Book Illustration in the Long Eighteenth Century: Reconfiguring the Visual Periphery of the Text

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CHAPTER FOUR

TRANSITIONAL FIGURES:
IMAGE, TRANSLATION, AND THE BALLAD
FROM BROADSIDE TO PHOTOGRAPH

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No genre was more central in reflecting the changing cultural priorities of Europeans during the long eighteenth century than that of the ballad. The ballad was where readers came to tell time—to feel historical—in more complex ways than they ever had before.[1] It was a potent force for political protest and popular entertainment, an indicator of the way the popular was always political. The ballad was also a contentious site of textual collection, a place where the rules through which one assembled and archived a nation's literary past were codified and contested.[2] And the ballad was at once a dependable anthropological witness, a palpable sign of the nature of culture, and an engine of social improvement, a key cultural technology for cultivating the growing numbers of general readers.[3] The ballad was an indication of a bygone era of communal poetic creativity as well as a new mediator between the stratification of high and low culture. More recently, we have begun to address the significance of the ballad's own mediality, the way it served in the eighteenth century as an important written testimony for a variety of oral communicative

[1] Susan Stewart, "Notes on Distressed Genres", *Journal of American Folklore* 104:411 (1991), 5-31; Winfried Woesler, ed., *Ballade und Historismus* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 2000); and Maureen N. McLane, "The Figure Minstrelsy Makes: Poetry and Historicity", *Critical Inquiry* 29:3 (2003), 429-52.
[2] Andrew Piper, "Processing", in *Dreaming in Books: The Making of the Bibliographic Imagination in the Romantic Age* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 85-120.
[3] Steve Newman, *Ballad Collection, Lyric, and the Canon: The Call of the Popular from the Restoration to New Criticism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007).

practices, practices which were, according to eighteenth-century commentators and collectors, gradually being superseded by the growing saturation of reading.[4] The ballad was, in the eighteenth-century, a relief image or photo-negative of the new widespread *writtenness* of modern culture.

In this essay I want to return to the mediality of the ballad, to its material presence in the world, but I intend to do so in a way that critics have too often circumnavigated. Despite the wealth of research on the orality of the ballad, and in particular the way the collecting craze that settled in after (and even before) Thomas Percy was driven by an attempt to repress the printedness of ballads,[5] contemporary readers of ballads have consistently overlooked the important role that the *image* played in shaping the genre's history.[6] In our efforts to wrestle with the actual and constructed nature of ballad performance, we have disregarded precisely the act of looking that was so central to the reading of ballads, whether as broadside or book.

The ballad, I will suggest, served as a pivotal site of intermediality in the eighteenth century, registering the changing fault lines between the practices of reading and seeing that had been in constant motion since the illuminated medieval manuscript.[7] Populated by a host of transitional figures, the ballad functioned as a key tool for learning how to *translate* between lectoral and visual experience in relation to print objects. In its gradual evolution over the course of the eighteenth century from the medium of the broadside to that of the book, the ballad emerged not so much as a marker of absolute medial difference or equivalence, but instead as a handbook for learning how to move between different modes of

[4] Maureen McLane, "Ballads and Bards: British Romantic Orality", *Modern Philology* 98:3 (2001), 423-43; by the same author, "Tuning the Multi-Media Nation; or, Minstrelsy of the Afro-Scottish Border ca. 1800", *European Romantic Review* 15:2 (2004), 289-305; and Philip E. Bennett and Richard Firth Green, eds., *The Singer and the Scribe: European Ballad Traditions and European Ballad Cultures* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2004).
[5] Paula McDowell, "The Manufacture and Lingua-Facture of Ballad Making: Broadside Ballads in Long Eighteenth-Century Ballad Discourse", *The Eighteenth-Century: Theory and Interpretation* 47:2 (Summer 2006), 151-78.
[6] For a path-breaking work, see Tom Cheesman, *The Shocking Ballad Picture Show: German Popular Literature and Cultural History* (Oxford: Berg, 1994), although his study addresses works mostly after the period with which I am concerned here.
[7] On such visual/lectoral overlap and its connection to medieval reading practices, see Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 221.

mediated experience. It was precisely the widespread translatability surrounding eighteenth-century balladry more generally that made it such an effective vehicle to promote new models of intermedial cognition. Between the end of the seventeenth century and the middle of the nineteenth century—between the surge in print and the emergence of photography in other words—, the ballad came to register the way intermedial translation was increasingly inscribed at the core of the modern reading subject. To imagine reading images and seeing texts in terms other than simultaneity and equivalence was one of the principle projects of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century balladry.

In order to understand the way ballads and their illustrations changed as they moved from broadside to book, I will begin with a brief discussion of the nature of broadside illustrations from the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. The printing of broadsides did not of course subside with the rise of bookish collections in the eighteenth century. (Indeed, it was in many ways the *nineteenth* century that can be seen as the golden age of the broadside.[8]) My concern here is not with a longer history of broadsides, but rather with the more particular nexus of the ballad and the book.[9] I am interested in asking how the book changed the ballad as well as how ballads changed our understanding of reading books. Accordingly, I will be turning to the ballad revival that took place during the 1760s and 1770s in the wake of Percy's landmark collection project, focusing in particular on Gottfried August Bürger's *Lenore*, which would be repeatedly reprinted, translated, illustrated, and critiqued at various junctures in the coming ballad fever. Whether it was the balladic experiments of Goethe, Schiller, Coleridge and Wordsworth in the 1790s or those of Hugo and Nerval in the 1820s, *Lenore* was remarkable for its attractive (or repulsive) force as an item of poetic and visual inspiration.

The fortunes of *Lenore* have much to tell us about the categories of both media and translation in the eighteenth century and the way they extended well into the first half of the nineteenth century with the dawn of new image-making technologies such as lithography and photography. I am particularly interested in addressing how *Lenore* came to play a role in the career of Julia Margaret Cameron, one of the nineteenth century's most important photographers. Given that she would translate *Lenore* for an illustrated edition by Daniel Maclise, I want to explore at the close of my essay how this linguistic translation of one of the most illustrated ballads

[8] See Leslie Shepard, *The History of Street Literature* (Detroit: Singing Tree Press, 1973), 81.
[9] For a different context, see Tom Cheesman and Sigrid Rieuwerts, eds., *Ballads into Books: The Legacies of Francis James Child* (Bern: Peter Lang, 1999).

in the history of the genre served as a key precursor to Cameron's own subsequent photographic career, a career whose fame has come to rest in no small measure on the incredible degree of textuality that surrounded her image-making. There is a balladic poetics, I am suggesting, imbedded in Cameron's photographic aesthetic. In bringing into sharper relief this long history of balladry, book illustration and photography, my aim is to draw attention to the significance of "translatability" for understanding these by now canonical sites of modern reproducibility, photography and the book. Balladry, I hope to show, offers us a new thread in understanding the interwoven histories of the printed book and the photographic print,[10] drawing attention to the significance of their eighteenth-century legacy.

