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From Bard to Spin Doctor: Continuities in strategy and style

Abstract:

As the formal intermediary between language and power, the bard plays a key role in post-tribal society by manufacturing social cohesion through the application of communication techniques that constantly connect the political to the mythical and vice versa. Strikingly similar bardic work is carried out today by spin doctors as they manufacture the form of social cohesion necessary to produce electoral majorities utilising communication techniques that intertwine politics and image. To confront the present wave of cynicism about democracy requires the democratisation of spin doctoring and a return to the practices of the bard in order to re-create the dynamic relationship between language and power that recovers both the political force of myth and the mythical dimension of politics.

We have...put together a pretty canny little story... We have been able to spin a giant tale, an interesting tale..

- Paul Keating (1993: 13)

I was in many shapes before I was released:
I was a slender enchanted sword... I was raindrops in the air,
I was star's beam; I was a word in letters, I was a book in origin;
I was lanterns of light... I was a bridge... I was a path,
I was an eagle, I was a coracle in seas;
I was a bubble in beer, I was a drop in a shower;
I was a sword in hand, I was a shield in battle.
I was a string in a harp... in the water as foam:
I was a spark in fire, I was wood in a bonfire;
I am not one who does not sing; I have sung since I was small.
I sang in the army of the trees' branches...

- Taliesin (quoted in Calder 1983: 101)

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Introduction

The cynicism of citizens towards the contemporary democratic process is often blamed on the distance between citizens and their representatives and the manipulation inherent in the media management techniques used by politicians and their spin doctors (for example see Tiffen 1989, Carey 1995, Capella 1997). An appreciation of the political function of spin doctors in the context of Celtic, Norse and Icelandic literature leads to the realisation that, despite all the postmodern practices and hi-tech equipment, the

spin doctor is essentially doing the work of the bard in a latter day war machine. This essay attempts to formally place this intimation with a view to clarifying its implications for contemporary political practice.

It is difficult to arrive at a precise account of the work of the bard but it is useful to return to the origins of bardic practices in tribal society to appreciate the interconnections between the bard's political and myth-making functions. Evolutionary psychologists point to palaeontological evidence which suggests that fine control over spoken sounds allowed the emergence of complex languages and inter-related collective practices (Diamond 1992, Mithen 1999). They argue that art and religion arose in the inter-play between this complexity and collectivity with the political purposes of cementing group solidarity and assisting the group's continuing reproduction in changing conditions. In the process, what was once mere instinctual decoration now became representation of deeper, mythological meanings expressed through costume, painting, dance and eventually song.

Bowra would argue that it was song itself that brought a new and increased power to words, a power that marked the emergence of the metaphors required for the creation of myths:

Once words have begun to be accommodated to music, they display qualities which might not be expected of them in their ordinary duties, and have not only lilt and balance, but tone and quality. (Bowra 1962: 276)

Thus the 'melody of the words' mimics musical melody and the interaction of both in song gives extra force to language. A shared language reinforced the group's shared construction of the world but the power of song showed that language could do more - it could be used to create power over the world, typically expressed through 'runes and chants, some of which had very practical magical purposes - to avert the evil eye, to cure some disease, or to propitiate some demon.' (Eliot 1957: 16) In oral society invocation is power, to name a spiritual force is not an abstract act because 'a taboo, a curse or the formula of spell was inextricably bound up in the speech itself...the spoken word was the magical power.' (Corcoran 1979: 15-16) The resonance of the language was used in ritual and myth to produce greater social cohesion than the threat of mere physical force could ever produce. (Berger 1973: 18-30)

All representation is, of course, a claim for a privileged point of view, and in tribal society, song in particular is used 'to exert an influence, to impose a special vision, to create in others a state of mind which is more than sympathy or understanding and implies some degree of subordination to [the singer's] will.' (Bowra 276-7; cf Elkin 1977: 3-18) The power of song is a political power that leaves the song-maker dominant but, in return, the listeners do get something important back. As they repeat the song, hum it, have it rolling around their heads, they are drilling their emotions, composing their thoughts as 'a defence...[against] the extreme uncertainties and hazards of...existence' (Bowra 282). In short, the social cohesion produced by song offers a sense of spiritual certainty which allows the tribal person to persevere and survive. The work of the bard, it will be seen below, is based in these tribal linguistic practices and their production of social cohesion.

