technical questions such as those concerning lyric subjects, address, or iteration.

ations of address,¹⁸ as well as on the status of poetry with respect to history and science. According to Peter Nicholls, this led to a shift to types of poetics based on a ‘partial and strategic dissociation of the poet from the poem’ and a rejection of expressivism (as exemplified by T. S. Eliot’s 1919 essay ‘Tradition and the Individual Talent’), inaugurating a tradition in which ‘partial self-effacement’ and the presence of ‘personae’ coexist with models based on the poet’s subjectivity.¹⁹ Mina Loy’s poems and her essays on poetry complicate the possibilities of these choices by playfully deploying modernist fragmentation, polyglossia, and poetic personae in order to create spaces for a non-normative feminist voice in relation to the types of communities that would make such a voice possible. As Scuriatti shows, Loy’s celebration of polyglossia, her multilingual poetics, and her affirmation of a gendered perspective may partially adhere to modernist cosmopolitan aesthetics or specific early twentieth-century feminist projects, but her poems produce mobile forms of identification and affiliations to ephemeral, interrupted communities.

INDIVIDUATION

A scepticism or even radical suspicion of community, which exposes the ways in which the concept has also been made to stand for rigid, crystallized, and sometimes conservative or exclusionary approaches to commonality and shared identification, is at the heart of the poetic practices of the poets Simone White and Carl Phillips, discussed here by Wendy Lotterman and Hal Coase. Comparing White’s 2016 collection *Of Being Dispersed* with George Oppen’s 1968 poem ‘Of Being Numerous’, Lotterman’s contribution investigates the rejection of a process of individuation that excludes the social life of racialized individuals and subjects, and proposes a crucial distinction between Oppen’s ‘numerousness’ and White’s ‘dispersion’ as two incommensurable conditions. Coase’s chapter turns its attention to queer critiques of community and analyses Carl Phillips’s poem ‘Hymn’, mobilizing the

18 See e.g. T. S. Eliot, ‘The Three Voices of Poetry’, in *The Lyric Theory Reader: A Critical Anthology*, ed. by Virginia Jackson and Yopie Prins (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014), pp. 192–200.

19 Peter Nicholls, ‘The Poetics of Modernism’, in *Modernist Poetry*, ed. by Davis and Jenkins, pp. 51–67 (p. 51).

idea of ‘counterintimacies’ proposed by Lauren Berlant and Michael Warner, whose 1998 essay ‘Sex in Public’ programmatically attempts to rethink the notion of community to account for the practices and shared experiences of gay people in the public space.²⁰ Berlant and Warner’s substitution of ‘community’ and ‘group’ with ‘world’ and ‘public’, as Coates shows, makes it possible to avoid the ‘identitarian alignment of a community’,²¹ and to conceive of a more mobile, open, and ‘messier’ coming or being together. If the notion of community seems to presuppose pre-existing identities that can come together or an identity that subsumes individual practices, the queer poetics of Phillips’s lyric explores instead ‘the erotics of waiting for a future collectivity.’²²

Another form of criticism of the nineteenth-century understanding of the lyric and its association with a specific form of subjectivity is discussed by Toby Altman, addressing the problematic origins of the (lyric) subject as theorized by John Stuart Mill in relation to capitalism and colonial imperialism, and thus participating in critical discourses which aim at rethinking the status and social role of the lyric in history. Altman shows that Jen Bervin’s 2008 artist book *The Desert* reflects on the modern subject’s roots in the appropriation and exploitation of land — and therefore ultimately in property. Bervin sewed over parts of the reprinted text of John C. Van Dyke’s *The Desert: Further Studies in Natural Appearances*, an account of his travels through the desert in the American West between 1898 and 1901, creating a poetic work made of certain words in Van Dyke’s text that have been left unsewn. According to Altman, this process and the ensuing work disrupt the lyric by restoring the social world of its material production and communal labour, as well as contesting its imbrication in colonial practices of land use.

The forms and reception of lyric poetry produce communities that are textual, as well as being determined by and anchored in reading practices and marked by identification, iteration, and public perform-

20 Lauren Berlant and Michael Warner, ‘Sex in Public’, *Critical Inquiry*, 24.2 (1998), pp. 547–66.

21 Hal Coase, ‘Lyric, Detachment, and Collectivity: On Carl Phillips’s “Hymn”’, in this volume, p. 237.

22 *Ibid.*, pp. 256–57.

ance. The unquestioned operations behind the canonization of specific works, as well as the habits associated with specific practices of reading and reception, can produce communities that are potentially exclusionary. While, in Altman's analysis, Bervin's *The Desert* exposes the exploitative implications of the lyric subject in nineteenth-century American poetry, Gözl approaches this question from the perspective of reparative translation with a focus on the situation of address and the figure of apostrophe in love poetry. Baudelaire's poem 'L'Invitation au voyage' ('Invitation to the Voyage'), according to Gözl, creates not just an object marked as a 'feminized other' but also a pattern of iteration which implies a default alignment between the iterator and the opposite of that 'other' — a practice that, once again, would point to a kind of community that is both marked by an exclusionary notion of identity and imbricated in power and subjection. It is a pattern which erases the feminine perspective and subjectivity — a pattern which Edna St Vincent Millay's retranslation of the poem, Gözl argues, repairs through a reconfiguration of indexicals in the translated text.