Before the Book

Broadsides were aptly named. Their breadth of circulation, not just their unfolded paginal surface area, was one of their most distinctive features. As in the German, *Flugblatt* or *Flugschrift*, unbound sheets of printed paper seemed to fly about. Paper was, and continues to be, a hard medium to control. There always seemed to be too much of it, embodied in the eponymous figure of the travelling news-seller whose exterior was overflowing with paper.[11] Broadsides were an insult to decorum, whether personal or social, a point no less true at the level of form. Consisting of a variety of early modern genres of sensationalism, including ballads, *gazettas*, *Famosschriften*, *pasquilles* and *libelles*, such formal heterogeneity was complemented by an equal admixture of the mediated kind. Broadsides combined text, image and song to form a potent multimedia *mélange*. They were not just carried about and peddled on the street, they were also performed there. Broadsides were formally, visually, and acoustically noisy. As eighteenth-century images of the *Bänkelsang* with

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[10] On intersections between the history of photography and that of the book, see: Carol Armstrong, *Scenes in a Library: Reading the Photograph in the Book, 1843-1875* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1998); Peggy Ann Kusnerz, ed., "Special Issue: Photography and the Book", *History of Photography* 26:3 (2002), 168-254; Andrew Roth, *The Open Book: A History of the Photographic Book from 1878 to the Present* (Göteborg: Hasselblad Center, 2004); Martin Parr and Gerry Badger, eds., *The Photobook: A History*, 2 vols. (London: Phaidon, 2004); and François Brunet, "Photography and the Book", in *Photography and Literature* (London: Reaktion Books, 2009), 35-62.

[11] Rolf Brednich, *Die Liedpublizistik im Flugblatt des 15. bis 17. Jahrhunderts*, vol. 2 (Baden-Baden: Koerner, 1975), fig. 135.

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its heterogeneous crowds attested,[12] the boundary-crossing inherent in broadsides at the level of form and medium traversed key lines of social distinction as well. The broadside was nothing less than the poetic proxy of the interactive space of the urban marketplace.

It was out of this performative milieu of attention seeking and unlicensed contact that broadside imagery first emerged. As scholars of broadside illustration have told us, one of the most elementary features defining the genre was that of repetition. "Ballad printing was an art of collage", writes Alexandra Franklin, "joining texts of old and new songs to woodcuts of various provenances ... Through repetition, the printers created an iconography legible to the ballad audience."[13] Alongside the idea of the *Schlagzeile* or headline, broadsides perfected the art of the *Schlagbild* or head-image, a visual cliché meant to seize (or assault) one's eye.[14] There was an element of pattern recognition to ballad imagery, as their emblematic and allegorical functions insisted on their being read as texts.

Tales of Robin Hood constituted a vast trove of ballad material, dating from some of the earliest broadsides at the outset of the sixteenth century well into the eighteenth century (for example in Thomas Bewick's illustrations to Joseph Ritson's 1795 edition of *Robin Hood*[15]). In the following two examples originating from the beginning of the eighteenth century that are taken from the ballad collection held at the Bodleian Library, we can see how some of the same woodcuts are used in two separate ballads, "Robin Hood's Golden Prize" and "Robin Hood's Chace" (Figs. 4.1 and 4.2). The more Robin Hood proliferated as a stable set of images, the more he became a visual icon, instantly recognisable and no different from popular ballad figures like *Infortuna* or *Frau Armut* for early modern readers. But we can also see how the principle of seriality at work here was inviting the reader's eye to perform similar visual and narrative tasks. The instantaneity of visual recognition was complemented by an episodic visual seriality.

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[12] See Wolfgang Braungart, *Bänkelsang. Texte, Bilder, Kommentare* (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1985).

[13] Alexandra Franklin, "The Art of Illustration in Bodleian Broadside Ballads before 1820", *Bodleian Library Record* 17:5 (2002), 329-31.

[14] Wolfgang Harms and Michael Schilling, eds., *Das Illustrierte Flugblatt der frühen Neuzeit. Traditionen – Wirkungen – Kontexte* (Stuttgart: Hirzel, 2008).

[15] Joseph Ritson, ed., *Robin Hood*, 2 vols. (London: Pickering, 1795).

Figure 4.1 *Robin Hood's Golden Prize* (17--). Douce Ballads 3 (121a). Courtesy of The Bodleian Library, University of Oxford.

Figure 4.2 *Robin Hood's Chace* (17--). Douce Ballads 3 (121b). Courtesy of The Bodleian Library, University of Oxford.

Whether it was an allegorical image of misfortune or poverty, a series of images of an infamous murder, or depictions of highly textualised bodies (Fig. 4.3), in broadside ballads readers read images when they saw or sung text. This point was no less true for single images in which numerous temporal levels of a ballad's action were arranged according to different spatial planes of the illustration.[16] The singularity of the broadside's surface argued for a synonymy between reading and seeing, a simultaneity that worked both intra- and intermedially.

Figure 4.3 *Speculum Hominis* (1645). Inv. Nr. II,336,11. Courtesy of the Kunstammlungen der Veste Coburg.

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[16] See for example "A New Song to drive away cold Winter, Between Robin Hood and the Jovial Tinker" (London: F. Grove, between 1623 and 1661). Bodleian Library Broadside Ballads Wood 401 (17).

Figure 4.4 *Bußfertige Beschreibung schwermütiger Gedancken/ vnd zaghaffter Weheklagung eines Armen Sünders gegen Gott* (1646/1655). HB 15068, Kaps. 1337. Courtesy of the Germanisches Nationalmuseum.

Even when we turn to a more complex illustration, such as the deathbed scene, "Bußfertige Beschreibung schwermütiger Gedancken/ vnd zaghaffter Weheklagung eines Armen Sünders gegen Gott [Repentant description of oppressive thoughts/ and fainthearted lamentation of a poor sinner against God]" (1646/1655),[17] we can see how these same integrative principles structure the visual and lectoral experience proposed by the broadside (Fig. 4.4, preceding). In this image, the human sinner is confronted by a range of personified virtues, marked in the image by their names, Belief (*Glaub*), Love (*Lieb*), Death (*Todt*), Conscience (*Gewissen*), and the difficult to see Hope (*Hoffnung*) and Patience (*Gedult*) in the background. At the same time, as was common for so much broadside imagery, earthly and heavenly planes are juxtaposed but also united. The rays of divine light reach down to the sinner's chamber just as the speech scrolls of this figure rise up to the heavenly realm. All eyes concentrate on a single point in the image, even as the textual artefacts unfurl out into the world. In the cosmological argument put forth by this and other broadsides, the possibility of coincidence of two separate dimensions of experience depends upon the dual techniques of the perspectival (the ray as the ultimate sign of point of view) and the textual (the speech scroll as a sign of an emphatic two dimensionality within the world). Indeed, one could argue that there is a causal linkage between these two medial registers. The high degree of textuality in the broadside, amplified by the biblical citation that adorns the headline, informs the visual fenestration that the broadside performs through its cosmological point of view. Seeing through and seeing all was not just tied to, but was a result of the seeing after of reading.