Kings, Bards and Language

The co-development of agricultural and linguistic practices around 10,000 years BC (see for example Jaynes 1977: 133-8 on the invention of names), allowed populations to increase and provided for the creation of even more complex social structures. The increasing size, complexity and wealth of agrarian social structures produced more intense crises, the result of both internal contradictions and external threats. Generally social structures responded to these crises by adopting a coercive style of leadership that utilised the power that close control of song delivered in the governance of populations.

Religious practice was formalised around gods, often the chieftains themselves (Jaynes 138-144) and social structures were reinforced by religious observances around shrines and temples (Adams 1994: 16) where it may be assumed that tribal 'singing' was transformed into the chants, incantations and structured meditation that are still apparent in the older, agrarian religions like Hinduism and Buddhism. The theocratic state intermingled religious and political power to dominate the production of meaning.

But even all-powerful kings cannot rely solely on appeals to God in extreme situations. The timely delivery of words based in, and with the inspirational force of, socially-inculcated songs was a central act of post-tribal leadership. Early literatures from many cultures record the oral/epic histories of kings and contain carefully formulated appeals to action, particularly prior to battle. *The Iliad*, *The Odyssey*, *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, *The Bible* and *Beowulf* all contain moments where troops are welded together and convinced to action by the appropriate words of leadership. (Root 1987: 13)

The Norse history, *King Harald's Saga* (Sturluson 1966) provides a good example of the importance of effective linguistic formulations to the warrior chieftain. Just before the Battle of Stamford Bridge against Harold of England, King Harald Sigurdsson of Norway seeks to inspire his troops to fight even though they are outnumbered and outmanoeuvred. First, he composes a simple verse dwelling on the superiority of the enemy and the armour he left at his ships. One can imagine the blank stares and sullen indifference of soldiers about to die. So Harald admits 'That was a poor verse, I shall have to make a better one,' and comes up a

more complex, resounding and heartfelt call to arms beginning: ‘We never kneel in battle...’ (Sturluson 150-1). Norway lost the battle and Harald died, but his troops fought well enough to ensure the Norwegian succession and provide his ally, William the Conqueror, the opportunity to take England.

However, chieftains and kings in post-tribal societies of ancient and medieval times did not take sole responsibility for the construction of cohesive linguistic formations; they relied on the services of bards for a plethora of linguistic tasks but essentially to tend the society’s store of songs in order to provide the right words at the right moments (see Burnet 1968: 23; and also the discussion on Celtic bards below). The bards had important political functions. Their work went beyond strategic involvement in the mundane operations of a war-machine and into the production and reproduction of the songs, myths and other representations required to sustain the society. Their mundane political work was intertwined with the production and reproduction of songs that ensured the inculcation of spiritual certainty and communal solidarity in populations.

The Work of the Bard

Bards were intimately involved in practical politics. They made words work for the chieftains and kings who employed them. Whether their contribution was political or mythical, satirical or serious, a pertinent phrase or narratives that lasted a week, the bards turned language to the purpose of the war-machine. The earliest extant work of Celtic bards, that of Taliesin and Aneirin from the sixth century AD (Calder 1983: xv, xviii) has a clear political intent, it extols the virtues of their patrons and the aspirations of their nations. In this political role, bards worked the malleable, shifting interface of language and power in the war-machine: they were warriors, they had warrior instincts. This is a complex and treacherous terrain that requires great skills - intellectual and spiritual - to survive and prosper.

One role of the bard was as poet laureate ‘whose primary business was to sing the praises of their patrons, memorise their **genealogies**, celebrate their victories and lament their deaths’ (Jackson 1971: 227). The bard’s recounting of genealogy fixed the king’s claim to sovereignty firmly in time and space, endowed it with a force beyond the contingency of physical coercion and placed it within the natural order of things.

Another role of the bard was as the repository and interpreter of the **history** of the people, a vital social function that maintained communal solidarity. The bard’s stories, whether legends of origin, traditional heroic tales or the latest reports to hand, were a form of propaganda that produced social cohesion. The production of social cohesion is particularly clear in the work of one sub-set of the bards, the *brehons*, who kept the detail of ‘the great traditions’ of the law that covered issues of status, surety, hospitality, land, farming and the proper behaviour of kings. (Hughes 1977: 13-15; Herm 1976: 240)

The bard also had a role providing timely strategic advice summarised in an **inspirational message**. Harald of Norway’s bard, Thjodolf, was always on hand with a responsibility to provide such a service. After Harald’s call to his troops prior to the Battle of Stamford Bridge detailed above, Thjodolf sketched out the strategic imperatives with the song:

Though Harald himself should fall,
Never shall I abandon
The king’s young heirs
...(who) Would soon avenge their father.

