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**JOYCE'S FICTION
AND
THE NEW RISE
OF
THE NOVEL**

*A special volume to celebrate the X Annual Conference organized
by
The James Joyce Italian Foundation*

*edited by
Franca Ruggieri*

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FRANCA RUGGERI

FOREWORD

JOYCE'S FICTION? "OH! IT IS ONLY A NOVEL"
(*NORTHANGER ABBEY*, 1798)

More than two hundred years have elapsed since Catherine Morland uttered these words in her meek defence of the novel, a poor new literary genre at the time with no precise rules and often disregarded by mainstream criticism.

Over these two centuries, the production of novels, their potential variety and the ambiguous fluidity in how they might be defined and structured, is, and continues to be, prolific, despite the immediate death of the genre being announced on several occasions. This is what T.S. Eliot asserted in "*Ulysses*, Order and Myth" in 1923, claiming that Joyce's use of the mythical method "had the importance of a scientific discovery" and predicting the end of the kind of fiction known as the novel. Indeed, he also observed that Joyce's *Ulysses* was not really a novel: might it be called an epic instead? It could not be a novel; this was a form that would no longer serve. The novel, after all, had ended with Gustave Flaubert and Henry James.

And yet in a letter written in Italian on 21st September 1920 to Carlo Linati, Joyce defined *Ulysses* as his "maledettissimo roman-zazione"; a novel, therefore, albeit a "damnedest, horribly enormous novel", which, as would be repeated on various occasions, was also "the epic of two races, the cycle of the human body as well as a little story of a day (life). Also a kind of encyclopaedia." We should also stress here that the actual word Joyce uses in the letter is "roman-zazione" where the noun (*romanzo*) is modified by the pejorative suf-

fix (-*accio*), as well as an augmentative second suffix (-*one*). This is not rendered particularly well in English by “monster novel”, a term introduced by Richard Ellmann and generally used ever since. Indeed, “romanzaccione” does not bear any monstrous associations, and Joyce’s description is perhaps best read as an understatement, underpinned by his full awareness of his novel’s undoubted merit, expressed here with ironic fake modesty (G. Melchiori, J. Joyce, *Lettere*, Mondadori, Milano 1974, 366 / R. Ellmann ed. James Joyce, *Selected Letters*, Faber & Faber, London 1975, 270).

Towards the middle of the last century, Ian Watt, literary critic of formal realism and commentator on the rise of the novel, saw Joyce’s *Ulysses* as the pinnacle of the development of the genre. A pinnacle which coincided with its manner of narration, shifting between the poles of subjectivity and objectivity, that is, the twin poles of the reality of the ego and the reality of the external world. It was Descartes – Watt added – who was the founder of modern realism and raised the question of dualism, making it one of the central philosophical issues in the three centuries that followed. It is worth adding that Watt disagreed with T.S. Eliot’s comment that the use of epic parallels in *Ulysses* was revolutionary; he put forth Fielding’s fragmentary application of a similar idea, and the definition of his “comic romance” as “a comic epic poem in prose” that is given in the preface to *Joseph Andrews*.

Contemporary with Watt, Giorgio Melchiori, in *The Tightrope Walkers, Studies in Mannerism in Modern English Literature*, was among the first to distinguish the common thread that runs from the formal and linguistic experimentation of the early English novelists, that is to say, Defoe, Swift and Fielding – and Sterne and Smollett in particular – to modernist fiction, above all to *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*. Through an abundance of detail and close reference to the texts, Melchiori demonstrated the links between the form of those early challenges to the limits of formal realism and Joyce’s hyperrealism.

Since then, Joycean studies, like comparative studies in general, have fully explored these issues in the light of a tradition of the novel that continues to be extremely dynamic and productive, just as it con-