Ballad Translations

Reconstructing the ballad's rise as a bookish genre in the eighteenth century, the way the ballad sheet came to be sewn and serially bound, depends upon an understanding of a variety of overlapping translational practices that were themselves readily translated throughout the century. We can group such translational balladry into three fundamental strands, each of which marks a combined process of *de-* and *revisualisation*. The first strand can be defined as a move from the street to the stage. Beginning with John Gay's *Beggar's Opera* (1727), which was inspired by local London performances of Alain-René Lesage's *Le tableau du*

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[17] All translations are my own unless otherwise noted.

mariage (1716),[18] balladic airs began appearing in a number of ways in popular eighteenth-century theatrical genres like the vaudeville, *opéra comique*, or *Singspiel*. Works like Charles-Simon Favart's *Les deux jumelles* (1734) and Christian Felix Weiße's *Der Teufel ist los* (1752), an adaptation of Charles Coffey's *Devil to Pay* (1731), brought the social boundary-crossing of the broadside and *Bänkelsang* into the sociable space of the theatre. In the process, the visualisable object—whether as broadside illustration or *Bänkelsang* bill—was transformed into the media of song and corporal gesture. The unbounded street performance (one finds a litany of complaints about such town crying in the eighteenth century) was gradually enclosed within the confines of both theatrical space and form. The visuality of the ballad was transferred to the body and voice of the actor as a precondition of the ballad's elevation within the hierarchy of the arts (and of course the inverted pull of the much contested popularisation of the theatre in the eighteenth century). By the opening of the 1770s, the period that saw the composition and publication of Bürger's *Lenore*, there were over 100 new *Singspiele* published in the German states and performed in German theatres.[19] As a key example of the way lingual and medial translation criss-crossed in the genre's reconfiguration of visual experience, Goethe's ballad, "Erlkönig", an adaptation of Herder's translation of a Danish ballad that was fundamentally about the ambiguous status of an observed object, would serve as the opening of the former author's *Singspiel, Die Fischerin* (1782).

If the translation of ballads from street to theatre in the eighteenth century brought with it a shifting locus of visual attention (from paginal object to ambulatory human body), their translation into the space of the codex as historical collections brought with it a change of a different register. In place of the depiction of heroic action (pace Robin Hood or Martin Luther), ballad collections gradually came to emphasise the visualisation of writing itself, whether as manuscript source or musical notation. In the historicisation of the ballad that accompanied its appearance in books, there was an understandable turn towards the depiction not of the ballad's action but of its source. Whereas chapbook

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[18] Daniel Heartz locates a number of advertisements showing the performance of Lesage's work in London during the 1720s by travelling French troops. Gay would organise an entire scene around "Le Cotillon", which was one of the "dances" that accompanied *Le tableau du mariage*. See Daniel Heartz, *From Garrick to Gluck: Essays on Opera in the Age of Enlightenment*, ed. John A. Rice (Hillsdale, N.Y.: Pendragon Press, 2004), 179-80.

[19] Fritz Brüggemann, *Bänkelsang und Singspiel vor Goethe* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1967), 23.

collections like Cluer Dicey's *Robin Hood's Garland* (1754?) still contained traditional woodcuts for the headpieces of each of the ballads in the collection, by the time of Charles Delusse's *Recueil de romances historiques, tendres et burlesques* (1767), such mimetic ornaments had been replaced by depictions of the musical notation for the poem's performance (Fig. 4.5). (I will return to this all-important connection between the genres of ballad and romance.) Thomas Percy's emphasis in the preface to his *Reliques of ancient English poetry* (1765) that a manuscript served as the primary source of his collection and not printed broadsides was a crucial element of subsequent practices of eighteenth-century collection that relied upon theories of intermedial transfer (from song to handwriting to printed book).[20]

Figure 4.5 Page 17, Charles Delusse, *Recueil de romances historiques, tendres et burlesques* (1767). Courtesy of the Cotsen Children's Library, Department of Rare Books and Special Collections, Princeton University Library.

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[20] Percy writes: "The Reader is here presented with select remains of our ancient English Bards and Minstrels ... The greater part of them are extracted from an ancient folio manuscript." (Thomas Percy, *Reliques of ancient English poetry*, vol. 1 [London: Dodsley, 1765], ix.)

Figure 4.6 Page 117, Thomas Percy, *Reliques of ancient English poetry*, vol. 1 (1765). Courtesy of the The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations.

Such a theory of media translation was nicely rendered in the headpiece to Book Two of Volume One of Percy's collection, where we see the young boy orally performing the handwritten sheets of Shakespeare accompanied by the ubiquitous lyre (Fig. 4.6, above). The lyricisation of the ballad in the eighteenth century opened up a new intellectual battlefield, where competing claims of who was nearer to the oral sources of ballads became potent weapons in literary one-upmanship. The depiction of musical notation in Joseph Ritson's *Scotish Songs* (1794) would be a crucial element in his attacks on the "fraud, forgery, and imposture"[21] that surrounded the history of Scottish poetry. But such musical notation was also a key ingredient for the continued circulation of ballads, as musicians set the new wave of ballad adaptations to their own musical adaptations. Following a larger social trend, ballads and their inherent performativity had moved by the century's close from the street to the stage to the bourgeois drawing room. Songbooks, a staple of the expanding market in printed books around 1800, came to play a key role

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[21] Joseph Ritson, *Scotish Songs*, vol. 1 (London: Johnson, 1794), 67.

in the ballad's continued proliferation, as readers learned to look at books to hear music.[22]

The third and final strand of balladic translation occurred largely at the level of genre through the revival of "romance" in the eighteenth century, which served in a continental context as a proxy for the English ballad.[23] The editors of the *Gazette littéraire de l'Europe* wrote in a review of Percy's collection: "Les Anglais donnent le nom de Ballades à ces vieilles chansons que nous nommons Romances [The English give the name ballads to the old songs that we call romances]"[24]. François-Auguste Paradis de Moncrif's *Constantes amours d'Alix et d'Alexis* (1738) is marked as the first major instance of this revival, a move that owed much to Moncrif's interest in Luis de Góngora's adaptations of traditional Spanish romances. Indeed, there was a larger French sense of the Spanish origins of the romance. Already in 1718, the *Nouveau dictionnaire de l'Académie françoise* defined the word "romance" as: "Mot tiré de l'Espagnol, et qui signifie une sorte de Poësie en petit vers, contenant quelque ancienne histoire [A word taken from the Spanish and which signifies a kind of light poetry containing ancient history or narratives]"[25]. In Johann Wilhelm Ludwig Gleim's German romances of the 1750s, which would serve as the foundation of the ballad revival for the Göttinger Hain in the 1770s, the author would explicitly invoke Moncrif as his primary model, further underscoring the genre's Romance language origins.

The translational core of "romance" (which after all once meant nothing more than poetry in the vernacular) was further accentuated by collections like *Romanzen der Deutschen* (1774), whose frontispiece gestured back to the genre's origins in the *Bänkelsang* and whose opening preface drew attention to its formal origins in early modern Spanish

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[22] On the rise of songbooks around 1800, see Gillen D'Arcy Wood, *Romanticism and Music Culture in Britain 1770-1840: Virtue and Virtuosity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

[23] Walter Müller-Seidel writes: "Wer von der deutschen Ballade handelt, hat es immer auch mit der Romanze zu tun ... Aber die Romanze des 18. Jahrhunderts in Deutschland ist ohne bestimmte Vorbilder des Auslandes nicht zu denken. [Whoever treats the German ballad must address the Romance ... But Romance in eighteenth-century Germany is impossible to conceptualise without foreign models.]" (Walter Müller-Seidel, "Die deutsche Ballade. Umrisse ihrer Geschichte", in *Wege zum Gedicht*, vol. 2, ed. Rupert Hirschenauer and Albrecht Weber [Munich: Schnell und Steiner, 1964], 17-83.)

