Evoking Auditory Imagination: On the Poetics of Voice Production in *The Story of The Glorious Resurrection of Our Lord* (c. 1580)

Jolanta Szpilewska

Drama is a form of art where oral delivery meets audio-visual reception. It is along this line of communication, actors – delivering their speeches – on one end, and audience members – listening, at the other end, that the Biblical story with its moral and theological message is being presented in the religious theatre.

Medieval and early modern religious theatre of the Latin Church developed different ways of establishing theatrical communication and securing proper audience reception. One of the tools of presenting a clear message and keeping the audience together was the traditional prologue and epilogue of the play as well as addresses to the audience in the play-text. Still another device was elaboration of the vocal delivery of the text. Thus, different voice pitches would be introduced to underline certain parts of the script, to make a play more lively and colourful. Elements of vocal delivery of the play such as raising/lowering the voice, pausing, using exclamations, as well as cursing, or singing, all amount to the so-called poetics of voice production or emission. The term poetics has been used for the purposes of the present inquiry since it embraces the principles of drama and theatrical performance that seem to keep the audience silent, secure continuous presentation of Biblical events on the stage, and help to avoid interruptions from the public.

One of the few surviving early mystery plays in Poland that introduce various ways of oral delivery, and thus evoke rich auditory effects, is the 1580s vernacular Easter play entitled *The Story of the Glorious Resurrection of Our Lord* from Southern Poland.[1] The play was either edited or written by a Pauline monk,

[1] *Historyja o Chwalebnym Zmartwychwstaniu Pańskim* (The story of the glorious Resurrection of Our Lord). Ms Cim. O.496 in Kórnik PAN Library. This is the so-called Redaction A of a highly popular play published in Cracow c. 1581-85. For its editions see: Stanisław Windakiewicz, in *Biblioteka Pisarzów Polskich*, 25 (Cracow: n.p., 1893); Julian Lewański, in *Dramaty staropolskie: Antologia*, vol. 2 (Warsaw: PIW, 1959), pp. 287-354; Jan Okoń, in *Biblioteka Narodowa* I, vol. 201 (Wrocław: Ossolineum, 1971). Further bibliography in "*Nowy Korbut:*" *Bibliografia literatury polskiej* (New Korbut: Bibliography of Polish literature), ed. Roman Pollak, 3 vols (Warsaw: PIW, 1965), and Władysław Korotaj et al., *Dramat staropolski od początków do powstania sceny narodowej: Bibliografia: Teksty dramatyczne drukiem wydane do r. 1765* (Bibliography of early Polish drama since its

Mikołaj from Wilkowieck. It has come down in its sixteenth-century printed version. There are also two later editions and numerous manuscript copies preserved. It seems to have been an extremely popular play since we find its redactions all over Poland and in Ukraine as late as the eighteenth century. I am focusing on this particular text in order to show what the role of voice emission in a religious play may have been. I would also like to raise the question as to whether or not we may actually speak of patterns or poetics of voice emission in Biblical plays and if so, how this knowledge contributes to our understanding of the function of an early religious play.

Before I enumerate specific forms of voice emission in *The Story of the Glorious Resurrection*, it is worthwhile noting that although the earliest known version of the play is a printed version, a hypothesis of the existence of an earlier popular play circulating in the oral tradition cannot be discarded. The 1580s edition is apparently meant for a wider use since it has neither dedication nor any mention of a specific community that would stage the play. Instead, we have a general prologue addressed to "anyone who would stage the play."[2] The play's introduction is a curious mixture of two modes of communication: oral and written. While the *dramatis personae* list is entitled "persony rozmawiające" ("speaking *personae*"), the introduction addresses a *bonus lector* – a kind reader, as the text says: "may the kind reader not worry that the play needs altogether 35 *personae*."[3] We then find some clues for combining several roles in the play. Thus we see how the play obviously meant for oral delivery acquires its written form, and the potential director of the play becomes its reader before anything else. As a result, we are facing a theatrical play being mediated by script; oral delivery is inscribed in an early printed literary work. In a word, the available resources of the urban culture that produced religious plays have conditioned the existence of our play text. Vernacular religious drama, of which *The Story of the Glorious Resurrection* is an invaluable example, depended not only on literacy established in Latin ecclesiastical culture, later flourishing among the laity, but it also depended upon the oral tradition of religious performances and ceremonies that were in existence long before they were recorded.