tinues to be varied, but also ‘conventional’. Nowadays novels flood the market and fill the bookshops in cities, railway stations and airports. Very often these are anything but demanding reads and are in no way experimental, but are pitched by author and publisher to capture the attention of a certain readership, thus earning recognition and commercial success. But the new rise of the novel is not necessarily based on sheer numbers, even though this might be the most evident sign. Indeed, in the post-Joyce creative stew we regularly find, either in the original language or in translation, many other voices, such as Samuel Beckett, Brendan Behan, Flann O’Brien, B.S. Johnson and Alasdair Gray, to name but some authors writing in English. They are the literary heirs of that tradition of experimentation, of that *other* rise of the novel, which, according to Eliot, supposedly ended with Flaubert and James, but which experienced a rebirth, a new ‘rise’, as it were, with Joyce. Indeed, not only can we trace Joyce back to the rhapsodic and irregular writings of Sterne, but forward to the experimental blend of satire, fantasy and farce in *At Swim-Two-Birds*, the disintegrating surreal cities of Unthank/Glasgow in *Lanark*, and B.S. Johnson’s concern with expressing happenstances and the structureless way we receive and record impressions (which even led to his refusal to have his novel bound in any specific order). These novels were responses to that quotation from *Tristram Shandy*, not by chance also chosen by B.S. Johnson as the epigraph to *The Unfortunates*: “I will tell you in three words what the book is. – It is a history. – A history! Of who? What? Where? When? Don’t hurry yourself. – It is a history book, Sir, (which may possibly recommend it to the world) of what passes in a man’s own mind” (Laurence Sterne, *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman*, Vol. II, Ch. II, Penguin 1984, 105). It is the story of what goes through a man’s own mind, roundly coming up against the uncertainty of one’s own identity: an unstable, ephemeral condition that is as much a recognizable sign of the existential unease and instability of the “ubi consistam” of the narrator of stories and novels as it is of the philosopher. In fact Tristram remains an elusive figure, perhaps because philosophy – bearing in mind Hume’s scepticism on this subject in the *Treatise of Human Na-*

ture – has taught him, to quote Ian Watt, that “personal identity is not so simple a question as is commonly assumed”. So much so that when the commissary asks Tristram ‘– And who are you?’ he can only reply, ‘Don’t puzzle me’ (Vol. VII, Ch. XXXIII, 500). The identity of Tristram is hard to pin down, despite being both author and central player in this preposterous, eccentric, rhapsodic biography of self.

From this, the perception of the ineffable nature of an identity that the individual wants to comprehend, this contradictory and heightened self-consciousness, triggers two reactions: a search, to distinguish the features of one’s own portrait over time, and the urge to widen the scope, both in content and linguistic expression, as regards the narrative discourse that opens up around that subject.

Sterne/Tristram imagined that he could take a man’s character from “the fixture of Momus’ glass in the human breast” (Vol. I, Ch. XXIII). In 1904, the young Joyce claimed in the first paragraph of *A Portrait of the Artist*, that a portrait “is not an identificative paper, but rather the curve of an emotion” with features which, in the unrelenting flow of a present caught between past and future, might express “their individuating rhythm” (James Joyce, *Dubliners and A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, a casebook edited by Morris Beja, London: Macmillan, 1973, 41). Michel Foucault wrote from a very different perspective in the Introduction to *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (New York: Pantheon Books 1972, 17). In the course of his consideration on the epistemological mutations of history with regard to the notions of rupture and discontinuity, he questioned the inevitable mutability of the self: “Are you going to declare yet again that you have never been what you have been reproached with being? Are you already preparing the way out that will enable you in your next book to spring up somewhere else and declare as you’re now doing: no, no, I’m not where you are lying in wait for me, but over here, laughing at you?” And he cannot avoid the question of his own identity when he says he is not the only one who writes in order to have no face. We should neither ask him who he is nor ask him to remain the same: “leave it to our bureaucrats and our police to see that our papers are in

order. At least spare us their morality when we write.” Thus speaks the philosopher ...

But acknowledging just how elusive the writer’s identity might be is also a precondition for total freedom without the risk of being judged by the reader/commentator/translator, with no historical burden of authorial intention. And this also explains the long supremacy of various forms of criticism that privilege the reader: from the open text of Umberto Eco to the growth of various forms of reader-oriented criticism, or at least those forms where the focus is on reader response. These are all variants on the principle that a literary work exists only when it is read, as Wolfgang Iser observed in *The Act of Reading* at the end of the 1970s, and again in the late 1980s with his thorough reading of *Tristram Shandy*. It is a current that has held sway right through to the emergence of more recent intertextual/intercultural approaches and the input of cognitive criticism.

