

Listening Harder: Reticulating Poetic Tradition in Michele Leggott's 'Blue Irises'

Janet Newman

Although Michele Leggott's third collection of poems, *DIA* (1994), won the New Zealand Book Award for poetry,¹ it did not always fare so well with reviewers, especially those reluctant to accept its fragmented quotational strategies. Not unlike early responses to T. S. Eliot's 'The Waste Land' (1922), which 'provoked charges of intentional obscurity' because of its 'highly allusive character',² some critics balked at Leggott's 'appropriation'³ of words, phrases and lines from earlier poets. Iain Sharp described her method as 'filching lines';⁴ Jane Stafford also took issue with Leggott's 'willful obscurity'.⁵ Bill Direen, however, wondered, 'if in fact one might be witnessing the rebirth of New Zealand poetry'.⁶

Leggott's steady rise to prominence in the following twenty years appears to confirm Direen's prescience: she has published eight collections of poems to increasing acclaim, was the New Zealand Poet Laureate (2007-9), and received the Prime Minister's Award for Literary Achievement in 2013. *The Auckland University Press Anthology of New Zealand Literature* (2012), co-edited by Stafford, includes five sonnets from *DIA*'s central poem 'Blue Irises' in a section called 'Writing Back'⁷—implying a significant revision of Stafford's earlier assessment of the poet's strategies. Through a close reading of 'Blue Irises', this essay will argue for the innovation of Leggott's 'writing back' within the New Zealand literary scene at the time of *DIA*'s publication, and emphasize the gendered politics at stake in the work. Bearing in

mind Leggott's own differential mode of production—that historicising and contextualizing are primarily the tasks of scholarship rather than poetry⁸—the essay's second purpose is to provide a critical companion to some of the sources of 'Blue Irises'.

'Blue Irises', a sequence of thirty sonnets making up the central section of *DIA*, enlarges on themes of motherhood and family addressed in Leggott's earlier collections, and fundamentally challenges the male-centeredness of the traditional English poetry canon and the influence of that canon on published poetry in New Zealand. One way it does this is by focusing on New Zealand women poets who Leggott believed suffered undeserved neglect. It weaves quotations from their poetry into her work through a strategy of unspecified, intertextual borrowing. Leggott's strategy appears to utilise conventional intertextual approaches to a unique end with respect to New Zealand poetry. Through the process of 'reticulation'—a term she uses to describe the method by which she creates complex networks of reference, interlacing quotations from diverse sources in new contexts⁹—she creates an alternative poetic world. This is a female-centred poetic, created from an amalgamation of the work of silenced women poets from New Zealand and elsewhere, and her own voice. Through reclamation and reshaping, Leggott creates a poetic whereby neglected women's voices are heard equally, not as part of a hierarchy, and where her own voice takes a place in the alternative poetic tradition she establishes.

A 'material quoted' index at the beginning of *DIA* lists the names of the women poets whose work she has woven into the collection. This is a limited resource, however, because it omits precise details about the origins of quoted material: specific authors, poem titles and line numbers are absent. For example, the listings for Robin Hyde and Eileen Duggan each comprise the titles of four collections—a substantial body of work to sift through in order to locate the quotations that appear without

specific reference points in Leggott's work. The text of 'Blue Irises' provides no help with locating the sources of quotation, or, in many cases, with finding the quotations themselves, which are not identified by quotation marks or footnotes. Some lines and phrases are italicised, which would seem to indicate that these are ones from external sources, but this is not exclusively the case. Furthermore, the sonnets contain quotations from sources that are not listed—from female as well as male poets, from a variety of countries and time periods. The strategy begs the question: what end is served by including unmarked quotations and an incomplete and nonspecific list of sources? It is a question worthy of consideration, and one that, until now, has not been investigated.

Leggott's purpose is to draw the voices of female poets from different time periods together and to join her voice with theirs in a poetic of reconstruction. Instead of source references, she provides a list of the names of neglected women poets whose work contributes to her work, and a note at the end of the collection that explains her gendered polemic. She writes:

[s]ome of the poems here stare down the literary oblivion of several New Zealand women poets, looking for what was lost when we asserted that good poetry in this country was shaped exclusively by British-derived Modernism of the 1930s and 1940s. It is time we listened in other places in order to draw some of those shadowy figures back into the conversation about language and place. To this end I have practiced a kind of ventriloquism, picking out white-hot lines from the poems of (among others) Robin Hyde and Eileen Duggan and recombining them with an ear for the heart, complexity, and engagement with which they were written.