Speaking about ways of appealing to the audience's auditory imagination in *The Story of the Glorious Resurrection*, we may account for three main groups of such devices: addresses to the audience, colloquial phrases and exclamations, and stage directions for the voice emission. All three groups of devices help to define the relationship between the world of the play and the real world, once we choose to follow the division of the dramatic situation into the ordinary world and

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beginnings to the rise of the national theatre: Dramatic texts published before 1765), vol. 1, pp. 198-200 (Wrocław: Ossolineum, 1965). – The present article refers to J. Lewański's edition.

[2] *Historyja*, p. 288. Translations are mine throughout the paper.

[3] *Historyja*, pp. 288-289.

dramatic or fictitious world.[4] The relationship between the two worlds is indeed shaped by the spoken word. However, while the addresses to the audience have an important function of sustaining the dramatic world and keeping the crowd together, the vocal effects, such as exclamations, screams, and changes of tone, in fact bridge the two worlds and help to bring the audience members into the world of the play. Affective language is supposed to appeal to the vocally agile listeners and to focus their attention on the particular scene endowed with these vocal effects.

Direct addresses to the audience are the type of conventional utterances that do not really threaten the integrity of the play; rather, they help to keep the audience interested. Addressing the audience in a popular religious play was an important strategy of establishing and sustaining the dramatic world. In *The Story of the Glorious Resurrection*, the audience is being addressed in the Prologue as "dear and faithful Christians gathered here in the name of God."[5] The prologue then summarises the events that would shortly be presented, and excuses any incoherence of the presented play with the Biblical narrative, explaining that this is due to the use of the apocrypha. Finally, there comes a short speech with comic undertones, in which the Prologue figure asks the audience to calm down and listen attentively. He also promises to introduce songs in the course of the play so that the audience listens more eagerly, and in case the people were falling asleep the song between the verses would wake them up. This is a comic excuse, but behind it there is probably a real concern to assure the best communication and reception of the play.

In its use of the prologue address to the public, *The Story of the Glorious Resurrection* follows the pattern of many late mystery plays where the audience is usually addressed right at the beginning of the play so that everyone can be clear in his mind what the situation is. This type of dramatic address to the public is often called a framing type.[6] As Diller points out: "Here, a presenter or precursor or per, clearly belonging to the ordinary world, addresses the audience, exhorts its members to decent behavior, and often gives an account of the plot of the play, characterising it as something to be watched and enjoyed."[7] The audience is being addressed in their real world capacity: as sinners, as people to be taught and entertained.

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[4] This distinction has been discussed in the context of English mystery cycles and Tudor comedies by Hans-Jürgen Diller, "Theatrical Pragmatics: The Actor-Audience Relationship from the Mystery Cycles to the Early Tudor Comedies," in *Drama in the Middle Ages: Comparative and Critical Essays*, eds. Clifford Davidson et al. (New York: AMS Press, 1985), pp. 321-330.

[5] *Historyja*, 1. 1.3-14.

[6] Diller distinguishes three ways that inform the relationship between the ordinary and dramatic world of the play: the "straddling" type in which speakers move freely between the two worlds, the "homiletic" type where characters make utterances that are relevant to the audience in their own world, and finally the "framing" type discussed above. See Diller, "Theatrical Pragmatics," p. 323.

[7] Diller, "Theatrical Pragmatics," p. 323.