As regards the role of the reader, and the readiness of the artist, writer or painter to grant the reader total freedom to interpret their work regardless of intention, Joyce once said to Arthur Power, “What do we know about what we put into anything? Though people may read more into *Ulysses* than I ever intended, who is to say that they are wrong: do any of us know what we are creating? Did Shakespeare know what he was creating when he wrote *Hamlet*; or Leonardo when he painted ‘The Last Supper’?” (Arthur Power, *Conversations with James Joyce*, Dublin: The Lilliput Press 1974, 102-3). On the other hand, this very free, possibilist approach towards the future of a work and its independence from the author once it has been published, was also underscored by Joyce’s characteristic indifference to errors and typos in his manuscripts and eventual publications, even when they were brought to his attention by the typesetter. The outcome is that, in spite of, and in addition to, the huge mass of notes and details supplied by schemes, guides and keys to his works, Joyce’s ideal sleepless reader is always free to interpret the open text in his or her own way. The reader recomposes an apparently fragmented text, making sense out of it, giving a new meaning to every reading. This calls to mind an episode from Vol. VII of *Tristram Shandy*, when the Abbess and the

novice of Andoüillets are forced to say out loud three times in succession – and more quickly each time – the magical but sinful words, “bouger” and “fouter”. Doing this can save them from danger by getting the mules to move forward and take them back to the abbey. So as not to commit a mortal sin, the two nuns decide to utter just one half of each word apiece, though even when the words are divided into two, *the Devil does understand*. In a similar way, the reader of Joyce hears the two separate parts of the word, and the devil of Tristram in us all supplies the overall meaning.

Indeed, the looming presence of the reader has been seen in the world of western literary criticism since the 1960s and Wayne Booth’s *The Rhetoric of Fiction*, and this has spawned various theories. The emphasis on the act of reading, on interpretation, on the collaboration of the addressee/receiver has become the all-important concern, to the point that it has even affected the sphere of translation as interpretation/ communication. In this case any investigation focuses on the fact that the text is created as it is being read; this is the necessary condition for activating the text. A text functions, therefore, in relation to the comprehension and the interpretation of the addressee, in addition to the way the text itself might direct this participation. However, in the different, but similar, cyclical history of things and ideas, it must be history that provides the context for any work, just as it does for the corresponding analysis of the creative process. And sometimes greater, sometimes less emphasis is granted to either the author or the reader, just as simple or more sophisticated instruments of analysis are called into play.

Because it is also true, as Eco says in *The Limits of Interpretation* (Indiana UP 1994, written 1958-62 and republished by La Nave di Teseo, 2016) that ever since Aristotle the history of aesthetics can be linked to a history of theories of interpretation and the impact that a work has on its addressee. In the case of Joyce, ongoing research, and the amount of papers that put his work at the centre of so much thought, is rooted in the fact that his readers are provoked by his textual strategies and can thus explore the texts in an infinite variety of ways.

Volume 19 of “Joyce Studies in Italy” evidences this, providing further instances of how variously Joyce’s work can be interpreted and reinterpreted, and how this is a prerequisite for a new generation of readers. In many respects, therefore, this is an extremely varied collection. Some of the authors are established, well-known names, while others are young: proof of the commitment that has been undertaken in recent years by “Joyce Studies in Italy” and The James Joyce Italian Foundation to support the work of emerging scholars. The essays range from explorations of *Dubliners* and *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* to *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*, focussing on specific textual details and references or else taking up more general themes using various tools of investigation.

And this edition of “Joyce Studies in Italy” is special not just for purely formal reasons. It is, in fact, a double issue: on the one hand it celebrates ten years of The James Joyce Italian Foundation, which organized the X James Joyce Birthday Conference in Rome this year, and on the other it opens up to a new focus of investigation, that is, to considerations made by Italian scholars of Italian literature who also happen to be passionate readers of Joyce (and we should not forget that Italian was a lingua franca in the Joyce household). With this in mind, for the first time in its fifty-year history, the present volume contains a long essay written in Italian (followed by a brief abstract in English) by an accomplished young scholar of Italian and Comparative Literature, who examines the occasional, evident, links between Joyce’s work and the poetry of Giovanni Pascoli and the fiction of Carlo Emilio Gadda.

In the last few years we have suffered first the loss of Giorgio Melchiori and then of Jacqueline Risset, Umberto Eco and Rosa Maria Bollettieri. We have, however, also welcomed the arrival of a promising new generation of young, creative and interactive scholars and translators, readers and artists as well as literary critics, experts in music, painting and computer studies, all ready and willing to respond to the inexhaustible forms and the infinite play of Joyce’s stories and language. In this way they help us to reflect on the state of Joycean studies in Italy, to draw a balance, and to suggest new horizons.