[24] *Gazette littéraire de l'Europe* 8 (15 janvier 1766), 233.

[25] See Heartz, *From Garrick to Gluck*, 189.

"coplas" or "sequndillas".[26] As critics have repeatedly pointed out, it was Friedrich Jacobi's translation of Gongora, *Romanzen, aus dem spanischen des Gongora* (1767), as much as Gleim's adaptations, that set the stage for the subsequent *Sturm und Drang* turn to the "ballad". Such Germanic adaptations of French adaptations of Spanish adaptations in the third quarter of the eighteenth century would then replay themselves with remarkable similarity in France during the later Romantic revival of the ballad. This time it was Abel Hugo's translation of Gongora, *Romances historiques traduites de l'espagnol* (1822), that set the stage for his brother Victor's initial experiments with the ballad, just as Abel's prose translations would themselves be translated subsequently into verse by Émile Deschamps in *Études françaises et étrangères* (1828).[27] Alongside such romance language revivals were of course balladic translations from the German: Edmond Géraud's "Lénore" in *La Ruche d'Aquitaine* (1827) appeared in the same year as Ferdinand Flocon's *Ballades allemandes, tirées de Bürger, Körner et Kosegarten* (1827).[28]

Whether at a medial, lingual or formal level, then, there was a vast translational context through which the ballad was conveyed to readers over the course of the eighteenth century and into the nineteenth. In each case, there was a gradual move away from the illustrative visual tradition of the broadside in favour of a more exclusive emphasis on oral performance, a trend that would then be reversed beginning in the 1790s with a number of subsequent illustrated ballad books in a new visual vein. Understanding this larger adaptive tradition surrounding the ballad in the eighteenth century should give us a better idea both of the specific innovations that informed Bürger's epoch-making *Lenore* and of the visual logic that then propelled its own subsequent adaptive fortunes. Bürger's ballad and later visual engagements with it can be read, I am suggesting here, as reckonings with the adaptive kernel of balladry more generally. The *Ur-Ei* of the ballad, as Goethe had called it, was not just the summation of all possible genres, it was also a generative seed of translatability itself.

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[26] *Romanzen der Deutschen* (Leipzig: Hertel, 1774), xviii.
[27] For a discussion of the balladic origins of French Romanticism, see Paul Bénichou, *Nerval et la chanson folklorique* (Paris: Corti, 1970).
[28] For a discussion of Romantic French ballad translations, see Christine Lombez, "La traduction des ballades anglo-saxonnes, germaniques et balkaniques en France à l'époque romantique", in *La ballade (XVIIIᵉ-XXᵉ siècles). Littérature savante, littérature populaire et musique*, ed. Judith Labarthe and Claudine Le Blanc (Nantes: Éditions Cécile Defaut, 2008), 75-94.

Lenore, or the Displacement of the Visual

Lenore was in many ways a perfect mirror of the larger translational practices that had surrounded the ballad in the eighteenth century. Beginning in the young woman's chamber at dawn and concluding in the young man's cabinet at midnight, the flight at the heart of the ballad was circumscribed by architectural enclosures. As in the logic of the *Singspiel*, the street was brought indoors. At the same time, as numerous critics have pointed out, there was a remarkable call to aural experience in this text. The ballad's repeated injunctions to listen, "Und horch! und horch! [And hark! and hark!]" (stanza 13), the proliferation of acoustic verbs such as *gurgeln, klingen, flattern, rasseln, prasseln*, and *sausen*, as well as the infamous use of onomatopoeia for the galloping horse (*trap trap trap, hop hop hop*, and *husch husch husch*), all produced a kind of aural affront on the reader (in place of the broadside's visual kind).[29] Rather than being shaped by the harmonious repetitions of song, Bürger's ballad depended upon a certain declamatory insistence.[30] As Wolfgang Braungart has remarked, *Lenore* served as a prime example of a new eventification of literature in the 1770s, a move away from a poetic model of *imitatio veterum* to one that was increasingly present and future oriented.[31]

Such poetic immediacy was part and parcel of one of the major functions of the poem, namely its challenge to religious direction. Lenore's inability to heed her mother's Christian advice to give up on her dead husband and the poem's repeated repurposing of the genre of the *Kirchenlied* were signs of the poem's radical "Diesseitsorientierung" or worldliness.[32] *Lenore* was not only a challenge to a particular theological world-view (or a world view as theologically understood). It was also a palpable challenge to a pictorial balladic tradition that had rested on the simultaneity of worldly and heavenly spheres as well as on the possibility of communication between the two (which we saw in the broadside death-bed scene). The ambiguous status of the bed in *Lenore*, as both marital and deathbed, as both here and there, was one small sign of a larger crisis of visual representation more generally in the poem.

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[29] All *Lenore* citations are from Gottfried August Bürger, *Gedichte*, ed. Jost Hermand (Stuttgart: Reclam, 1966), 3-10.
[30] See Emil Staiger, *Stilwandel. Studien zur Vorgeschichte der Goethezeit* (Zürich: Atlantis, 1963), 100.
[31] Wolfgang Braungart, "Ungesellige Geselligkeit. Bürger als Epigone seiner selbst", in *Geselligkeit und Bibliothek. Lesekultur im 18. Jahrhundert*, ed. Wolfgang Adam and Markus Fauser (Göttingen: Wallstein, 2005), 52.
[32] Winfried Freund, *Die deutsche Ballade* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 1978), 21.

The more closely one attends to the details of visual experience in *Lenore*, the more problematic this consensus about the thereness (the *Diesseitsorientierung*) at the heart of the poem becomes. It is precisely *deixis*—the problem of pointing—that I think emerges as one of the central concerns of the poem. In our insistence on the poem's call to sound, that poetry can call at all, we have overlooked the way the poem sees or, perhaps more importantly, does not see.

Take for example the first stanza after Lenore and Wilhelm have begun their ride (stanza twenty), lines which we know were added after Bürger began sharing his poem with members of the Göttinger Hain:

Zur rechten und zur linken Hand,
Vorbey vor ihren Blicken,
Wie flogen Anger, Heid' und Land!
Wie donnerten die Brücken!
"Graut Liebchen auch? – Der Mond scheint hell!
Hurrah! Die Todten reiten schnell!
Graut Liebchen auch vor Todten" –
"Ach nein! – Doch lass die Todten!"
[And see, to left, to right, with speed
Fly past them hamlet, town and mead;
They pass heath, valley, mountain ridge,
And thundering cross o'er many a bridge.
Fearest thou, sweet love? the moon shines clear;
The dead they ride in full career.
Dost fear, sweet love? "Oh! no", she said;
"But why, my William, name the dead?"][33]

The key element of the flight is the way that what is present to view is both spatially divided (the stereoscopic, "Zur rechten und zur linken Hand") and temporally superseded (the aftersight of "Vorbey vor ihren Blicke"). Such visual disrupture is then encapsulated in the tension between the chromatic blur underpinning the central verb of emotion, *grauen*, and the bright illumination of the moon ("Graut Liebchen auch? – Der Mond scheint hell!"). *Greyness*—the problematic distinction between black and white, but also between visual and aural experience in those thundering bridges—is the source of the observer's emotional insecurity. Not only the moon's light, but its distinct visual outline, are offered as compensation for the terror of the "grey".