(Sturluson 1966: 151)

Earlier in Harald’s and Thjodolf’s careers there is an interesting example of the king ceding strategy-making to the bard when Harald begins a poem reflecting on the pleasures of anchorage in Randers Fjord and calls on the poet to conclude the verse. Thjodolf obliges with: ‘Next year our cold-blooded anchor/Will drop in warmer oceans...’ (Sturluson, 79) - a call for the invasion of Denmark which was then pursued.

Bards who inspire populations for power have the potential, indeed the ethical responsibility, to ensure that power is not misused and this leads directly to another, counter-hegemonic role for the bard: as a foil to the power of the king and a source of **contrary advice**, often in the social interest. The bards’ proficiency with words and their aristocratic provenance, or at least countenance, provided them with a certain independence from formal hierarchies, or rather a formal position ancillary to the chain of command. Where ‘...it was a strict business relationship...[they] did not owe any personal allegiance to the kings they praised...’ (Magnusson & Palsson in Sturluson 26) and so the bard could provide a reality check as part of a professional service. Where the bard was a loyal subject who had difficulty in delineating the professional content of impartial advice, he might take on an overly deferential persona that gave his role a certain continuity with that of the fool (see for example: Welsford 1966, particularly ch. IV), so much so that the Old Cornish word *barth* means ‘a mime or buffoon’ (Jackson 228). However the bard gained the space to offer impartial advice to the king, that independent space, Murray argues, (1997: 13) allowed the bard to ‘serve the people as well as the chief.’

From the review of the bardic political work above, it becomes clear that bards were manipulating not just words but also systems of knowledge, both prosaic and beyond. While they played their role in the cut and thrust of battle and court, the bards' role was also to connect politics to the **spiritual and mythical** planes of popular consciousness. From a point of view of scientific detachment, these planes do not have to be seen as ineffable, but rather refractions around the point where language meets the techniques of magic in the imagination of the population. As Hughes (1977: 7) writes with reference to the bards' genealogical responsibilities for their king: 'There was obviously some virtue, almost a magic property, in knowing one's origins...' Similarly in recounting mythical stories, bards gave them a magical power by sometimes ignoring strict chronology so that they were, as Chadwick (1970: 289) says, 'neither of the past nor the present'. With this welding of fact and imagination, bardic stories took on a force beyond the constraints of mundane reality.

Bards channeled the mythical into the mundane through their work as seers. By entering into ritual trance, wrapped in the dark of cattle hide, nestled behind the rush of the waterfall, the bard travelled to an other-world and returned with stories and prophetic utterances. (Freeman 1995) It is wrong to view this work as distinct from the bard's political work - it is merely an extension of it, again using language to create social cohesion and collective action at the interface of the past, present and future.

There is much confusion in the literature as to where the line between the bard's mythical and political work goes. Some commentators on Celtic society distinguish between the bard and the seer or *filidh*, some fudge the distinction and others ignore it altogether. Norton-Taylor (1974: 70) defines the *filidh* as 'seers and satirists' while the bards 'composed laudatory poems...and perpetuated vital genealogical records.' Herm (1976: 239) says the bards 'sang and lectured' while the *filidh* 'counted as priests and scholars and gradually came to outrank the Druids.' He further confuses the issue with the statement: 'the bairds counted among the upper class and the *filids* were aristocrats.' (Herm 253) Calder (1983: xv, xviii) classes the bard as Welsh and the *filidh* as Irish while emphasising the functional, social nature of their songs. Jackson (227-8) ignores the distinction by calling all *comers* bards, Cruise O'Brien (1981: 243ff) by equating both bards and *filidh* with poets and Hughes (1977: 3) has it both ways with statements such as: 'There were bardic families in which the skills of the *filid* were nurtured.'