In her introduction to *Young Knowledge: The Poems of Robin Hyde* (2003), Leggott remarks: 'A different configuration is needed to

transmit the excitement of Hyde's poetry and its relevance for a contemporary audience'.¹⁰ 'Blue Irises' provides this different configuration. By withholding quotation marks, she avoids bracketing off the work of Hyde and other women poets like curated relics in a museum. The ambiguity of where Leggott's words end and the quotations begin permits the creation of a unified whole. Lines from past poems are integral parts of the new work, forcing readers to contend with their continued relevance within a composition that conveys their 'excitement' by relocating them in a contemporary, feminized poetic.

To better understand the polemical nature of Leggott's allusive strategies, it is useful to turn to Michael André Bernstein, who argued that the large number of 'pre-texts' available to modernist writers, and the loss of a definitive traditional literary canon to which writers and readers might refer, meant that modernist poets were able to use quotation and reference to establish their own new tradition rather than to emulate existing canonical texts. This resulted, he argued, in 'a set of inevitably idiosyncratic assemblages [...] whose very compilation is a polemical gesture'.¹¹ Moreover, he claimed, 'in the absence of a relatively homogeneous and stable hierarchy of values [...] each writer is not only free to select his own *exempla*, but also has the responsibility, implicitly or explicitly, to justify the terms of his selection'.¹² Bernstein's gender pronouns highlight the 'modernist patriarchy' Leggott is critiquing with her postmodern, feminist strategies. In her note in *DLA*, she makes clear her purpose and intent, thereby 'justifying' the 'terms of [her] selection: 'raiding and rewriting (poetry's) androcentric history'. Establishing the continued relevance of neglected women poets by interweaving their words and images within a revised and feminized poetic is a positive approach to their revival. It counters the negative notion of 'rescuing' women poets who were silenced by poetry's patriarchal tradition. Leggott achieves what Bernstein described as a 'decisive qualitative change in the work' resulting from 'a quantitative change' in the range of the

pre-texts available. A selected range of pre-texts enables the establishment 'of the boundaries of [her] own tradition'.¹³ Leggott's poetic canon traces back to Sappho rather than traditional male origins: Homer, Catullus, Horace and Ovid. Her local moment and setting is late twentieth-century New Zealand but she reinvents it as a gynocentric landscape.

Leggott deliberately withholds explicit identification of the 'material quoted', complicating the reader's ability to distinguish her voice from a multitude of others. In this way, she achieves the 'speaking together'¹⁴ of female poets whose neglect has left them disparate. Words and phrases separated from original contexts become an integral part of 'Blue Irises'. Assemblages of original and sourced material, associations between the two and between the sources from which quoted material has been derived, combine to create an intact entity. The willful act of 'reticulation' becomes the unifying agent—the adhesive, webbing the fragmented texts together.

Leggott's strategy appears to convert the concept of 'intertextuality' into a practice of explicit intertextual reference that purposefully seeks to submerge the authorial presence within a polyphony of voices introduced via quotation from a range of demarcated texts. She converts the poststructuralist concept into an artistic procedure in order to intentionally exploit the multiplicity of meanings that arise through association and connotation from a predetermined selection of sampled texts. Her focus appears to be on the loss of a text's autonomy and the lack of authorial control, which she manipulates in order to create her own 'intertext' centred on the female aesthetic and the creation of a female poetic tradition.

By dispensing with quotation marks and a single referent, Leggott destabilizes what Jacques Derrida termed the 'phallogocentric' order of representation and reference. This term describes the 'patriarchal "logocentric" order [...] in which a work or a referent functions as a stabilizing ("seminal") source and provides the authority of meaning'.¹⁵ Arguably, then, her

intertextual borrowing ‘underwrites a critique of logocentrism and of patriarchy, substituting for patriarchal self-presence the feminizing “otherness” of intertextual “lapses”’.¹⁶ Further, Leggott’s use of pronouns without obvious subject referents (I, he, she, we, they and you (used both as second person singular and plural)), and her irregular approach to italicizing quotations, function as deliberate ‘lapses’ that further emphasise the ‘feminizing otherness’ of the work.