I am again particularly grateful to Peter Douglas for his contribution in editing the book.

1.
JOYCE'S FICTION
AND THE NEW RISE OF THE NOVEL

DEFECATION AND THE OTHER: PERFORMING
AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL ART IN THE “HAUNTED
INKBOTTLE” SCENE

A long-established tradition defines autobiography as a textual representation of one’s own life events and as a means for communicating a comprehensible self to the world. This customary way of thinking about autobiographies signifies the possibility of providing a true account of one’s life and self and, in effect, qualifies the autobiographer as a historian. Both the historian and “the writer of his own life”, Samuel Johnson maintained, have “knowledge of the truth” (Johnson 1948: 263). More recent criticism acknowledges that concepts of knowledge and truth regarding any historical fact are impossible, and are similarly impossible with representations of one’s self and life. Notions of a “trans-historical” or a “universal” self (Freeman 2001: 285), as well as the idea of an “essential self” (Bruner 2001: 26), become ambiguous. Such principles as accuracy and verity of and in self-representations are likewise complicated because, Mark Freeman argues, the “self and narratives about the self are culturally and discursively ‘situated’” (2001: 287). Critical approaches which maintain that autobiographies reduce the self to “cultural or identitarian determinations” (Huddart 2008: 19) and to a “repertoire of types” (Harré 2001: 62) inquire into the extent to which autobiographies reconstruct a culturally desirable self and into the very possibility of representing it.

In *Finnegans Wake*, subjective qualifications of any of the members of the Earwicker family are a difficult task. They change names, forms, and functions within the family. Subjective distinctions are highly complicated with Shaun and Shem, as the twins repeatedly

“swop hats” (*FW* 16.08) or become “one and the same person” (*FW* 354.8). The context of unfixed identities and destabilized selves seems to contradict autobiographical practices which, conventionally, claim to represent a unitary self. However, the “Haunted Inkbottle” scene renders a conflict between the twins that concerns preeminently the tension between distinct forms of self-representation. Shaun constructs a culturally applicable self. He employs established autobiographical techniques of defining the self against an “other” and accords cultural conventions to both self and “other”. In Shaun’s account, Shem’s bad hygiene and consequent stench reflect his moral degradation while Shaun’s own unsoiled body mirrors his pure soul. On the contrary, Shem is “writing the mystery of himself” (*FW* 184.9-10) not by using situated narratives, but by discharging waste matter. I argue that, for Shem, defecation functions as an autobiographical performance which challenges the reduction of the subject into predetermined forms of subjectivity, and reconstructs the self as its own origin.

The writing of the self is a pivotal concern throughout the conflict between the brothers. At the beginning of the scene, Shaun reproaches Shem for his habit of stippling “endlessly inartistic portraits of himself” (*FW* 182.18-19). Later in the scene, Shaun specifically condemns Shem’s method of writing his self with “synthetic ink and sensitive paper for his own end out of his wit’s waste” (*FW* 185.7-8). As Shem’s autobiographical practice is one rooted in the body and in the bodily discharge of waste matter, I will examine the significance of autobiography as a physical performance. First, I distinguish Shaun’s autobiographical account from Shem’s methods of self-expression. Then I discuss the difference between textual and performative representations of the self. Finally, I account for defecation as Shem’s particular mode of autobiographical performance.

Although Shaun reproaches Shem for his autobiographical performance, Shaun does not condemn the autobiographical practice in its entirety. Rather, he is concerned with establishing legislative limits for self-representations. To do so, Shaun, first, outlaws Shem’s particular method of producing “inartistic portraits of himself” (*FW* 182.19) by employing legal terminology such as “plagiarism” and

“forgery”¹. Then, Shaun’s own autobiographical account exemplifies the proper “manner and matter” (*FW* 185.8) for representing the self. Self-representations are constructed, first and foremost, upon an opposition from an “other”. We learn that moral affirmation depends upon the dichotomous categories of “I” and “you”: “I shall shiver for my purity while they will weepbig for your sins” (*FW* 188.24-25). Also, as Justius, Shaun’s assertion of his physical and spiritual superiorities explicitly provides an autobiographical account that maintains the self/other division: “Brawn is my name and broad is my nature and I’ve breit on my brow and all’s right with every feature” (*FW* 187.24-25). In this opposition, the other is the Whore of Babylon who, shortly before this, had been depicted with a “brand of scarlet on the brow” (*FW* 185.11-12). That Shaun/Justius’s account insists on the width of his brow² allows him to affirm spiritual preeminence particularly by contrasting his measure of forehead against the branded brow of the Whore of Babylon.