Speaking of the second group of devices that were supposed to appeal to the auditory imagination of the public, the use of daily language, we cannot know how many utterances in the play come from the contemporary colloquial language. There are numerous hints at the possible use of the well-established everyday patterns of speech and colloquial phrases, but we should bear in mind that some of the scenes might have been stylised to imitate the simplicity of daily life and its language. For example, in the Emmaus scene, the words and gestures of the speakers are fashioned after the behaviour of pilgrims. The disciples who are on their way to Emmaus speak a more refined language and use stylised Italian pilgrimage greetings.[8] Similarly, the exclamations of the guards of Christ's tomb are only signs of real-life utterances introduced for theatrical effect. Thus, when the guards see the empty tomb on Easter Sunday and exclaim in Italian, Hungarian, and Ukrainian, a spatio-temporal elsewhere is being represented as though actually present for the audience who might have been familiar with these languages.[9] Another example of such stylisation is the scene in which the chief guard Theoron, who is supposed to be German, makes mistakes in Polish by adding a characteristic German part of speech, or when Philemon, his fellow, gets terrified at the sight of the empty tomb and starts stammering.[10] In a similar vein, Proclus, the third guard tries to show his bravery and uses a typical hunting term when he wants to say that it is too late to do anything about the disappearance of Christ's body. Other stylised utterances appear when the guards greet the high priests with a late sixteenth-century greeting formula or when the three Marys greet each other in a very simple way, possibly fashioned after everyday women's greetings.[11]

The greetings of pilgrims, women, and the elders are on one side of this everyday language repertory; curses and blasphemies are on the other. Thus, we cannot omit a series of blasphemous shouts of Lucifer and his pack in the Harrowing of Hell scene.[12] The Patriarchs do not stay behind, and reply with a set of abusive phrases in order to verbally challenge the devils, before Jesus comes to conquer Hell in person. When Jesus arrives, he also calls Lucifer names. Interestingly, some other real life exclamations may be identified in the words of Cerberus summoning his companions to fight Adam. Cerberus uses the expression "Ad idem! Ad idem omnes!" the phrase that was supposedly used by Krakow students while plundering Protestant churches. A series of attacks is known to have taken place after 10 October, 1574.[13] Thus, by introducing all these colloquial

[8] Such as: "Bona vita!" "Bon fradello." *Historyja*, l. 1234, 1240.

[9] "O, Dio!" (Ital.), *Historyja*, l. 349, "Uram gazda!" (Hung.), l. 351, "Pro Boha" (Ukr.), l. 357.

[10] *Historyja*, l. 377.

[11] *Historyja*, l. 285, 289.

[12] The Harrowing of Hell scene comes as part 4 in the play's 6-partite structure. *Historyja*, 311-330.

[13] See Jan Okoń, "*Historyja o Chwalebnym Zmartwychwstaniu Pańskim na tle misterium rezurekcyjnego*" (The history of the glorious Resurrection of our Lord and the cycle of the Resurrection mystery plays), in *Dramat i teatr religijny w Polsce* (Liturgical and religious theatre in Poland), ed. Irena Sławińska, vol. 2 (Lublin: KUL, 1991), p. 71.

phrases the play takes the audience back from the Biblical world to their own historical moment.

Since *The Story of the Glorious Resurrection* is clearly a text that was meant for oral delivery, it is worthwhile to look for the devices that were supposed to enhance the delivery of certain parts of the play. We have to bear in mind that the play relies on much earlier tradition, perhaps going back to the beginning of the sixteenth century, thus medieval theatrical patterns in its oral delivery have to be taken into account. No codified rules of theatrical speech delivery are known to have existed in Poland in the sixteenth century or earlier. At that time, only foreign rhetorical treatises were known in academic circles in Poland.[14] In any case, the early popular religious theatre, to which *The Story of the Glorious Resurrection* belongs, would hardly draw upon specific rhetorical rules and indications of speech delivery found in these theoretical works. The voice emission indications encountered in *The Story of the Glorious Resurrection* text have rather to do with the unwritten staging rules of a popular medieval theatre. The influence of liturgy also cannot be discarded. There are three types of voice indications in the text: *Mutata voce* – 'having changed the voice;' *Alciori voce* – 'in a higher voice,' from *altioro*, meaning 'raise, lift;' *Distincte* – 'clearly, distinctly, expressively,' has connotations with *intelligere*, *exprimere*, *repraesentare*, *significare* (all pertaining to theatre context). The other meaning of *distincte* has to do with the formal disposition of the text: *distincte* may also mean 'separately, piece by piece, *separatim*.' Besides these indications, we should also mention a Polish voice emission phrase meaning "*Exclamavit voce magne*." We should also note a frequent use of shouting indicated by means of the *clamabit* direction. *Clamo* belongs only to devils and Adam in the Harrowing of Hell scene.