In this respect, Leggott’s method appears to resemble the work of the postmodernist American essayist and poet, Susan Howe.¹⁷ Howe’s poetry entwines unsourced quotations and original work to recontextualise past texts in order to articulate lost voices from the historical record, which are invariably female. Ming-Qian Ma’s reading of Howe’s poetry, particularly with respect to her intertextual allusions, borrowings and graftings, offers insights into how we might read Leggott’s specific geographical and gendered inflections:

through her borrowed text [...] Howe outlines a revised history, in which the so-called chronicle of civilization is exposed as a murderous campaign against the Other and in which what has formerly kept invisible and silent is given form and voice.¹⁸

With regard to Leggott’s technique of obscuring her authorial presence to permit other voices to emerge, we might look to Gerald L. Bruns’s reading of Howe’s work. Bruns suggests that Howe’s ‘philosophy of composition [...] is that of quotation and collage, to which she adds, however, a dimension of *intersubjectivity*, meaning that in writing she is always herself and others’.¹⁹ Bruns describes Howe as ‘a *fluid* or [...] *porous* subject’ who is interested not in ‘self-possession but in self-alterity’.²⁰ ‘Blue Irises’ reveals similar strategies of ‘intersubjectivity,’ as this comment from Leggott suggests: ‘There is no way of telling where one bit-part finishes and another starts; and it is only my voice signing to the first person pronouns’.²¹ This self-

effacement of the self in a plurality of impossible-to-locate 'I's, parallels Howe's submersion of her own voice within an aggregate of others.

Ironically, Leggott appears to borrow strategies from a particular contingent of what she calls 'British-derived Modernism' in order to call it into question. She utilises methods of quotation employed by the American poet Louis Zukofsky—the subject of Leggott's doctoral research, and a subsequent scholarly monograph²²—whose work is dense with unattributed allusion. *DIA's* 'material quoted' section resembles the imprecision of the index that begins Zukofsky's 'Poem Beginning "The"' (1928).²³ This poem parodies the convention of providing a list of quoted material, and its incomplete and farcical index subverts the convention that quotations must be bracketed off from the host text—for example, by quotation marks or footnotes for example. The poem itself contains no single host; it is made entirely of numbered quotations that resist connection. Leggott appears to appropriate Zukofsky's idea that quotation need not exist as a textual adjunct for her own end, which is to compose a work in which integrated quotations in fact form a network of connectivity.

Leggott's strategy of deliberate, unspecified intertextual borrowing is distinct because its objective is to reclaim and restore the poetry of neglected New Zealand women poets, thereby subverting the dominance of earlier, male poets, within the New Zealand canon. This method is evident in lines 1-4 and 12-14 of Sonnet 17, where Leggott conflates her voice with Eileen Duggan's to delineate the neglected poet as a point of departure from the patriarchal line:

Suppose, sweet eyes, you went into a distant country
mad with the honey and the noon in your throat
a fiery drizzle of rip and glory asking: Where
are the words that broke the heart with beauty?

[...] Your sweetness ripples through the rain
of a country to which you may never return You
are the still caesura that breaks a line in two

Numerous lines from Duggan's poetry are interwoven into Leggott's sonnet. 'Suppose, sweet eyes, you went into a distant country' is the first line of Duggan's 'The Tui';²⁴ 'Rip and glory' is line ten from 'Plagiarism'.²⁵ 'Where are the words that broke the heart with beauty?' is the first line of 'Shades of Maro of Toulouse' which decries the modernist aesthetic that overtook Duggan's work,²⁶ and 'You are the still caesura/ that breaks a line in two' are the first two lines of 'Night'.²⁷ Leggott's reworking of the latter lines skews meaning from the original poem's contemplation of national pride to a reflection of New Zealand's patriarchal poetic landscape. This was evidenced by Duggan's refusal to allow her work to be included in Allen Curnow's 1945 and 1951 Caxton anthologies, or in the 1960 *Penguin Book of New Zealand Verse* due to what Leggott calls 'issues of representation' and 'what was perceived as an unwelcome prescriptiveness in the Caxton-Penguin line': 'Curnow wanted to show in 1945 that the whole effect of Duggan's work was of an emotional cliché',²⁸ despite her being 'for a number of years [...] the best-known and most widely admired of New Zealand poets'.²⁹ Duggan's first major collection, *Poems*, was reprinted in the United States in 1938 with an enlarged second edition in 1939, and her second collection, *New Zealand Poems* (1940), also ran to second editions in the United States and Great Britain. By citing quotations from Duggan's work within a contemporary perspective, Leggott reflects on her absence from the male-dominated and male-edited New Zealand anthologies published in New Zealand, post-WWII, and creates, from these fragments and her own words, a sonnet that reshapes them within a contemporary, feminized poetic.