The solution to this confusion between the roles of bard and seer is to accept that while there may have been some specialisation, the roles of all the Celtic orders (*filidh*, bards and even druids) were intertwined in the production and reproduction of social myths. The remarkable thing is, given the systematic and destructive attacks on Celtic society over the centuries, these traditional orders continue to exert so much influence: Cruise O'Brien (1981: 246) writes of the respect accorded to the poet in Gaelic society during the late nineteenth century because he (and sometimes she) could 'make a satire' about a person or 'bring you out in blisters' or sicken your cattle or make 'your crops rot in the ground'. Hughes (1977: 15) notes 'the terrifying force (of the bard)...as late as the 1930s'.

The political and mythical aspects of the bard's work were intertwined by the bardic **style** which was the cohesive force that moved populations to action. Bardic verse was part of an oral tradition defined by strict metrical patterns, combining original narrative with stock formulaic phrases, elaborate similes and extended digressions. As Kuno Meyer (1970: 257) says of the bardic style: '...the Celts were always quick to take an artistic hint: they avoid the obvious and the commonplace; the half-said thing to them is the dearest.' By deleting verbs and definite articles, by dispensing with tense and by favouring the unmarked verbal noun, the bards produced an intense, dynamic 'spiralling of thought' (Calder 1983: xiii) that inspired commitment, whether to a cause, a person or life-endangering action.

Seven to twelve years of bardic training (Herm 1976: 239) was designed to produce an ability to create a persistence of style between the old and the new, between the magical and the real, between the mythical and the political. In turn, that persistence of style produced a linguistic continuity which aided the potency of the bard's utterances in the collective imagination and so ensured linguistic and social cohesion. The composition of personal lyric was a secondary consideration for the bard, an affectation for pleasure and reflection. Even then, their work is characterised by 'an astringent, objective *pudeur*, a convention of impersonality which allows voice only to the socially-sanctioned emotions and concepts.' (Cruise O'Brien 1981: 244)

The 'magic' of the bard was in the stylistic techniques which drew the maximum power to inspire action from the fewest possible words. Action is the fuel of the war-machine and the Celtic bards chose their words carefully to incite their warrior society. 'They took pleasure in murderous slapstick, pithy speech which, leaving no space for reflection, would drive a plot to cruel climaxes.' (Herm 1976: 251) Whether in the 'rushing, torrential, allusive' style of the Welsh or 'the clear-cut jewel work of Irish and Scottish composition' (Jackson 1971: 227), the bard utilised 'a sparseness, an economy of expression' (Calder 1983: xiii) to twist and turn the language into a powerful weapon for the war-machine. The bards knew the most potent magic available was in the words.

The bards knew that myths are more than simple stories - they are templates for the life of the people. A bard from the 6th century AD, Taliesin, is generally credited with a *widsith* or song which, contra Calder (1983: 101), does not have to be read as 'obscure both in meaning and function' but can be interpreted as the bard's own reflection on his work and style at the juncture of language, magic, myth and the war-machine. (See reproduction above) In this work, the intertwining of the political and mythical is obvious as is the centrality of style and the reliance on images that still have purchase today. The song reveals the complexity of the bard's role: as political ('a sword in hand') and mythical ('a slender enchanted sword'); and as a leader ('lanterns of light...a bridge...a path') and as an element of the whole ('a drop in a shower...a string in a harp'). Further, while acknowledging the imagination and

transience in their work ('star's beam...a bubble in beer...a spark in fire'), bards were also aware of its impact on the real world ('a sword...a shield...wood in a bonfire...'). Most importantly this fragment suggests the central role of style in transforming the complexity of existence ('many shapes') through training ('I have sung since I was small') into a purposeful singularity that is both a political and a mythical service to the war-machine as a social institution ('the army of the tree's branches...'). (Calder 101)

The Work of the Spin Doctor

The recurrence of bardic practices in the work of spin doctors is hardly surprising. Human community depends, now more than ever, on effective communication to create social cohesion. While industrial and information economic models tend to atomise society into individual units, nothing works without some level of cooperation and cohesion.

The cross-development of political and commercial persuasion techniques over the last century has spawned the political consultancy industry (Blumenthal 1981, Sabato 1981, Napolitan 1994) staffed by what may be termed spin doctors who frame arguments and statements to elicit their most persuasive effect on electorate-audiences (Matthews 1989: 168-81; Maltese 1994: 215-6). While spin doctors are derided as threats to democracy who 'try to alter the facts through deliberate and reckless disregard for the truth' (Dilenschneider 1998), perhaps they are merely engaged in old fashioned electioneering by modern means.