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[33] The translation is taken from Julia M. Cameron, *Leonora* (London: Longman, 1847), unpaginated.

The description of the visual disorientation of the flight in stanza twenty will repeat itself again in stanza twenty-four with even greater intensity:

Wie flogen rechts, wie flogen links
Gebirge, Bäum' und Hecken!
Wie flogen links, und rechts, und links
Die Dörfer, Städt und Flecken!
"Graut Liebchen auch? – Der Mond scheint hell!
Hurrah! Die Todten reiten schnell!
Graut Liebchen auch vor Todten" –
"Ach nein! – Doch lass die Todten!"
[Fast flew to left, fast flew to right,
Each object as it came in sight;
The mountains, bushes, hedges flew,
All mingled in the hurried view.
"Dost fear, sweet love? the moon shines clear,
The dead they ride in full career.
Dost fear, my child?" "Oh! no", she said;
"But why not leave in peace the dead?"]

In contrast to stanza twenty, the verb of flight is detached here from the objects of sight through line breaks, where seeing is associated solely with the divided directionality of the observer's gaze ("Wie flogen rechts, wie flogen links ... Wie flogen links, und rechts, und links"). At the same time, the objects themselves merge into increasingly abstract units, from mountain peaks, trees and hedges, to villages, cities and the all-important "Flecken"—patches of ground but also visual blurs.

The blur-inducing "flight" will then come to a close in a similarly ambiguous set of arrivals and recognitions in stanza twenty-eight. "Wir sind, wir sind zur Stelle. – – – [We are, we are there. – – –]", we read as the doubled "we are" of this line, along with the repetitive use of the dash, serves to highlight the very ambiguity of predication and pointing that is the poem's "point": we are ... where? or what? When two stanzas later the narrator intones, "Ha sieh! Ha sieh! [Ha look! Ha look!]", in an explicitly deictic gesture, what we see is the gruesome image of the defleshed husband:

Huhu! Ein grässlich Wunder!
Des Reiters Koller, Stück für Stück,
Fiel ab, wie mürber Zunder.
Zum Schädel, ohne Zopf und Schopf,
Zum nackten Schädel ward sein Kopf;
Sein Körper zum Gerippe,

Mit Stundenglas und Hippe.
[What is this horrid ghastly sight?
All shivering falls the warrior's steel,
A skeleton from head to heel!
And as his flesh, so doth his hair,
All mouldering, leave a death skull bare;
His bony fingers, lean and lithe,
Clasp round an hourglass and a scythe.]

We see, in other words, the undoing of the very object of sight "in that place [zur Stelle]", as "Ha sieh! [Ha look!]" stands in place of the acoustically proximate phrase that we no longer hear (from stanza twenty-five), "sieh da! [look there!]". In place of the verb's spatial predicate "there", we have instead a word that now lacks semantic content, "Ha". Such undoing of visual apprehension will be classified by Bürger as "ein grässlich Wunder [a gruesome miracle]", where *grässlich* etymologically calls upon *grauen* (and *grausam*) and the "greyness" of vision at the heart of the poem.

The transformation of the husband from returning lover to harbinger of death—the affirmation of the long-held association between marriage and death—will occur not through metamorphosis or transubstantiation, but instead through a process of visual erosion. His skin is peeled back as the remaining skeleton, *Gerippe*, significantly carries an hourglass and sickle (*Hippe*), the signs of both time and *deixis* so common to traditional ballad imagery. But what is most significant about this conclusion is the way the defleshed husband will himself gradually disappear in the final dance of death of stanzas thirty-one and -two. The placedness of both skeletal stance and deictic sickle are replaced by the pivotal acoustic nouns of "Geheul" und "Gewinsel", a howl and a whimper ("Geheul! Geheul aus hoher Luft,/ Gewinsel kam aus tiefer Gruft [A howl! A howl from the air above,/ A whimper from the grave below]"). Sound and sight follow one another as the undoing of visual focalisation gives way to an acoustics of undifferentiated noise (and liminally human noises at that).[34] It is precisely the absence of the poem's visual *punctum*, to intentionally misuse Barthes' terminology, which emerges as its paradoxical point.

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[34] More could be said about the ambiguous acoustic identity of *Gewinsel*. Although I have translated it as "whimper", it is not the same as *Gewimmer*, which is the more direct Germanic manifestation of the same English noun. It is part of a family of words used to connote a low, whining lament. Perhaps more important than fixing its semantic content here is the way it echoes the undoing of the circular work of the *Gesindel* from stanza twenty-six whose song around the "spindle" dissipates into a vorticular wind (*Wirbelwind*).

Envisioning Lenore

Lenore thus emerged as a key index of a greater epochal shift surrounding the visualisation of reading poetry, from the stark contours of the iconographic *Schlagbild* of the broadside to the visual blur of the readerly imagination engendered by books. The specificity of visual representation, whether at the level of print illustration or linguistic metaphor, gives way in and after Bürger to a program defined by visual deficiency, to a fleeting sense of sensorial focalisation.

It is therefore all the more surprising that *Lenore* would serve as the starting point of a wave of ballad illustrations that began appearing in books at the end of the eighteenth century. Or is it? One suspects that it was precisely the visual vacuity of this ballad that served as one of the conditions of its overwhelming translation into visual form. Balladry emerges as a key textual inspiration for a new framework of visual representation precisely because it promotes the principles of adaptability and translatability upon which such illustrative practices depend. The former subordination of image to text in the broadside tradition—the extreme legibility of the *Schlagbild*—is not so much overturned by the primacy of the image in ballad books. Rather, it metamorphoses into a paradigm of blurring between visual and textual experiences.

In 1796 there appeared seven different renderings of *Lenore* into English by five separate translators.[35] Critics have tried to posit various reasons as to why this year proved so fruitful for translations of a German ballad into English, from the rise of the gothic (itself a Germanically-inspired genre) to English fears of French passion (where the Germanic serves as a continental proxy for all political things French).[36] However persuasive such arguments are about the generic or historical influences for understanding this rash of Bürger translations, it is important to remember how fundamental the category of translation was for the continued circulation of the genre of the ballad. However much Bürger translations were addressed to the moment, they were also participating in a much longer tradition of intercultural ballad circulation. One year later,

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[35] See Oliver Farrar Emerson, *The Earliest English Translations of Bürger's Lenore: A Study in English and German Romanticism* (Cleveland, OH: Western Reserve University Press, 1915), 10.

[36] Robert Lawson-Peebles, "Translation in Uncertain Times: The Case of Bürger's Lenore", in *Revolutions and Watersheds: Transatlantic Dialogues, 1775-1815*, ed. W. M. Verhoeven and Beth Dolan Kautz (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1999), 7-25.

three of these English translations of *Lenore* would be republished (in English) in a German edition printed in Göttingen.[37]

Figure 4.7 Frontispiece by William Blake, *Leonora: A Tale*, translated by John Stanley (1796). Courtesy of the Department of Special Collections, University of Tulsa.