Further melding of quotations from past and present New Zealand poets occurs in lines 5-7 of Sonnet 16. Here Leggott revises lines from her contemporary Bernadette Hall, linking these with lines from the work of Duggan and Hyde. The question that results juxtaposes Leggott's and Hall's contemporary experience and perspective with Duggan and Hyde's battle for poetic recognition in New Zealand, and Hyde's 1930s struggle to combine writing and motherhood in conditions of poverty, isolation and moral conformity.

What are we going to do
about that moon in the ngaio tree beating like
a fontanelle?

The question is an amalgam of 'beating like a fontanelle/ within the ngaio tree' from Hall's 1989 poem 'Constructing a Landscape'³⁰ and 'Here have seen His first moon in the ngaio trees' from Duggan's 1937 poem 'A New Zealand Christmas'.³¹ Leggott uses the shared image of the New Zealand native ngaio tree to draw into chorus the voices of the poets separated by more than fifty years. By dispensing with quotation marks she creates one voice from an amalgam of theirs and hers, rather than a collection of labelled, and therefore isolated, individual voices.

In line ten in the same sonnet, Leggott reticulates a phrase from Hyde's 1938-9 poem 'China is floating past me:' 'Lord butterfly on lord hibiscus spray',³² which describes a 'broken moon' as Hyde leaves China:

Lord butterfly on lord hibiscus spray
are we through crying and the big heart's big conversation
with pain? Two sons, two sons and crowning
isn't a light word any more than a light kiss
resembles a dark one Which you are

'Two sons' acknowledges the poets' shared experience of motherhood and is poignant in regard to Hyde whose first son,

Robin, was ‘stillborn or died at birth’ in 1926.³³ Hyde took his name as her pseudonym, an act Leggott describes as ‘deliberate androgyny’.³⁴ Hyde’s given name was Iris and ‘[h]er own eyes [...] were blue’,³⁵ providing Leggott with the title of her sonnet sequence. Including Hyde’s line with Leggott’s own words, which reflect on Hyde’s life from a contemporary perspective, forms the reticulation—or network—of multiple voices and associations that underpin the sequence.

By fusing the voices of Hyde, Duggan and Hall with her own voice, Leggott creates an amalgam of New Zealand women poets’ voices. She restores Hyde’s work in a gynocentric poetic that ‘androcratic society’ would ‘not countenance: sexuality celebrated and inscribed by a woman’.³⁶ Leggott’s melding of unsourced quotation permits all voices, including her own, to contribute equally to her alternate, female-centred poetic.

As suggested, Leggott is clearly ‘writing back’ against the male-focused, traditional canon of New Zealand poetry that excluded and ignored past New Zealand female poets. But she is also ‘writing back’ to the patriarchal tradition of canonical British poetry, including male modernists she admires despite their androcentric record. By reticulation, for example, she brings to the New Zealand context the poetry of Ezra Pound, subverting his work to highlight its masculine focus. She does this by adapting the poetic form in which gendered assumptions about masculine dominance and female objectification have been canonically encoded for centuries: the sonnet.

In lines 4-12 of Sonnet 5, Leggott subverts quotations from Pound to expose the constriction of the male gaze—not only its narrow definition of women but also its restricted formulation of poetic language:

[...] For him
the language is a woman’s body and she
will stand out in the rain a hundred years
running it back at him Hast ‘ou seen the rose

in the steeldust (or swansdown ever?) Have
you seen a falcon stoop? Hast thou found a nest
softer than cunnus? Can yee see it brusle
like a Swan? O so white! O so soft! O so sweet
is she