We may suppose that *alciori* or *alciori voce* indicates chanting in different tones, as happened at solemn Gospel readings or in liturgical drama where similar directions may be found. Indications like *alta voce* or phrases like "each time sing in a higher tone" are ubiquitous in liturgical drama, and they are still preserved in the Holy Saturday liturgy in the Latin Church. These indications stress the solemnity of the feast and they have a practical role as well, for the celebrating priest has to start at an appropriate tone in order to be able to reach the higher one in several changes of voice, but without straining his voice too much.

However, the exact phrasing *alciori* or *alciori voce* as well as *distincte* does not appear in liturgy, as far as I have been able to check with a performer and researcher of the liturgical chant, Marcin Bornus-Szczyciński. As a result of this inquiry, I have come to the point of discarding the possibility for any of the above-mentioned directions to signify singing or recitation, as some researchers of the

[14] In sixteenth-century Poland only foreign works on poetics and rhetoric were known, though some of the authors were related to Poland, like Conrad Celtis, H. Bebl or J. Vadian. K. Hegendorfin's *Stichologia* (1534) was written while he held a teaching position in Poland. The earliest examples of the local school of poetics might be considered two works: W. Korwin's *Compendiosa et facilis diversorum carminum structura* ... (1496), and Zacius' *Libri duo ad artem versificatoriam* ... (1532).

play and its performance context have suggested. The reason why I suppose that these voice indications relate to simple dramatic heightening of the voice in the spoken manner, and clear declamation with no singing, is that the play text usually indicates singing whenever needed. Thus, at the beginning, the singing of a traditional vernacular Easter song is highly advised by the redactor,[15] and then throughout the play, at regular intervals, there appear verses of another song that match the story presented in each episode.[16] Also, whenever the choirboys have to sing in the Harrowing of Hell scene, it is clearly indicated in the text. My suggestion therefore is that these stage directions do not presuppose the singing of the parts of the dialogue, they rather underline the dramatic moment of the particular scene and they also become the attributes of some of the *dramatis personae*. In a word, they are part of the impersonation that is taking place on the stage. In this sense, early sixteenth-century popular theatre detaches itself from highly symbolic use of voice in the liturgical drama. We find a great deal of conventionality in the *Visitatio* plays, for example, where it is enough for an Angel, performed by a man, to sing in a slightly higher tone to indicate the part of a woman. He is not told to imitate female voice, so we assume that the liturgical theatre was based on a set of conventions while later popular religious theatre introduced voice change indications in order to underline the impersonation. This new phenomenon significantly reduces our plays' direct connections with the liturgy.

Voice emission directions in the *The Story of the Glorious Resurrection* appear in different contexts; they may be found in both shorter dialogues and in extensive monologues where several voice changes are prescribed for the same speaker. Most of these directions appear in the Prologue, in the Harrowing of Hell scene and in some comic scenes. The Harrowing of Hell scene is the fourth scene of the play and it seems to be the liveliest and the noisiest one. We encounter 6 *mutata/mutabit vocem* directions, 3 *clamabit,* 1 *alciori voce* and a Polish variety of "*exclamavit voce magna*."