Like the Whore of Babylon, Shem’s otherness goes hand in hand with his immorality. Shem’s “cruelfiction” (*FW* 192.19) is attested by “adding to the already unhappiness of this our popeyed world” (*FW* 189.9) and by being exercised “at the expense of the taxpayers” (*FW* 182.35). In addition, as the following accusations maintain, Shem’s production of a “no uncertain quantity of obscene matter not protected by copriright” (*FW* 185.29-30), as a form of self-expression, is socially corrosive, particularly, due to its reproductive potential. The threat of reproduction is manifest on the level of language when Shaun upbraids Shem as a “condemned fool, anarch, egoarch, hiresi-

¹ At the beginning of the scene Shaun laments: “how very many piously forged palimpsests slipped in the first place by this morbid process from his pelagiarist pen?” (*FW* 182.2-3). The several affiliations connected with Shem include “Jim the Penman (James Townsend Saward, b. 1799), a notorious British forger of the nineteenth century, as well as a popular play based on his criminal career, *Jim the Penman* by Charles L. Young (1886)” (Ellmann 2012: 39). That Shem, “the artist, the eminent writer” (McHugh 2006: 185), is associated with Jim the Penman enforces the idea that forgery is inherent to the artistic process.

² McHugh annotates “breit” as German for “breadth” (2006: 187).

arch” (*FW* 188.15-16). The denotation of “-arch” associates Shem’s practice with cultural dominance. At the same time, the repetition of the suffix “-arch”, through linguistic performance, connects the potential reenactment of Shem’s autobiographical methods with cultural dominance. Despite the moral and mental reduction of Shem to a “condemned fool”, the repetition of Shem’s practice would establish a cultural model. As such, Shem’s performance would regulate ensuing forms of self-representation in accordance with itself and, consequently, re-organize the existing culture into a “new Irish stew” (*FW* 190.9).

In order to determine Shem’s bodily performance, his “tries at speech unsyllabled” (*FW* 183.14-15) being harmful to social order, Shaun draws on the distinction between truth and fabrication. According to Shaun, Shem’s “piously forged palimpsests slipped [...] from his pelagiarist pen” (*FW* 182.2-3) may claim for authenticity but, like plagiarism and forgery, are inherently false and can produce nothing more genuine than “cantraps of fermented words, abracadabra calubra culorum” (*FW* 184.26). By likening Shem’s autobiographical practice with the art of magic, Shaun reveals his anxiety about the capacity of Shem’s practice to be mistaken for truth and, consequently, to persist as a “continuous present tense” (*FW* 186.1), that is, an existing social reality. The ability to deceive by bearing only the appearance of truth is especially hazardous at the hands of Shem whose disposition to “neither serve nor let serve, pray nor let pray” (*FW* 188.19) indicates his tendency to adjust social behaviour according to his own refusal to adhere to an external force. Shaun, however, perceives proper cultural conduct and social order as constructed upon referentiality.

An “other”, for instance, functions as an external referent against which one constructs a culturally applicable self. Yet Shaun also insists on referential language as a paradigm for maintaining the self/other dichotomy. Therefore, he deems that the “manner and matter” of Shem’s performative model should “be cloaked up in the language of blushfed porporates that an Anglican ordinal, not reading his own dunsy tunga, may ever behold the brand of scarlet on the brow of her of Babylon and feel not the pink one in his own damned cheek” (*FW* 185.8-13). The passive form, “blushfed”, characterizes language

as inert insofar as language conforms to a predetermined referential system. In contrast, “dunsky tunga”, an imperfect anagram of “dung”, connotes Shem’s use of his fecal matter and, thus, proposes a form of communication that generates from the body. Although Shem does apply language, for it is indicated that he “*wrote* over every square inch of [...] his own body” (*FW* 185.35-36, my emphasis), I argue that it is the performative dimension of his autobiography that challenges the authority of referentiality in self-representations and that *this* performativity sustains the conflict between the brothers.