By applying integrated quantitative and qualitative research, spin doctors target and track the reactions of the specific pockets of electors needed to form a majority. They position their candidate to his or her best advantage by using media management and advertising to send carefully scripted messages through the mass media as well as via more personal kinds of contact such as direct mail and phone banking and the traditional activities of door-knocking, community networking and speech-making.

Their aim is to deliver a complex but cohesive meta-narrative designed to engage the minds of electors and to elicit from a majority of them the appropriate intellectual and emotional response in the polling booth. To do this, it is argued below, spin doctors instinctively recreate bardic technique and adapt it to new technologies with reference to new insights from the social sciences.

There are also a number of direct correlations in the detail of the work of the bard and that of the spin doctor. The spin doctor polishes a candidate's **genealogy** to produce a personal history that underlines the suitability of their character and sustains the candidate's claim to leadership. This process centres around the construction of 'image'. While the notion of image remains vague, it serves as a useful bridge between what political scientists know about electoral behaviour and what the marketing profession knows about consumer behaviour (Nimmo 1985). Boorstin (1962) identifies the key characteristics of successful image building: constructed to achieve certain goals, the image has to credibly appeal to the values and common sense of the electorate. It is 'vivid and concrete' but still ambiguous enough for voters to supply their own interpretations and make it their own. Image, like bardic genealogy, is a device to engage the audience. It is an opportunity to create a relationship between the leader and the people that comes alive in the symbolic universe created by the collective consciousness.

In producing the meta-narrative of the campaign, the spin doctor recreates the **history** of the constituency to produce a sense of social cohesion. To do this the spin doctor uses a model of voter behaviour that acknowledges not only the importance of issues and policies but also pertinent past events, current events, personal events and epistemic issues (Newman & Sheth 1985: 62-71). In this process, the spin doctor produces a functional history of the constituency with the campaign's goal as its coherent end. Demographic and opinion research are used to probe those historical facts so that, as proponents of polling have argued: 'opinion research can help a democracy to know itself...' (Berelson 1952: 313). But what the polls tell spin doctors is secondary to what they do with them as they reinvent, reinterpret and repack the history of the constituency in order to position the candidate or campaign so that the support of the maximum number of citizens coheres around them.

Like the bard, the spin doctor seeks to hone the timely and **inspirational phrases** that summarise the rationale of the campaign and produce the desired responses from the audience. These phrases are referred to as 'the message' and their construction and communication are the major part of the spin doctor's work. 'The Message is the central strategic rationale as to why a candidate or issue position is the right one at the right time and is preferable to other alternatives.' (Faucheux 1993: 26) The message may be summarised in words as a slogan which, like bardic locution, should be simple and direct, a clear and precise narrative moment with the power to turn events and yet diffuse enough to encompass the popular desire in all its emotional complexity. As Safire (quoted in Faucheux 26) says: 'Good slogans have rhyme, rhythm and alliteration to make them memorable. Great slogans may have none of these, but touch a chord of memory, release pent-up hatreds, or stir men's better natures.'

Also like the bard, the spin doctor can offer the leader not only rhetorical expertise but also **contrary advice** that could not be expected from those with closer, less professional ties. The aim of the spin doctor is to produce and disseminate the image of the candidates and the version of related events most advantageous to the campaign. To do this the spin doctor relies primarily, not on the intuitions of the candidate and campaign supporters, but on the voices of real people as reflected in the opinion polling produced in the process of targeting and tracking voters. (Mills 1986: 8-13) The strategies and 'lines' thus produced do not always accord with the candidate's predispositions and so the spin doctor must be ready to provide a reality check and argue the candidate around

with frank, and even harsh, assessments of the campaign's weaknesses.

Further, to deflect disaster and turn it into opportunity the campaign needs to be ready to employ damage control: 'the need to manage a crisis, to minimise a problem that suddenly raises its ugly head and can't be ignored.' (Stewart 1994: 24-9) Often the best method of damage control is to 'hang a lantern on the problem' which involves admitting shortcomings where necessary and then promoting those shortcomings, or at least the admissions, into a positive thing about the candidate and the campaign. (Matthews 1989: 156-8) Also, it is useful to do rigorous research of the candidate's own public record to identify contradictions in their statements and actions or any other reasons why they should not be elected. (Persinos 1994) As your opponents may be expected to do this research and release it at strategically inopportune times for your campaign, it is best for the spin doctor to confront the candidate with this material so they are prepared to respond to damaging attacks.