Let us take a look at the Harrowing of Hell episode in *The Story of the Glorious Resurrection*. First of all, Jesus changes his voice when he knocks at the gates of Hell, citing verses of Psalm 23. Later Lucifer and Cerberus, in turns, are supposed to shout or speak loudly, as the direction *clamabit* indicates. They express their concern for the souls that they will lose when Christ enters Hell. At one point of their dialogue, Lucifer is supposed to change his voice (*mutabit vocem*) and say "Have the heavens gone mad?"[17] After that, Cerber's monologue follows in which three voice indications are specified: *clamabit*, *alciori voce*, two

[15] *Historyja*, p. 289. The song is an extended Easter trope, "Przez Twe święte zmartwychwstanie," and it is the earliest mentioned vernacular song in a religious play text in Poland.

[16] The other song is a traditional Easter song surviving in several versions in religious songbooks.

[17] *Historyja*, l. 644.

mutata voce. There is no *distincte* direction as in the Prologue, though this monologue is a long one, and it may be broken into logical units just like the Prologue was. This scene probably plays more on the effect of a negative character speaking than on stressing the logical argument of his speech. Perhaps numerous voice changes in this monologue signify the unstable position of Cerber, his terror and eventual defeat. However, shouting is ambiguous in a way that it may express both threat and fright. The shouting devil may therefore be threatening the greedy merchants, vain women, and disloyal servants to whom he refers in his monologue. Due to the lively dialogues the Harrowing of Hell scene turns into a real verbal battle between Jesus and the pack of devils. The argument and the frequent change of voice by the devils and Patriarchs as opposed to only one change of voice on the part of Jesus underline the atmosphere of confusion in Hell at the coming of Christ. All these vocal effects create a truly apocalyptic noise and underline the difference between the noisy, retreating camp of devils and the serene and dignified figure of Christ.

In the Emmaus scene, Jesus walking in a pilgrim's guise with the Apostles is supposed to change his voice (*mutata voce*) after his complaint about the people unable to acknowledge his resurrection. He changes the tone again and makes a very practical remark about the lodging for the night. In this context the change of voice indicates the ontological difference between the two utterances. Later, in the same scene, we see the rest of the disciples still hiding from possible persecution when Jesus enters and addresses the disciples with a speech with four *distincte* directions. These pauses in Christ's speech help to differentiate between everyday details and the theological message of the appearance of Christ. First Jesus has to speak 'distinctly' as he introduces himself to the disciples and says:

> I am the true Son of God,
> Resurrected, Present, Alive.[18]

Later Andrew 'distinctly' inquires:

> What is it, for God's sake, a ghost or some vision?
> Here is some strange divine creature.[19]

To which Jesus distinctly replies:

> Look here:
> My side, feet and hands,
> And even more, if you want,
> Come and touch my wounds.[20]

Later, Thomas changes his voice as he expresses his doubt at the news he has just been told. To which Jesus responds in twelve lines and after first six he changes his voice and invites Thomas to come over and touch his wounds. Thomas expressively refuses to do so, and professes his faith in Christ. The use of *distincte* at this point may indicate the influence of sermon performance in the early modern period. Since the first acting companies were known to come from ecclesiastical

[18] *Historyja*, l. 1344-45.
[19] *Historyja*, l. 1350-51.
[20] *Historyja*, l. 1360-1363.

circles, the rhetoric of the earliest religious plays might be related to the theological exposition practised in the form of a sermon.

All in all, as we can see from the play's voice emission indications, the atmosphere of solemnity mixes with very down-to-earth humour. The theme of the play and the subject matter of separate scenes brought into the play complex religious and moral issues, as well as different interpretations of the Biblical events. In view of this multitude of meanings and characters in a religious play, a mixture of Biblical events and apocryphal stories, the overall meaning of the play might have been lost. It seems therefore that a clear presentation of the subject matter and parts of the play was being achieved by an appropriate voice modulation and the text's formal disposition. Moreover, dialogues in *The Story of the Glorious Resurrection* bear many features of everyday life dialogues, as the speakers move from solemn appraisal to a strong rebuke, from doubt to enthusiasm. In this way, the dialogue may be said to come close to a real life conversation.