Representing the self with language is restricted to a set of linguistic rules. On the other hand, as Kristin M. Langellier argues in her study of autobiographical performances, performativity is independent of linguistic conventions and carries the narrative “above and beyond its referential context” (Langellier 2001: 150). The release from the “fixed, unified, stable, or final essence” (*ibid.*: 151) of referential systems of signification allows performativity to produce new forms of self-construction and self-representation. By the same token, Shem’s performance marks his self-exile from language particularly as a referential framework for expressing the self. Accordingly, Shem’s autobiographical performance is rendered through Shaun’s speech and when Shem is finally given the stage to speak for himself, not only is he no longer Shem but Mercius, although his voice gradually turns into the voice of ALP. This allows Shem’s autobiographical performance to resist being “cloaked up” in language and to remain self-consistent. Shaun proscribes Shem’s claim for self-consistency precisely. By employing homosexual imagery as “prosodite” and “masculine monosyllables” (*FW* 190.35), Shaun correlates Shem’s claim for self-consistency with the capability of a single sex to satisfy its own needs. Even more so, “prosodite”, by associating “prosody” and “sodomite”, alludes to Lord Queensberry’s charge of sodomy against Oscar Wilde, and conflates Shem’s autobiographical self-sufficiency with the homosexuality that was condemned in Wilde’s trial. For

Shaun, therefore, Shem's claim for self-sufficiency is as illegal, and should be as proscribed, as Wilde's homosexuality³.

The referential framework from which Shem strives to extract himself also includes the parental factor. Shem's renouncement of the body that begot him, in his address to his twin brother, "I who oathily foreswore the womb that bore you" (*FW* 193.32-33), establishes his body as its own origin. By doing so, Shem insists not only on the self-sufficiency of his self-representation through the body's use of its own materials, but, also, on the self-consistency of the body via self-generation. For Shaun, however, such claims do not credit the original creator, be it God or the father or one's own culture. Self-generation is a claim for self-authorship that Shaun conceives as forgery and plagiarism (*FW* 182.2-3). Therefore, Shaun renames his brother "Shem Macadamson" (*FW* 187.35) in order to reinstitute Shem's *body* in a referential framework of patrilineal descent which traces all the way back to the first man.

Shaun condemns not only the performativity of Shem's autobiography, which allows his self-exile from referentiality, but, more poignantly, its relation to defecation. That "no uncertain quantity of obscene matter" is produced out of Shem's "unheavenly body" (*FW* 185.29-30), affirms the offensive nature of human bodies and of Shem's body in particular, who "will need all the elements in the river to clean" him (*FW* 188.5-6), and is, therefore, an "other" to "that pure one" Shaun (*FW* 191.14). Shaun's purity reflects even on his bodily functions and waste matter, as his excremental discharge is relieved in "spiritual toilettes" (*FW* 191.26). Even more so, that Shaun's "spiritual toilettes were the talk of half the town" (*ibid.*) which converts the physical act into discourse and, thereby, reinstitutes the body in lan-

³ Robert Boyle argues that Shem's artistic practice draws on Oscar Wilde's principle of "new aesthetics" according to which "Art never expresses anything but itself" (Boyle 1974: 72). Boyle's claim that "the charges brought against Shem the true artist include many of the charges leveled at Wilde", most particularly, "the charge of sodomy" (*ibid.*: 78) strengthens my suggestion that Shaun conflates Shem's and Wilde's transgressions in order to proscribe Shem's claims for self-consistency.

guage. Conversely, Shem's discharge of waste matter as an autobiographical performance enacts his self-extraction from the referential framework upon which both language and body are bound, and establishes the autonomy of the self. Shaun counters defecation as means for metonymic extraction from referentiality by constituting his own body as the progenitor of Shem's body: "the good brother feels he would need to defecate you" (*FW* 193.22-23). In this manner, Shaun re-conceptualizes defecation as means for metonymic re-insertion into referentiality.