‘Hast ‘ou seen the rose/ in the steeldust (or swansdown ever?)’ is from Pound’s ‘Canto 74’.³⁷ His line is in turn a variation of ‘Have you felt the wool ‘o the beaver/ Or swans down ever?’ from lines 25-6 of Ben Jonson’s ‘A Celebration of Charis: IV Her Triumph’ (1640),³⁸ which valorizes the physical beauty of the goddess. ‘Hast thou found a nest softer than cunnus’ is from Pound’s Canto 47.³⁹ ‘Can yee see it brusle/ like a Swan?’ is from Robert Herrick’s ‘A Nuptiall Song, or Epithalamie, on Sir Clipsey Crew and His Lady’.⁴⁰ The line refers to the marriage bed in stanza 12, which ends with the phrase ‘and Drowne/ the night, with you, in floods of Downe’. The subsequent ‘O so white! O so soft! O so sweet/ is she’ is the final line of Jonson’s poem. Separation of the last two words to a new line raises the question: ‘is she?’ in opposition to Jonson’s exclamatory finale. Leggott quotes the work of the male poets who reused the traditional metaphors of love poetry in order to recontextualize their objectification of women. In doing so, she takes back control, ‘running it back at him.’

As the above example suggests, Leggott’s strategy of selective allusion examines and reconfigures that tradition of poetry from which the work of women poets was excluded. Lines 1-4 of Sonnet 5 attest to the male-centeredness of traditional love poetry by exposing the lack of an established vocabulary for female poets:

She made him a porpoise *gills a-snort*
because it was so hard to configure that body
The words weren’t there or they rolled over
and supplied mermaids and mariners

The phrase ‘*gills a-snort*’ is taken from line 13 of Elizabeth Barrett-Browning’s ‘Sonnets from the Portuguese 37’ (1850). Barrett-Browning’s sonnet refers to the difficulty of honouring her poetic subject through the metaphor of a shipwrecked sailor who inadequately honours God with the sculpture of a dolphin. It ends with ‘vibrant tail, within the temple gate’—phrases that Leggott uses to close Sonnet 5 and begin Sonnet 6. Leggott’s own words reflect on the difficulty experienced by Barrett-Browning as she wrote her sonnets in the absence of a tradition of a vocabulary for female love poetry. The phrases ‘it was so hard to configure that body/ The words weren’t there’ acknowledge the absence of an established poetic language for women to articulate desire, at the time when Barrett-Browning was writing and sonnets predominantly concerned male contemplation of female subjects.

Leggott’s sonnet sequence reclaims the sonnet as love poem by subverting the work of Jonson, Herrick and Pound, to expose the female objectification inherent within traditional love poetry. It includes the words of Sappho translated by Mary Barnard, and Barrett-Browning who also appears as a protagonist, and connects New Zealand women poets Leggott believes were undeservedly neglected with a wider tradition of neglected women writers from the English canon. It offers an alternate vision: a sonnet sequence in which empowered women celebrate and inscribe female sexuality.

One way Leggott creates a dominant female aesthetic is by incorporating words and phrases from the Sapphic fragments with her own words to illuminate what she calls the ‘irrefragible’ record, reporting that Hyde too ‘called attention to the Sapphic fragments as she sensed an iron sea closing over women poets in her own time’.⁴¹ She incorporates quotations from Mary Barnard’s *Sappho: A New Translation* (1958)⁴² in lines 9-14 from Sonnet 27:

[...]

be violets tiaras in tune

with celestial mechanics o memes tinkling
in the afternoon *you're so graced*
to be placed pink-ankled in orbit at
the imagined corners with all these bodies
making a song and dance about conjunction

The Sapphic phrases ‘violet tiaras’ and ‘pink-ankled’ are woven into an image of women frolicking at the Agapanthus Motel—a name that evokes New Zealand where motels gardens are often planted with the exotic perennial. The final line ‘making a song and dance about conjunction’ puns on the textual aggregation of quoted fragments and original phrases. By working the Sapphic phrases into original images, Leggott asserts their contemporary relevance, while alluding to their ancient, and arguably neglected, record. Barnard’s translation is acknowledged in the ‘material quoted’ section at the beginning of *DLA* alongside work by Fleur Adcock, Ursula Bethell, Duggan, Hall, Dinah Hawken, Hyde, Anne Ridler, and Mary Stanley, drawing together the record of female poets from ancient to contemporary times.