To sum up, exclamations, cries, colloquial phrases and voice emission directions in *The Story of the Glorious Resurrection* have several functions:

1. They emphasize the extraordinary elements in the play, creating an atmosphere of terror, threat, joy, and surprise.
2. The use of the *distincte/mutata voce* directions helps to underline dogmatically crucial episodes in the play; they organise some of the monologues rhetorically, as they bring order and clear disposition into particular speeches.
3. By introducing different pitches, affective language, the word is used to clarify the differences between certain characters, to enrich the visual message of the play, and, above all, to keep the audience in suspense.
4. We have to take practical matters into consideration: the play would be staged outdoors, in a hall or a semi-enclosed space that was a specific acoustical setting. It might have happened that the conditions provided by the church for the liturgical drama setting were not available for the vernacular urban theatre and thus additional voice modulation directions had to be invented to emphasise parts of the play, to assure sound and clear delivery of the text.
5. The narrator's addresses to the audience, the colloquial phrases, and everyday situations might have been used to create an impression of audience familiarity with the Biblical story as well as to strengthen group bonds between the members of the audience.

The redactor of *The Story of the Glorious Resurrection* emphasized the verbal material of the play and its oral delivery, and thus he also introduced some spoken language of which parts can be recovered with some reservations. If we follow the hypothesis of the play being an adaptation of an Italian *Rappresentazione*,[21] we have to underline that through the introduction of numerous vocal effects, and genuine linguistic material, the play acquired a life of its own and influenced the

[21] "Rappresentazione della Resurrezione di Gesu Cristo (1559/1572)," in *Sacre rappresentazioni dei secoli XIV. XV e XVI*, ed. A. d'Ancona, vol.I (Florence: Successori le Monnier., 1872), pp. 329-356.

development of the mystery play tradition in Poland. It is worth mentioning, however, that the effect of the colloquial phrases as well as all the voice emission directions, is best tested in the course of performance, as many such reconstructed performances have shown.

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Cover illustration: The wife of Potiphar covets Joseph: "... erat autem Joseph pulchra facie et decorus apectu: post multos itaque dies iecit domina oculos suis in Ioseph et ait dormi mecum." ("... And Joseph was [a] goodly [person], and well favoured. And it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me."), Gen. 39: 6-7 (KJV). Concordantiae Caritatis, c. 1350. Cistercian abbey of Lilienfeld (Lower Austria), ms 151, fol. 244v (detail). Photo: Institut für Realienkunde des Mittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit (Krems an der Donau).

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Preface

Oral culture played an instrumental role in medieval society.[1] Due to the lack of any direct source evidence, however, research into the functions and importance of oral communication in the Middle Ages must confront a number of significant problems. Only indrect traces offer the opportunity to analyze phenomena that were based on or connected with the spoken word. The 'oral history' of the Middle Ages requires the application of different approaches than dealing with the 20th or 21st century.

For some decades Medieval Studies have been interested in questions of orality and literacy, their relationship and the substitution of the spoken by the written word.[2] Oral and literate culture were not exclusive and certainly not opposed to each other.[3] The 'art of writing' was part of the 'ars rhetorica' and writing makes no sense without speech.[4] Any existing written statement should also be seen as a spoken one, although, clearly, not every oral statement as a written one. Authors regularly wrote with oral delivery in mind. 'Speaking' and 'writing' are not antonyms.

It is also obvious that "the use of oral communication in medieval society should not be evaluated . . . as a function of *culture populaire* vis-à-vis *culture savante* but, rather, of the communication habits and the tendency of medieval man

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[1] For the late Middle Ages and the early modern period, cf. Willem Frijhoff, "Communication et vie quotidienne à la fin du moyen âge et à l'epoque moderne: réflexions de théorie et de méthode," in *Kommuniation und Alltag in Spätmittelalter und früher Neuzeit*, ed. Helmut Hundsbichler (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1992), p. 24: "La plupart de gens vivait encore pour l'essentiel dans une culture orale et les procédés d'appropriation des idées passaient de préférence par la parole dite et écoutée, quand bien même on était capable d'une lecture visuelle plus ou moins rudimentaire."