The rash of translations of *Lenore* was significant not simply on linguistic grounds, but because it coincided with a new wave of illustrations of Bürger's work that often accompanied those works. In our attention to the interlingual, we have overlooked the role of intermedial translation in the circulation of texts during this period. William Blake would produce a frontispiece for the second edition of John Stanley's translation (Fig. 4.7, preceding), and Lady Diana Beauclerc designed four remarkable illustrations for William Spencer's large-format bilingual edition. It would indeed be Beauclerc's work, rather than Blake's, which in many ways established a visual vocabulary that strongly influenced subsequent renderings of the ballad. Blake's imagery had drawn heavily on the dyadic structure of heaven/earth so prevalent in broadside illustration (and his own poetry), something one could also find in Daniel Chodowiecki's illustration to the poem that had appeared in an edition of Bürger's works twenty years earlier.[38] In Blake, we see the horse and its riders serving as the new link between the human and divine, a function that had formerly belonged in broadside ballads to the devices of speech scroll or godly line of site. In that absurdly elongated horse of Blake's, one can see (in its echoes of the unfurling speech scroll) the extent to which this image argues for the significance of both linearity and cosmological contact.

Beauclerc's illustrations, by contrast, are notable for just how earthly they are. Not just in their dazzlingly realistic depiction of the horse (Fig. 4.8), but also in the way the vertical dyad of heaven and earth is traded in for a horizontal attention to one of fore- and background. There is a noticeable *defocalisation* of Beauclerc's backgrounds, something that is not all that easy to do with copper-plate engraving. The "atmospheric" that is on display here is an antagonist to the hard lines of the burin, something against which Blake would constantly rail,[39] but that would become increasingly popular with the new technique of lithography. Such attention to background atmospherics in Beauclerc is all the more interesting because of the way it is set against the other noticeable feature of her work, the repetitive corporal symbol of Wilhelm's pointing hand (Fig. 4.9).

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[37] Gottfried August Bürger, *Lenore. Ballade von Bürger. In drei englische Übersetzungen* (Göttingen: Dieterich, 1797).

[38] Gottfried August Bürger, *Gedichte. Mit 8 Kupfern von Chodowiecki* (Göttingen: Dietrich, 1778).

[39] As Blake would famously write: "Leave out the line and you leave out life itself." (William Blake, *A Descriptive Catalogue of Pictures: Poetical and Historical Inventions Painted by William Blake* [London: Shury, 1809], 65.)

Figure 4.8 Plate I, *Leonora*, translated from the German of Gottfried Augustus Bürgher, by W. R. Spencer, Esq., with designs by the right honourable Lady Diana Beauclerc (London: J. Edwards, 1796). Courtesy of the Klassik Stiftung Weimar, HAAB/Ngr 7670.

Figure 4.9 Plate II, *Leonora*, translated from the German of Gottfried Augustus Bürgher, by W. R. Spencer, Esq., with designs by the right honourable Lady Diana Beauclerc (London: J. Edwards, 1796). Courtesy of the Klassik Stiftung Weimar, HAAB/Ngr 7670.

As Michael Camille has suggested, the pointing hand was one of the more prevalent ways that medieval manuscript illustration drew attention to the orality of textual performance, itself drawing on an earlier Christian iconography of divine calling.[40] Michelangelo's work on the Sistine Chapel was one of the most famous instances of this divinely calling hand, a scene numerously reproduced in prints throughout the eighteenth century. In one sense, then, Beauclerc's imagery fit ideally into the oral scheme of Bürger's *Lenore*, as illustration pointed to the text's attention to the call of poetry. But when we consider the gesturing hand within the larger pictorial field of the image, we see how one of its primary functions is to draw attention to a deictic problem, the way it points to the problem of pointing. Whether it is the off-scene in image one, the hazy death march in image two, or the circling skeletons in image three (Fig. 4.10), in each of these images there is a more general problem of focus, an attention to the status or "place" of the blur, a problem dramatised across the images through the shifting position of Wilhelm's head, as it moves from left to right to left much like in Bürger's source text.

Figure 4.10 Plate III, *Leonora*, translated from the German of Gottfried Augustus Bürgher, by W. R. Spencer, Esq., with designs by the right honourable Lady Diana Beauclerc (London: J. Edwards, 1796). Courtesy of the Klassik Stiftung Weimar, HAAB/Ngr 7670.

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[40] Michael Camille, "Seeing and Reading: Some Visual Implications of Medieval Literacy and Illiteracy", *Art History* 8:1 (March 1985), 39.

The deictic uncertainty of Beauclerc's illustrations will reach its most extreme expression in the fourth and final image (Fig. 4.11), where we see Wilhelm transformed into a skeleton holding an absurdly large spear that points, not coincidentally, at the fainting (dying?) Lenore's cleavage, reinforced by the horse who has now also taken an interest. The sexualisation of an often bare-breasted Lenore would become a commonplace of Bürger illustrations (see below), and on one level the spear serves as the first in a long line of titillating imagery. But the insanely large spear is not so much a technological reproach against the deictic failures of the human hand (i.e. technology can point in a way that manual representation cannot). Rather, it seems to mark a critique of deictic desire, whether it belongs to visual technologies like engraving or poetic technologies like the ballad that turned on the young woman's transgressive desire to "see" her lost lover. Spears do not just point, they also pierce. The point of the spear is not to repair the hand's failed gesturing but to associate all such pointing with the act of dying. The *punctum* of the image is marked in both Beauclerc and Bürger as a moment of death.[41]

Figure 4.11 Plate IV, *Leonora*, translated from the German of Gottfried Augustus Bürgher, by W. R. Spencer, Esq., with designs by the right honourable Lady Diana Beauclerc (London: J. Edwards, 1796). Courtesy of the Klassik Stiftung Weimar, HAAB/Ngr 7670.

[41] For a discussion of a greater Romantic attention to such defocalised looking, see Brad Prager, *Aesthetic Vision and German Romanticism: Writing Images* (Rochester: Camden House, 2007), 59f.

Figure 4.12 Frontispiece, *Leonora*, translated from the German of Gottfried Augustus Bürgher, by W. R. Spencer, Esq., with designs by the right honourable Lady Diana Beauclerc (1796). Courtesy of the Klassik Stiftung Weimar, HAAB/Ngr 7670.

Beauclerc's rendering of Bürger's poem thus draws attention to the double problem of visual pointing encoded in book illustration. Where does the textual illustration point? To the text or to its imaginary referent? In both cases there is a problem of thereness imbedded in the practice of "illustration" that Beauclerc's work poignantly draws out, nowhere more pronouncedly on display than in the illustrator's frontispiece, a giant image of a veil (Fig. 4.12, above). The initiatory illustration to *Lenore* is almost nothing more than a vast white space, a blank page, but one that can be filled-in by the simulation of the heroine's name written in script.