The divergence between the twins' conceptualizations of defecation peaks in the contrast between life and death. For Shaun, self-exile from referentiality by way of defecation and Shem's use of his excrement is a "morbid process" (*FW* 182.3), but one that has a pretence of vitality. When reproaching Shem for "conceal[ing] your scotchphily by mating" (*FW* 190.33-34) Shaun associates Shem's autobiographic performance with death by insisting on its pretended vitality. This complex image connotes "scotophily", that is, something living and flourishing in the dark. As such, "scotophily" implies either the development of a fetus in the uterus or the production of dung in the digestion system. The former suggests the conception of new life, while the expelling of dead organic matter signifies death. According to Shaun, to "conceal" by "mating" allows Shem's discharge of waste matter to assume the pretense of procreation.

Shem's contrary view of defecation as a vital force is most explicit in the Latin passage⁴. Here, Shem's buttocks are likened to the "giving & allpowerful earth" and their function in expelling fecal matter is likened to the "lifegiving" capacity of earth. Shem, "the eminent writer", places the "foul dung" in an urn. That the urn was "once used as an honoured mark of mourning", seemingly, conforms to Shaun's association of feces with death. However, by displaying the dead organic matter in an urn, Shem "made himself an indelible ink". This

⁴ The translations of the Latin phrases into English are taken from McHugh's *Annotations to Finnegans Wake* (2006: 185).

transforms the implication of death into a twofold concept: the artist produces for himself an artistic creation by converting his feces into indelible ink; the artist conceives himself as an artist in this gesture of conversion. Finally, that the artist conceives himself through his artistic creation, associates every artistic process with an autobiographical act.

The opposition between life and death is also evidenced by the different means by which each brother conceives the effect of defecation on the body. Shaun conceives defecation in terms of the fragmentation of the body. As such, defecation challenges the indivisibility of the individual and brings about a “dividual chaos” (*FW* 186.4-5)⁵. For Shem, on the other hand, defecation functions in performing a cyclical movement that perpetuates the autonomy of both the self and representations of the self. In the Latin passage Shem is described as having “relieved himself into his own hands”. In this image, what is divided from the body returns to the body in a manner of recirculation that alludes to Vico’s “cyclewheeling history” (*FW* 186.2). The enactment of Vico’s cyclical model, in which the past collapses onto the present, re-conceptualizes cyclical movement in relation to the subject. In this new concept of cyclical movement, subjectivity is not undermined⁶. Rather, the recirculation of the body’s own materials maintains the autonomy of the self from pre-determined frameworks for self-representation and self-construction.

⁵ “(thereby, he said, reflecting from his own individual person unlivable, transaccidentated through the slow fires of consciousness into a dividual chaos, perilous, potent, common to allflesh, human only, mortal)” (*FW* 186.2-6). Although “transaccidentated” suggests that the spiritual essence overshadows the physical manifestations, Shem’s excrement is not subject to the sublimation that Shaun’s waste matter undergoes through “spiritual toilettes” (*FW* 191.26). The insistence on “human only” inverts the image of the Eucharist: in the reversal of sublimation, the spiritual turns into the corporeal because, as Boyle attests, “Joyce, never out to reject anything human, manages like Christ to encompass all of human experience [...]. He does not, like Christ, do it to carry men to something beyond the human, but, like Balzac, to provide a human, not a divine, comedy” (Boyle 1974: 73).

⁶ James Fairhall, for example, argues that the Vichian view of cyclical progress undermines subjectivity because in Vico’s model “conflict propels the historical process; the specific identity of the contestants [...] matters little” (Fairhall 1993: 222).

Julia Kristeva's concept of "Abjection" as "These body fluids, this defilement, this shit" which "life withstands, hardly and with difficulty, on the part of death" (Kristeva 1982: 3) recalls Shem's resistance against predetermined forms of subjectivity by way of defecation. The abject, according to Kristeva, is the opposite of the thinkable and assimilable and is, therefore, expelled from the self. In this gesture of expelling the abject, the self, "weary of fruitless attempts to identify with something on the outside" (ibid.: 5) expels itself and, thus, constitutes its being in a "fortified existence" (ibid.: 9) set against "Religion, Morality, Law" (ibid.: 16). Kristeva argues that the constitution of the self takes place in the slippage of death into its opposite, life. By the same token, literature that is fascinated with the abject engages with "a crossing over of the dichotomous categories of Pure and Impure, Morality and Immorality" (ibid.: 16).