[2] See Marco Mostert, "New Approaches to Medieval Communication?" in *New Approaches to Medieval Communication*, ed. Marco Mostert (Turnhout: Brepols, 1999), pp. 15-37; Michael Richter, "Die Entdeckung der 'Oralität' der mittelalterlichen Gesellschaft durch die neuere Mediävistik," in *Die Aktualität des Mittelalters*, ed. Hans-Werner Goetz (Bochum: D. Winkler, 2000), pp. 273-287.

[3] Peter Burke calls the construct of "oral versus literate" useful but at the same time dangerous: idem, "Mündliche Kultur und >Druckkultur< im spätmittelalterlichen Italien," in *Volkskultur des europäischen Spätmittelalters*, eds. Peter Dinzelbacher and Hans-Dieter Mück (Stuttgart: Alfred Kröner Verlag, 1987), p. 60.

[4] Michael Clanchy, "Introduction," in *New Approaches to Medieval Communication*, ed. Marco Mostert (Turnhout: Brepols, 1999), p. 6.

to share his intellectual experiences in the corporate framework."[5] Oral delivery was not "the sole prerogative of any socioeconomic class."[6]

For all these reasons, it is important to analyze the extent of and context, in which 'speech acts,' auditive effects, and oral tradition occur in medieval sources .[7] Research into the use of the spoken word or references to it in texts and images provides new insight into various, mainly social, rules and patterns of the communication system. It opens up additional approaches to the organization and complexity of different, but indispensably related, media in medieval society, and their comparative analysis.[8]

The spoken word is connected with the physical presence of its 'sender.' Speech may represent the authenticity of the given message in a more obvious way than written texts or images. Therefore, the use of 'speech acts' in written or visual evidence also has to be seen in context with the attempt to create, construct, or prove authenticity. Moreover, spoken messages contribute to and increase the lifelikeness of their contents, which may influence their perception by the receiver, their efficacy and success. Being aware of such a situation will have led to the explicit and intended use and application of the spoken word in written texts and images – to increase their authenticity and importance, too.

If one operates with a model of 'closeness' and 'distance' of communication with regard to the level of relation of 'senders' and 'receivers,' then the 'speech acts' or their representation have to be seen as contributors to a 'closer' connection among the participants of the communication process.[9] At the same time, however, speech might be evaluated as less official. One regularly comes across 'oral space'

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[5] Sophia Menache, *The Vox Dei. Communication in the Middle Ages* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), p. 19.

[6] Ibidem, p. 21. Cf. also Jan-Dirk Müller, "Zwischen mündlicher Anweisung und schriftlicher Sicherung von Tradition. Zur Kommunikationsstruktur spätmittelalterlicher Fechtbücher," in *Kommunikation und Alltag in Spätmittelalter und früher Neuzeit*, ed. Helmut Hundsbichler (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1992), p. 400: "Offensichtlich sind schriftliche und nichtschriftliche Tradierung von Wissen weiterhin relativ unabhängig voneinander, nachdem die Schrift längst dazu angesetzt hat, Inseln der Mündlichkeit oder praktisch-enaktiver Wissensvermittlung zu erobern. Die Gedächtnisstütze kann die Erfahrung nicht ersetzen, sondern allenfalls reaktivieren. Sie ist sogar nur verständlich, wo sie auf anderweitig vermittelte Vorkenntnisse stößt."

[7] Cf. W.F.H. Nicolaisen, ed., *Oral Tradition in the Middle Ages* (Binghamton: Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 1995).

[8] See, esp., Horst Wenzel, *Hören und Sehen, Schrift und Bild. Kultur und Gedächtnis im Mittelalter* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1995), passim.