The frontispiece usurped the visual iconography of dedicatory leaves that were coming into vogue in books around this time,[42] positioning the reader's relationship to the poem within an affective economy of mutual exchange (underwritten of course by the technology of the handwritten proper name). The manuscriptural standing-in for print in the (printed) frontispiece would be repeated in the end-pieces as well, where veils, either natural or fabricated, partially cover over typographic representations of the protagonists' proper names.

Figure 4.13   Page 1, *Die Ballade der Lenore. In zwölf Umrissen von Johann Christian Ruhl* (1827). Courtesy of the Klassik Stiftung Weimar, HAAB/Ngr 30659.

Beauclerc's imagery is thus marked by a potent combination of *deixis* and obfuscation, of pointing and *not* looking, a feature that would come to inform a variety of later visual adaptations of the poem. Not only would the veiled bedroom scene of Lenore's awakening (the recognition of the absence of her lover) be coupled with that dramatic gesturing hand as the

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[42] Andrew Piper, "The Art of Sharing: Reading in the Romantic Miscellany", in *Bookish Histories: Books, Literature, and Commercial Modernity, 1700-1900*, ed. Paul Keen and Ina Ferris (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 126-47.

poem's starting point (Fig. 4.13, preceding). A concluding scene of veiled eyes and bared breasts would also serve as a common visual cue in shaping readers' relationship to the ballad (Fig. 4.14, below).

20   LÉNORE.

Et maintenant , que Dieu fasse grâce à ton âme !

Ton corps est délivré.

Figure 4.14   Page 20, "Lénore", *La Pléiade: Ballades, fabliaux, nouvelles et légendes* (1842). Courtesy of the Klassik Stiftung Weimar, HAAB/N58111.

At stake was always an indulging in, and then repudiation of, a certain thereness that served as the precondition of the erotic gaze in the poem. Like Beauclerc's oversized spear that conclusively rejected the aspirations of the pointing hand, it was the demonic status of the grasping hand, seen here in Moritz Retzsch's rendition (Fig. 4.15, below), which was to serve as a basic cautionary tale to readers. Unlike seventeenth-century broadside illustrations with their insistence on the simultaneity of textual and visual space—the fundamental graspability of the broadside as a whole—in bookish ballad illustrations the reader's eye, both inner and outer, was being trained to attend to a visual and medial elsewhere.

Figure 4.15   Page 5, *Umrisse zu Buergers Balladen von Moritz Retzsch* (1840). Courtesy of the Klassik Stiftung Weimar, HAAB/N 22674.

The visuality of such bookish ballad illustrations depended not so much on a poetics of equivalency as on one of excess, given that the despecification of ocular focus drew attention to the possibility of translation into another domain. It drew attention, in other words, to translation rather than simultaneity, to a medial, paginal, and temporal movement that was predicated on a fundamental feature of surplus.

Whether it was Beauclerc's atmospherics, Retzsch's demonic grasping hand, or a host of subsequent French ballad illustrations that revolved around the vaporous,[43] ballad imagery after 1800 persistently grappled with the question of visual possession. It constituted a potent array of imagery that asked after the anti-indexicality and transitionality of technologically reproducible works of art. In this, such imagery would serve as an important, and largely overlooked, precursor to the emerging medium of photography.[44]

Coda: The Birth of the Photograph from the Spirit of Ballad Translation

In 1847 there appeared on the literary market another illustrated edition of Bürger's *Lenore*, translated into English by a certain Julia M. Cameron with illustrations designed by Daniel Maclise. Accounts of Cameron's life usually mention the translation, but most often only in passing, coming as it does fifteen years *before* the beginning of her engagement with photography. Little is known about this episode in her life, but according to biographers it is likely that it was a product of Cameron's correspondence with John Herschel, with whom she was exchanging letters about the new art of photography and who likely helped arrange the publication of the translation while she was living in Calcutta. Cameron was studying music and German at the time and her daughters had moved away from home. *Lenore* was, so the story goes, ideal material to reflect on her experience of maternal loss.[45]

In bringing into view Cameron's work as a translator, I am interested in drawing attention, in only the most preliminary of strokes here, to the ways that these overlapping sites of translation, balladry and the book could have served as significant sources of visual inspiration for her later

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[43] See the illustrations to Sébastien Rhéal, *Les divines féeries de l'Orient et du Nord: légendes, ballades, gazals, romances, myriologues, petits poèmes* (Paris: Fournier, 1843) and to Joseph Autran, *L'an 40: ballades et poésies musicales* (Marseille: Lejourdan, 1840).

[44] For an important account of this nexus of print and photography, see Stephen Bann, *Parallel Lines: Printmakers, Painters, and Photographers in Nineteenth-Century France* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001). Bann however remains within an intra-art-historical framework that my work aims to complement through attention to the textual and translational sources of photographic practice.

[45] See Kirsten A. Hoving, "'Flashing thro' the Gloom': Julia Margaret Cameron's 'Eccentricity'", *History of Photography* 27:1 (2003), 45-59.

photographic work.[46] Not only did Cameron's translation emerge out of her correspondence with Herschel, which we must remember revolved principally around the new invention of photography (Herschel sent Cameron a number of calotypes). The translation also belonged to one of the most visually famous texts of the nineteenth century. A translation of *Lenore* was not a translation of just any text. It was an engagement—at the most intimate interpretive level—with *the* landmark work of nineteenth-century intermediality, a book that had passed through all available visual styles of bibliographic illustration, including copper-plate frontispieces, outline drawings, marginal illustrations, wood-end vignettes, and lithography. Cameron's translation of *Lenore* invites us to reflect on the extent to which her subsequent photographic work can be read as part of a longer continuum of interest in and inspiration out of the diverse representational practices that belonged to book illustration and linguistic translation.

Today, we are more and more accustomed to ask after photography's textual origins—to study its shared graphic legacy with the medium of writing. Henry Fox Talbot's photographic fac-similes or Dominique François Arago's promotion of photography as an ideal medium to record textual inscriptions on architectural ruins were two of the more prominent examples of just such an influence.[47] For Cameron in particular text would play a key role in her development as a photographer, from the large number of textual sources for her images, to the prevalence of inscriptions that accompanied her photographs, to the central place of the book as a medium of either photographic exchange (the album) or photographic object (pictured readers). It is significant, for example, that the print that she considered her "very first success in Photography" (of Annie Philpot), was not only inscribed with these exact handwritten words, but another print of the same image was then placed in an album next to a mounted piece of paper that was a handwritten letter from Annie to her father.[48] Her

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[46] This project is thus envisioned as an addition to recent work that has tried to rewrite our understanding of the birth of photography in Cameron's life. See Victoria C. Olsen, *From Life: The Story of Julia Margaret Cameron and Victorian Photography* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), and Joanne Lukitsh, "Before 1864: Julia Margaret Cameron's Early Work in Photography", in *Julia Margaret Cameron: The Complete Photographs*, ed. Julian Cox and Colin Ford (Los Angeles: Getty Publications, 2003), 95-105.

[47] See Dominique François Arago, "Report of the Commission of the Chamber of Deputies", in *Classic Essays on Photography*, ed. Alan Trachtenberg (New Haven: Leete's Island Books, 1980), 17.

[48] Cox and Ford, *Julia Margaret Cameron*, 112-3.

