

and Alfred, Lord Tennyson's "The Charge of the Light Brigade" are all poems that have long survived their original occasions, and W. B. Yeats' "Easter, 1916" and W. H. Auden's "September 1, 1939" are notable modern examples. England's poet laureate is often called on to meet the emergency of royal anniversaries and important public events with an appropriate occasional poem.

Ode. A long lyric poem that is serious in subject and treatment, elevated in style, and elaborate in its stanzaic structure. As Norman Maclean has said, the term now calls to mind a *lyric* which is "massive, public in its proclamations, and Pindaric in its classical prototype" ("From Action to Image," in *Critics and Criticism*, ed. R. S. Crane, 1952). The prototype was established by the Greek poet Pindar, whose odes were modeled on the songs by the *chorus* in Greek drama. His complex stanzas were patterned in sets of three: moving in a dance rhythm to the left, the chorus chanted the **strophe**; moving to the right, the **antistrophe**; then, standing still, the **epode**.

The **regular** or **Pindaric ode** in English is a close imitation of Pindar's form, with all the strophes and antistrophes written in one *stanza* pattern, and all the epodes in another. This form was introduced into England by Ben Jonson's ode "To the Immortal Memory and Friendship of That Noble Pair, Sir Lucius Cary and Sir H. Morison" (1629); the typical construction can be conveniently studied in this poem or in Thomas Gray's "The Progress of Poesy" (1757). The **irregular ode** was introduced in 1656 by Abraham Cowley, who imitated the Pindaric style and matter but disregarded the recurrent stanzaic pattern in each strophic triad; instead, he allowed each stanza to establish its own pattern of variable line lengths, number of lines, and rhyme scheme. This type of irregular stanzaic structure, which is free to alter in accordance with shifts in subject and mood, has been the most common for the English ode ever since; Wordsworth's "Ode: Intimations of Immortality" (1807) is representative.

Pindar's odes were **encomiastic**; that is, they were written to praise and glorify someone—in the instance of Pindar, the ode celebrated a victorious athlete in the Olympic games. The earlier English odes, and many later ones, were also written to eulogize something, such as a person (John Dryden's "Anne Killigrew"), or the arts of music or poetry (Dryden's "Alexander's Feast"), or a time of day (Collins' "Ode to Evening"), or abstract concepts (Gray's "Hymn to Adversity" and Wordsworth's "Ode to Duty"). Romantic poets perfected the personal ode of description and passionate meditation, which is stimulated by (and sometimes at its close reverts to) an aspect of the outer scene and turns on the attempt to solve either a personal emotional problem or a generally human one (Wordsworth's "Intimations" ode, Coleridge's "Dejection: An Ode," Shelley's "Ode to the West Wind"). Recent examples of this latter type are Allen Tate's "Ode to the Confederate Dead" and Wallace Stevens' "The Idea of Order at Key West." See M. H. Abrams, "Structure and Style in the Greater Romantic Lyric," in *The Correspondent Breeze*, 1984.

The **Horatian ode** was originally modeled on the matter, tone, and form of the odes of the Roman Horace. In contrast to the passion, visionary boldness, and formal language of Pindar's odes, many Horatian odes are calm, meditative, and colloquial; they are also usually **homostrophic** (that is, written in a single repeated stanza form), and shorter than the Pindaric ode. Examples are Marvell's "An Horatian Ode upon Cromwell's Return from Ireland" (1650) and Keats' ode "To Autumn" (1820).

See Robert Shafer, *The English Ode to 1660* (1918); G. N. Shuster, *The English Ode from Milton to Keats* (1940, reprinted 1964); Carol Maddison, *Apollo and the Nine: A History of the Ode* (1960)—this book includes a discussion of the odes of Pindar and Horace (chapter 2); John Heath-Stubbes, *The Ode* (1969); Paul H. Fry, *The Poet's Calling in the English Ode* (1980).

Onomatopoeia, sometimes called **echoism**, is used both in a narrow and in a broad sense.

- (1) In the narrow and most common use, onomatopoeia designates a word, or a combination of words, whose sound seems to resemble closely the sound it denotes: "hiss," "buzz," "rattle," "bang." There is no exact duplication, however, of nonverbal by verbal sounds; the perceived similarity is due as much to the meaning, and to the feel of articulating the words, as to their sounds. Two lines of Alfred, Lord Tennyson's "Come Down, O Maid" (1847) are often cited as a skillful instance of onomatopoeia:

The moan of doves in immemorial elms,
And murmuring of innumerable bees.

The American critic John Crowe Ransom has remarked that by making only two changes in the consonants of the last line, we lose the echoic effect because we change the meaning drastically: "And murdering of innumerable beeves."

The sounds seemingly mimicked by onomatopoeic words need not be pleasant ones. Robert Browning liked squishy and scratchy effects, as in "Meeting at Night" (1845):

As I gain the cove with pushing prow,
And quench its speed i' the slushy sand.
A tap at the pane, the quick sharp scratch
And blue spurt of a lighted match. . . .

Compare *euphony* and *cacophony*.

- (2) In the broad sense, "onomatopoeia" is applied to words or passages which seem to correspond to, or to strongly suggest, what they denote in any way whatever—in size, movement, tactile feel, or force, as well as sound (see *sound-symbolism*). Alexander Pope recommends such extended verbal mimicry in his *Essay on Criticism* (1711) when he says that "the sound should seem an echo of the sense," and goes on to illustrate his maxim by mimicking two different kinds of action