TRANSLATION

If iterability is a core feature of the lyric, lyric is intrinsically intertwined with translation: the very fact that a poem is meant to be repeated by different readers in a variety of contexts triggers processes of transformation, retransformation, and 'manipulation' of the text in other languages.²³ The idea of translation itself presupposes an understanding of the text as transferable and thus sharable between different social and cultural environments. When texts are particularly shareable, as in the case of lyric poems, translation significantly contributes to the formation of communities across time and space.

How does translation shape a community? In recent decades, translation studies has strongly questioned the notion of equivalence.²⁴ Translation, one might therefore argue, generates communities which cannot, and do not intend to, be equivalent to the 'original' one. The circulation, transmission, and reuse of lyric

23 *The Manipulation of Literature: Studies in Literary Translation*, ed. by Theo Hermans (London: Routledge, 1985).

24 See e.g. Theo Hermans, *The Conference of the Tongues* (London: Routledge, 2007).

poems is unpredictable. Even if produced in particular contexts, they can be reperformed across generations, put to other uses, and bent to very different purposes, as exemplified here by Peter D. McDonald's exploration of the case of the songs composed by Rabindranath Tagore, which became the celebrated national anthems of India and Bangladesh despite his radically anti-statist vision of community. On the other hand, in their transnational circulation, verses written in Spanish by Federico García Lorca were translated into Russian and reused as lyrics for music produced in the underground or unofficial culture of the Soviet Union in the Khrushchev Thaw. Bullock explores how composers, including Sofia Gubaidulina and Alfred Schnittke, established transnational lyric communities through their engagement with avant-garde circles in Western Europe, and examines their experimentation with a cosmopolitan range of literary texts and a radical musical language.

The impossibility for a translation to be equivalent to its 'original' does not necessarily imply a loss. As David Damrosch has argued, a text can 'gain' in translation, and this 'gain' can be intended in a variety of ways.²⁵ For instance, translation can be reparative, as Gözl shows in her analysis of Millay's retranslation of Baudelaire. Repairing a poem also means creating the possibility of sharing it with another community — a community that has a different, and more inclusive, understanding of textual gender mechanisms.²⁶ A text can also gain in translation in terms of recognition (in general or within a specific community, as Bullock shows).

More generally, lyric comes to readers and poets with a significant degree of prestige that is linked to its language(s), and can be used to generate forms of exclusion and control as well as to engender cultural and social respect. The lyric — as much as it can induce readers to reproduce entrenched perspectives without questioning them — can also become a space in which minority languages and ways of speaking usually associated with lack of education can find a status more usu-

25 David Damrosch, *What Is World Literature?* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003).

26 See Emily Apter, 'Afterword: Towards a Theory of Reparative Translation', in *The Work of World Literature*, ed. by Francesco Giusti and Benjamin Lewis Robinson (Berlin: ICI Berlin Press, 2021), pp. 209–28 <https://doi.org/10.37050/ci-19_09>.

ally associated with the great poets of a particular tradition. As Derek Attridge shows, the publication of lyric poetry in Kaaps, the language spoken by the coloured community of the Cape Flats, can be instrumental in advancing the status of the language, not only when it is read by members of the community in which it is produced, who can identify with it as a form of protest but also as a source of pride, but even more so when it is read by middle-class white Afrikaners, who may be invited ‘to see themselves as part of a much larger Afrikaans-speaking population and to value the cultural productions of places such as the Cape Flats.’²⁷ Language issues are also crucial when it comes to the lyric expression of multiple personal and social identifications, as shown by Scuriatti’s investigation of how Mina Loy’s multilingual coinages, together with her use of pronouns, produce extremely complex and mobile clusters of communities.

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27 Derek Attridge, ‘Lyric Poetry and Community Good: Kaaps and the Cape Flats’, in this volume, p. 169.

Irene Fantappiè, Francesco Giusti, and Laura Scuriatti, 'Rethinking Lyric Communities: Introduction', in *Rethinking Lyric Communities*, ed. by Irene Fantappiè, Francesco Giusti, and Laura Scuriatti, *Cultural Inquiry*, 30 (Berlin: ICI Berlin Press, 2024), pp. 1–13 <https://doi.org/10.37050/ci-30_00>

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