Through the above techniques spin doctors recreate the explicitly political work of the bard but the work of the contemporary practitioner also extends into the **mythical realm** of the bard in a number of interesting ways. The 'mythical' nature of politics is often obscured by the technocratic mind-set of many spin doctors. Some approach electoral research as just quantitative calculations to ascertain what the electorate wants to hear. But to be effective, the spin doctor must go beyond the mere science of polling to appreciate the 'magic' they are seeking to effect in managing the transition from present to future. Recent developments in polling utilising new telecommunication and computer technology and incorporating qualitative methodologies allow spin doctors to quickly assess the electorate's mood and its responses to ideas, issues and personalities with more accuracy (though perhaps with not as much emotional depth) as the bardic seer's excursions into trance. Blumenthal (1981: 5) draws out the bardic content of the work of the spin doctor when he explains:

...each candidate is a dream problem, a problem that must be solved consciously [by] stimulat[ing] the public's wish fulfillment for the candidate through the manipulation of symbols and images, enticing voters to believe that the candidate can satisfy their needs.

Like the filidh, the spin doctor must tap into the substance of people's hopes and fears and rework the myths by which they sustain themselves in order to produce the words which encapsulate people's own explanations of existence and, at the same time, convince them to action that will alter that existence.

To achieve this connection, spin doctors rely on a neo-bardic **style**, using a bardic economy of expression, to generate 'the lines' that are delivered, either 'spun' into the heat of the media battle or presented via frenzied, fragmented TV advertisements (for more on the bardic function of television, see Fiske & Hartley 1978: 85-100). Advertising, public appearances and even written materials are 'cut to the music' to create a 'spiralling of thought' which allows the spin doctor to constantly and quickly 're-position' the campaign while recruiting and inspiring supporters. Song itself plays a direct though minor role in the contemporary campaign which typically adopts a musical signature for key moments. The language of the campaign itself is most effective where it has melody, beat and a strong chorus. Some spin doctors refer to the candidates repetition of key lines as 'the mantra'.

The Contemporary Bard and the People

The use of the term war-machine throughout this paper gains a deeper theoretical purchase when read against the work of Deleuze and Guattari (1988: 351-423) who distinguish the nomadic war-machine from the state apparatus, the first as an occupant of smooth, exterior space that allows possibility to replicate, the second as an occupant of striated, interior space that confines possibility. The bulk of spin doctors' work is in that striated space, some of their work is insurgency, utilising guerilla tactics and coming from the outside (where the constituency is), not so much to win state power as to assert the peoples' will - in all its complexity, on the state.

This extension of the notion of war-machine raises some tantalising possibilities about the work of the spin doctor and their obligations to society. By understanding the work of the spin doctor as something distinct from the state, as work *on* the state rather than *of* the state, then the potential arises that the skills of the spin doctor might produce political campaigns that assist politics to escape the gravitational pull of the state, at least to the extent that politics serves the aspirations of the citizens at least as much as it serves the aspirations of the state.

These are not just utopian trajectories. The emerging information economy and its attendant global politics require new conceptualisations of how to do democratic politics. The rise of the global corporation is producing its opposition, and not just on the streets of Seattle and Melbourne. Just as anyone connected to internet can be a publisher or a critic, they can also be a spin doctor. 'The army of the tree's branches' is adapting the skills of the bard to the new technologies to create a fresh relationship between language and power that recovers both the political force of myth and the mythical dimension of politics. Already the campaigns of Greenpeace and Amnesty International indicate ways in which strategic use of trans-national media can spread ideas that produce global impacts.

There is an opportunity to rediscover something mythical in the paradox of society - humans are both the products and the constituents of the collective, forever creating and being created, producing language to produce the sustenance and survival required to produce language. In all this, purposeful language is the key: '...when, through their sound and rhythm and sense, words exert so strong a hold on us that we can think of nothing else, we still speak of their enchantment...' (Bowra 1962: 276) and it is crucial for the recreation of democracy that the skills of the spin doctors to produce and disseminate this purposeful language must be available to all.

Political decisions are made in moments of expedient compromise between ineffable human needs and an irreducible universe. To effect those decisions, the global citizenry must take the opportunity to return, in a contemporary way of course, to the mechanics of bardic myth and enchantment in order to mix prosaic politics with emotion, imagination and mythology and so lift global society to its aspirations and beyond.

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