## Contents

List of Figures	ix
Acknowledgements	х
Chapter 1	
Singing Ideas: An Alternative History of Thought	1
(Un)doing History: The Authority of Literacy and the	
Performativity of Thought	5
Oral Trouble and Women's Voices: Searching for Intellectual	
Traditions Beyond the Written Word	9
Singing Politics and Power in Society: Some Comparative Examples	12
Seizing Agency: Women of Song	15
Beyond the Limits of Textuality: Performing the Past and	
Performing Thought	17
Chapter 2	
'Where Everything Trembles in the Balance': Song as a Liminal	
Ludic Space	23
The Theory of Liminality	24
Performing Liminality: Poetry as a Symbolic Marker for Liminality	
in the Irish Tradition	26
A Journey to the Sacred and Back: The Liminality of the	
Aisling (Vision)	29
Song and Oral Poetic Performance as Ritual	31
Separating from the Profane: Ekstasis and Song	34
Moments of Potentiality: The Antistructure of Melody and Verse	
in the Irish Tradition	36
The Ritual Powers of (Song)Poetry: Satire, Insult and Fearlessness	41
The Potentiality of the Play-Sphere: The Challenging Discourse	
of Song	43
The Singer of Ideas as 'Seer of Communitas': The Liminality of	
Song and the Generation of Ideas	51

Chapter 3	
Singing Parrhesia: Máire Bhuí Ní Laeire, Song Performance and	
Politics in Nineteenth-Century Ireland	56
Máire Bhuí Ní Laeire: Nineteenth-Century Song Poet	59
Irish-Language Song-Making: Poetry as Performance and the	
Aesthetics of Orality	65
Multiformity and Oral Formulaic Techniques	69
Local Agrarian Agitation and the Creation of the Poetic Radical	78
Crisis and Charisma: The Song Poet as Prophet and Truth-Teller	86
Identity and the Aesthetics of Orality: New Ideas and the Narrative	
of Belonging	104
Framing the Revolution: Performing Antistructure and the Vision	
of the Revolution through Song	110
From Generation to Generation to Regeneration: The Legacy	
of Ideas through Song	113
Conclusion. Singing Ideas in Society: Experience, Song and	
'Passing Through'	125
Appendix of Songs and Lore	131
Bibliography	191
Index	201