Another way Leggott creates a female aesthetic is by using subversive syntax and pronominal slippage to transform the quotations employed, such as lines 4-8 in Sonnet 6:

The bee in the fox-glove, the mouth on the nipple
Words! and be forgiven hot kisses translated
with cool accuracy She ripples past his lilly
in a Christal to get at a thyme-burning bee
shut up in a crystalline Perfect footwork

‘The bee in the foxglove, the mouth on the nipple’ is the first line from Adcock’s ‘Ngauranga Gorge Hill’.⁴³ The shifting pronouns—from the second person ‘you’ in line 3 to the third person ‘she’ in line 6—serve to grant agency to the female protagonist, Barrett-Browning. She challenges Herrick’s poem ‘The Lilly in a Christal’,⁴⁴ which also uses imagery of ‘swan’ and ‘snow’ to describe female beauty, and whose female subject is

entombed in the male gaze. In contrast, the 'she' in Leggott's sonnet seeks out the trapped bee (previously a metaphor for her entrapment), which may be a suggestive metaphor for her own desire. The words 'shut up' imply that Herrick's romantic notion of the lily is actually a state of imprisonment, and allude to the silencing of neglected women poets whose work often remained unpublished. Leggott's sonnet transforms Herrick's protagonist's view as male admirer, replacing it with the perspective of the agential female protagonist who is no longer silent and passive. The bee refers back to Adcock's poem, in which the speaker apologises for using images of sensual procreation within a description of vegetative and intellectual sterility in Wellington. In this way, Leggott's sonnet brings to New Zealand's poetic landscape the issue of female objectification in traditional love poetry, and rewrites the male aesthetic of female beauty by centering on the articulation of female desire.

Ways of knowing 'down' and 'snow' other than as images of female beauty are also recalled by Howe in her reading of allusion in Emily Dickinson's poems, which is instructive when considering Leggott's work. In *My Emily Dickinson*,⁴⁵ Howe analyses Dickinson's poem 'My Life had stood—a Loaded Gun' which contains the lines (15-16): 'Tis better than the Eider Duck's/ Deep Pillow—to have shared—'. Howe claims Dickinson's words allude to a scene in *Wuthering Heights* (1847) where Catherine Earnshaw tears open a pillow, filling the room with eider feathers resembling snow because she was 'driven mad by her inability to detach Heathcliff from herself, and remorse over marrying Edgar'.⁴⁶ Howe describes how the female eider duck plucks from her breast the down that lines her nest, using this as a metaphor for the constriction of nineteenth-century marriage: 'A newly married wife shares her pillow with her husband even if what she rests her head on is the freedom she has plucked from her own breast'.⁴⁷ Dickinson's words, she says, suggest 'Death and smothering'.⁴⁸ Howe's analogy, however, may also be read as the eider duck creating her female

space for nurturing, and the room filled with down as sustenance for poets—apt and touching images for Howe and Leggott’s feminist poetic. There is an aspect of reclamation in Leggott’s project, but she wants the voices to be heard equally, and she takes her own place in the tradition she establishes, shaping new things out of past language, shaping poems out of the ‘down’ she finds in the air about her.

Notes

- ¹ Michele Leggott, *DLA* (Auckland: Auckland University Press), 1994. The sonnet sequence ‘Blue Irises’ covers pp. 8-39.
- ² *The Broadview Anthology of British Literature: The Twentieth Century and Beyond*, Vol 6, ed. by Joseph Black et al. (Canada: Broadview Press, 2006), p. 443 and p. 451.
- ³ Jane Stafford, ‘The Panic of O’, *New Zealand Books*, 4.3 (September 1994), 10-11.
- ⁴ Iain Sharp, ‘Books’ *Evening Post* (7 Oct 1994), 7.
- ⁵ Stafford, ‘The Panic of O’, p. 11.
- ⁶ Bill Direen, ‘Rebirth’, *New Zealand Listener* (19 November 1994), 65.
- ⁷ *The Auckland University Press Anthology of New Zealand Literature* ed. by Jane Stafford and Mark Williams (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2012), pp. 889-92.
- ⁸ See, for example, Leggott’s essay ‘Opening the Archive: Robin Hyde, Eileen Duggan and the Persistence of Record’, in *Opening the Book*, ed. by Mark Williams and Michele Leggott (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1995), pp. 266-93.
- ⁹ Leggott used the term ‘reticulation’ in conversation with the author at the Five Loaves Café in Devonport, Auckland, on 15 September 2012.
- ¹⁰ Robin Hyde, *Young Knowledge: The Poems of Robin Hyde* ed. by Michele Leggott (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2003), p. 7.