"first success" was framed, in other words, by the textual work of the pencil, no doubt in homage to Fox Talbot's first book of photographs, *The Pencil of Nature* (1844).

And yet despite this growing understanding of photography's textual origins, the place of translation—precisely the practice needed to move from text to image—remains surprisingly overlooked. Why was it the case that one of the most influential theorists of photography's origins, Walter Benjamin, was also a major contributor to the field of translation theory? What drew Benjamin to these two creative practices and how might they intersect with one another? With its dual visual and translational heritage, the ballad offers a particularly useful starting point for beginning to conjoin these two spheres of Benjaminian inquiry. It strikes me as deeply significant, for example, that Fox Talbot also published a volume of translations prior to his photographic work, a book, interestingly enough, of Nordic sagas and folktales, genres intimately connected to the ballad tradition.[49] In Cameron's case, not only would she produce photographic illustrations of Alfred Tennyson's *Idylls of the King* (1875), rewritings of Arthurian romances that were genealogically related to the ballad form, or an illustration of Walter Scott's *Lady of the Lake* (1869), a poetic work by one of the legendary nineteenth-century ballad editors (and translators of *Lenore*), she also illustrated such popular ballads as "King Cophetua and the Beggar-Maid" (1875), which had appeared in Percy's collection. Perhaps most suggestively, one of Cameron's most iconic photographs would consist of the piercing eyes of Philip Stanley Worsley (1866), translator of Homer's *Odyssey*, the work of the blind bard.

While I do not have the space for it here, I want to mark out a preliminary outline of the stylistic ways in which Cameron's understanding of the medium of photography can be read to have been influenced by such balladic translationalism. Cameron famously grouped her photographs under the larger heading "From Life", capitalising on photography's incipient realism to ground her pictorial practices. But there is also an interesting element of departure in this idea of an image being "from life" (much like Goethe's working supertitle for his autobiography, *Aus meinem Leben*).[50] Cameron's work was grounded less in an ideal of bringing

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[49] [William] H[enry] Fox Talbot, *Legendary Tales, in Verse and Prose* (London: Ridgway, 1830).

[50] I am aware of her well-known quip about her photographs also being "to the life". As she wrote to Herschel: "They are not only from the Life but to the Life and startle the Eye with wonder & delight." (Cited in Olsen, *From Life*, 184.) As I will argue, however, it is precisely this ambiguity of from/to that is at the heart of the deictic breakdown in Cameron's work.

something into view, as *darstellen*, and more in terms of a "placing outside", as *ausstellen*.

Figure 4.16 Julia Margaret Cameron, *My Niece Julia Jackson now Mrs Herbert Duckworth* (1867). Courtesy of the National Museum of Photography, Film and Television.

Whether it was the strained profile views of so many of her female portraits looking askance (as in one of her most famous images, *My Niece Julia Jackson now Mrs Herbert Duckworth*, 1867; Fig. 4.16, above) or the soft-focus that became a hallmark of her style, Cameron's photographic corpus continually undermined the clear visual distinctions, either between fore- and background or scene and off-scene, that were at the core of the perspectival view. The visual blur that had been a product of the

stereoscopic view in Bürger—and Beauclerc's subsequent rendering—was turned in Cameron into a theory of photographic portraiture. In the swirling pattern of *The Gardener's Daughter* (1867) or the alluring *The Dream* (1869) (Fig. 4.17), which was inscribed in one copy with lines from Milton's sonnet, "On His Deceased Wife", about the Bürgerian theme of the impossible accessibility of one's lost lover, objects persistently undulated in and out of view across Cameron's picture plane. Nowhere was such visual attention to the outside more iconically on display in Cameron than in her suite of photographs of young children (often asleep), capturing the sense of the fragile presence of childhood—and children—in the Victorian world.

Figure 4.17 Julia Margaret Cameron, *The Dream* (1869). Courtesy of the National Museum of Photography, Film and Television.

In Cameron's detailed attention to the turn, the blur, or the child, there is a recurring element of the temporality of sight encoded in her attention to a visual elsewhere. As in Bürger's time of flight that resulted in visual defocalisation, seeing after was no longer associated, as in the early modern ballad, with the synoptic, with seeing all, but instead with a breakdown of visualisation. Unlike the simultaneity that had been at the heart of early-modern ballad illustration, Cameron's illustrative practices

argued instead for the undoing of medial equivalency. Cameron's work did not emphasise the headline of the earlier broadside tradition, but rather the *reading line* of the ballad book, the processuality of the eighteenth-century ballad's translational identity that she both inherited and promoted. As Cameron wrote to Herschel, "Yes – the history of the human face is a book we don't tire of if we can get its grand truths and learn them by heart"[51]. The face, the centre of her visual portraiture, had become bookish—it not only took time to read, but our understanding of it depended upon the ocular turning that was at the heart of the reading eye.[52] There was a new anamorphic relationship to both text and image in Cameron's work.

In place of the ideology of the snap-shot, then—the medium's imagined ability to arrest time[53]—Cameron's photography is remarkable for its manifold practices of imaging time, and specifically what I am calling here the time of translation. Such attention to the elsewhere and the afterward at the core of this translational visuality was no more pronouncedly on display in Cameron than in her repeated attention to foregrounding the developmental process of the photographic print. Cameron's work is remarkable for its comfort with, indeed its explicit foregrounding of, pictorial blemishes, well beyond her initiatory phase of learning the wet collodion process. Like the figural turn or the focal blur, the developmental blemish or *Fleck* (recalling Bürger once again) in Cameron gestures in subtle ways to the processuality, and not the instananeity, of photography. A sufficient explication of Cameron's deployment of the blemish would take us too far afield for this essay, so I will conclude with just one final image, a detail from the above mentioned *The Dream* (Fig. 4.18), where we can see a thumbprint in the lower right corner.

As one more element within Cameron's taxonomy of visual blurs, the significance of the blemish, I want to suggest, lay in the way it wrestled with the question of "finishing" that belonged to the practice of translation.

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[51] Cited in Cox and Ford, *Julia Margaret Cameron*, 66.

[52] One thinks here too of the numerous images of pictured readers in Cameron, such as *Kate Keown Reading* (1867), *Cupid's Pencil of Light* (1870), *A Sybil* (1870), or *Sisters* (1873). For the significance of the inaccessability of the pictured reader, see Garrett Stewart, *The Look of Reading: Book, Painting, Text* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006).

[53] For a reading of the nineteenth-century canonisation of photography as the arrestation of time, see Hubertus von Amelunxen, *Die aufgehobene Zeit. Die Erfindung der Photographie durch William Henry Fox Talbot* (Berlin: Nishen, 1989).

The dramatisation of the photographic blemish highlighted the time of making that not only accompanied, but indeed authorised the time of intermedial seeing. Whereas Walter Benjamin had seen the essence of nineteenth-century photography residing in the synoptic presence of the subject's gaze—the way the duration of the image's recording compressed the time of an entire life into a single moment—Cameron's work pointed instead to the drawing out of time, and importantly time as something differentiated in itself. Her work encapsulates, we might say, the impossibility of finish that resided at the core of translation.

Figure 4.18 Detail from *The Dream* (1869). Courtesy of the National Museum of Photography, Film and Television.