[9] See also Stefan Sonderegger, ">Gesprochen oder nur geschrieben?< Mündlichkeit in mittelalterlichen Texten als direkter Zugang zum Menschen," in *Homo Medietas. Aufsätze zu Religiosität, Literatur und Denkformen des Menschen vom Mittelalter bis in die Neuzeit. Festschrift für Alois Maria Haas zum 65. Geburtstag,* eds. Claudia Brinker-von der Heyde and Niklaus Largier (Bern et al.: Peter Lang, 1999), p. 665: "Jedenfalls darf man sich bewußt bleiben, daß auch in den Texten des deutschen Mittelalters die Reflexe gesprochener Sprache eine bedeutende Schicht ausmachen, die besonders dann immer wieder hervortritt, wenn es um einen direkten Zugang zum Menschen geht, um einVerstehen aus unmittelbarer Partnerschaft heraus ..."

that has become institutionalized or more official by the application of 'written space.'[10] Simultanous employment of such different levels and qualities of messages must often have had considerable influence on their efficacy.[11]

The papers in this volume are the outcome of an international workshop that was held in February, 2001, at the Department of Medieval Studies, Central European University, Budapest. Participants concentrated on problems of the occurrence, usage, and patterns of the spoken word in written and visual sources of the Middle Ages. They dealt with the role and contents of direct and indirect speech in textual evidence or in relation to it, such as chronicles, travel descriptions, court and canonization protocols, sermons, testaments, law-books, literary sources, drama, etc. They also tried to analyze the function of oral expression in connection with late medieval images.

The audiovisuality of medieval communication processes[12] has proved to be evident and, thus, important for any kind of further comparative analysis of the various levels of the 'oral–visual–literate,' i.e. multimedia culture of the Middle Ages. Particular emphasis has to be put on methodological problems, such as the necessity of interdisciplinary approaches,[13] or the question of the extent to which we are, generally, able to comprehend and to decode the communication systems of the past.[14] Moreover, the medievalist does not come across any types of sources in which oral communication represents the main concern.[15] Instead, she or he is confronted, at first glance, with a great variety of 'casual' and 'marginal' evidence.

We would like to thank all the contributors to the workshop and to this volume. Their cooperation made it possible to publish the results of the meeting in the same year in which it took place. This can be seen as a rare exception, at least in the world of the historical disciplines. The head, faculty, staff, and students of the Department of Medieval Studies of Central European University offered various help and support. Special thanks go to Judith Rasson, the copy editor of

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[10] This, e.g., could be well shown in a case study on the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela: Friederike Hassauer, "Schriftlichkeit und Mündlichkeit im Alltag des Pilgers am Beispiel der Wallfahrt nach Santiago de Compostela," in *Wallfahrt und Alltag in Mittelalter und früher Neuzeit*, eds. Gerhard Jaritz and Barbara Schuh (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1992), pp. 277-316.

[11] Cf. Bob Scribner, "Mündliche Kommunikation und Strategien der Macht in Deutschland im 16. Jahrhundert," in *Kommunikation und Alltag in Spätmittelalter und früher Neuzeit*, ed. Helmut Hundsbichler (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1992), pp. 183-197.

[12] Wenzel, *Hören und Sehen*, p. 292.

[13] Cf. Ursula Schaefer, "Zum Problem der Mündlichkeit," in *Modernes Mittelalter. Neue Bilder einer populären Epoche*, ed. Joachim Heinzle (Frankfurt am Main and Leipzig: Insel Verlag, 1994), pp. 374 f.

[14] Frijhoff, "Communication et vie quotidienne," p. 25: "Sommes-nous encore en mesure de communiquer avec la communication de jadis?"

[15] Michael Richter, *Sprache und Gesellschaft im Mittelalter. Untersuchungen zur mündlichen Kommunikation in England von der Mitte des elften bis zu Beginn des vierzehnten Jahrhunderts* (Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann, 1979), p. 22.

this volume, who took particluar care with the texts of the many non-native speakers fighting with the pitfalls of the English language.

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