- 11 Michael André Bernstein, 'Bringing it all Back Home: Derivations and Quotations in Robert Duncan and the Poundian Tradition', *Sagetrieb*, 1.2 (Fall 1982), 176-89 (p. 178).
- 12 Bernstein, p. 178.
- 13 Bernstein, p. 178.
- 14 Leggott, *DLA*, author's note, n.p.
- 15 *The New Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, ed. by Alex Preminger and T. V. F. Brogan (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), p. 621.
- 16 *The New Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics*, p. 621.
- 17 A photocopy of the title page of Howe's *My Emily Dickinson* (1985), included in study notes accompanying Massey University's graduate paper 'Contemporary New Zealand Writers in an International Context', confirms that Leggott was familiar with Howe's work. It carries the handwritten dedication: 'For Michele, with much admiration and hoping to see you soon, love Susan (Howe)'. A dedication on the title page of Howe's 1990 poetry collection *Singularities*—also copied in the study notes—indicates that Leggott later met Howe. It reads: 'Michele from Susan Howe in memory of a great Duncan week in March 1996'.
- 18 Ming-Qian Ma, 'Poetry as History Revised: Susan Howe's "Scattering As Behavior Toward Risk"', *American Literary History*, 6.4 (Winter 1994), 716-37 (p. 726).
- 19 Gerald L. Bruns, 'Voices of Construction: On Susan Howe's Poetry and Poetics (A Citational Ghost Story)' *Contemporary Literature* 50. 1 (Spring 2009), 28-53 (p. 43). Emphases in the original.
- 20 Bruns, p. 29.
- 21 *DLA*, author's note, n.p.
- 22 Michele Leggott, *Reading Zukofsky's 80 Flowers* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1989).
- 23 Louis Zukofsky, *Complete Short Poetry with a Foreword by Robert Creeley* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), p. 8.

- ²⁴ Eileen Duggan, *New Zealand Bird Songs* (1929). <<http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tm/scholarly/tei-DugNewZ-t1-body-d1.html>> [Accessed 2 February 2015].
- ²⁵ Eileen Duggan, *Poems* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1937), p. 51.
- ²⁶ Eileen Duggan, *More Poems* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1951), p. 17.
- ²⁷ Duggan, *More Poems*, p. 27.
- ²⁸ Leggott, 'Opening the Archive', p. 284; p. 282.
- ²⁹ *The Oxford Companion of New Zealand Literature*, ed. by Roger Robinson and Nelson Wattie (Auckland: Oxford University Press, 1998). <<http://www.bookcouncil.org.nz/writers/profiles/duggan,%20eileen>> [Accessed 3 February 2015].
- ³⁰ Bernadette Hall, *Heartwood* (Christchurch: The Caxton Press, 1989), pp. 7-8.
- ³¹ Duggan, *Poems*, p. 37.
- ³² *Young Knowledge: The Poems of Robin Hyde* ed. by Michele Leggott (Auckland: Auckland University Press, 2003), p. 353.
- ³³ *Your Unselfish Kindness: Robin Hyde's Autobiographical Writings*, ed. by Mary Edmond-Paul (Dunedin: Otago University Press, 2011), p. 10.
- ³⁴ Leggott, 'Opening the Archive', p. 271.
- ³⁵ 'Opening the Archive', p. 271.
- ³⁶ 'Opening the Archive', p. 271.
- ³⁷ Ezra Pound, *The Cantos* (London: Faber and Faber, 1954), p. 449.
- ³⁸ Ben Jonson, 'A Celebration of Charis: IV Her Triumph' <<http://www.poetryfoundation.org/poem/173715>> [Accessed 2 February 2015].
- ³⁹ Pound, *The Cantos*, p. 238.
- ⁴⁰ *The Complete Poetry of Robert Herrick* ed. by J. Max Patrick (New York University Press, 1963), pp. 154-8.
- ⁴¹ Leggott, 'Opening the Archive', p. 290.
- ⁴² Mary Barnard, *Sappho: A New Translation* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1958), fragments 42 and 47.

- ⁴³ Fleur Adcock, *High Tide in the Garden* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971).
- ⁴⁴ *The Complete Poetry of Robert Herrick*, pp. 107-9.
- ⁴⁵ Susan Howe, *My Emily Dickinson* (Berkeley: North Atlantic Books, 1985), p. 764.
- ⁴⁶ Howe, *My Emily Dickinson*, p. 109.
- ⁴⁷ *My Emily Dickinson*, p. 109.
- ⁴⁸ *My Emily Dickinson*, p. 110.