In the "Haunted Inkbottle" scene, Shem's "fortified existence" is constructed by setting "this defilement, this shit" against predetermined modes of self-definition. However, Shem's "fortified existence" is not one set against his artistic creations. The artistic performance which simultaneously creates the artist, the "eminent writer", and his "foul dung" as an artistic expression, break down the boundary between Shem and his creation in a manner recalling the blurred boundaries between Dorian Gray and his portrait and between de Valentine and his shagreen⁷. The division between the artist and his art breaks down as the dichotomy between filth and purification collapses in the act of defecation, in which the discharge of foul matter purifies the body. Finally, by way of defecation as an autobiographical performance, the separation between body and language collapses. That Shem produces "for his own end out of his wit's waste" (*FW* 185.7-8) the material with which he "wrote over the only foolscap available, his own body" (*FW* 185.35-36) redefines communication as filtered through physical performance. Shem's language is conditioned by his

⁷ Both works are alluded to in the scene: "from the crystalline world waned chargeenold and doriangrayer in its dudhud" (*FW* 186.7-8).

body and not by an external referential system. It is a form of language that issues from his body and concludes on his body. In effect, the body's use of its own materials allows for a self-engendered and a self-sufficient form of subjectivity.

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THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF ODOUR IN JAMES
JOYCE'S *ULYSSES*

The past several decades of research on olfaction have revealed that odour is the focus of numerous interdisciplinary studies positioned at the crossroads of nature-based sciences and the humanities. Against a backdrop of this synthesis within Literary Studies, attention to the representation of olfactory modality in a literary text has recently intensified. Research claims that the basic theoretical issue of literary olfaction is on the one hand connected to the obvious contradiction between the presence of an infinite number of smells and their nuances, and the absence of a language classification system for them on the other. According to Sperber, "There is no semantic field for smells", but only general lexical subcategories such as "stench" and "perfume" (Sperber 1975: 116). As "language has not developed an abstract terminology for referring to smells" (Rindisbacher 1992: 15), descriptions of olfactory modality involve references to the material sources of the smell; that is, they are rendered as "smells of something" or are attached to such value judgments as being on a scale of "good" and "bad" smells.

The lack of lexical tools is due primarily to the fact that the olfactory system of each person is genetically unique, which means that any olfactory experience of the external world is purely individual. The uniqueness of smell intended in its subjectivity can be traced to Kant's *Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View* (Kant 2006: 49) and remains as relevant as the philosopher's general question: "What is man?"

Thus, the topic of this paper is postulated, first, by the profound connection between the olfactory dimension and human life, nature and culture; second, by the ability of literature to provide a deeper understanding of the capacity of language to verbalize olfactory phenomena; and third, by the conviction that manifestations of odour in a literary text characterize the extent to which the human condition is seen in the literature of a particular period.

Our central premise is that James Joyce's *Ulysses* can be regarded as an encyclopedia-sized literary-odour document that echoes modern scientific knowledge and, in some ways, outpaces it. The aromatic axis of the novel comprises an incredibly wide palette of smells (ranging from "good" smells – "the very palatable odour of our daily bread" (*U* 16.570) – to "bad" ones – "you skunk" (*U* 15.504)) which are natural and artificial, individual and social. Consequently, odour in *Ulysses* functions as a means of personal identification and a medium of interpersonal communication, as well as presenting a considerable range of olfactory symbols illustrating the ways in which the writer encodes information supplied by the perception of smell in the text.

Choosing an anthropological approach as a research method for studying olfaction in *Ulysses*, we can assume that smell is an anthropological universal, and the study of its artistic representation leads to identifying the ways in which the non-articulated phenomena of human sensory experience are encoded in a literary text. Our choice is inspired by the general guidelines of philosophical anthropology which lead to a unique categorical interconnection between biology and the humanities¹.

One could argue that Joyce in his work seeks to answer the main question of anthropology: what it means to be human. Moreover, he elaborates a language to describe what is human. The distinctive feature of his characters is a particular plasticity visualized in such micro-

¹ The issues of the anthropology of smell, namely, of the cultural history of smells, smells in social, gender and other interactions across cultures are often the focus of studies in cultural anthropology (*Empire of the Senses* 2005).

motions as sigh, glance, or gesture. These narrated micro-events render elementary sensory experiences without which the fullness of human subjectivity is unrepresentable.

From this angle, *Ulysses* creates an anthropological model of a stunning scale of diverse self-transformative and communicative human manifestations and strategies – external and internal, bodily, mentally, intellectually. On the whole, identifying a Man, his biological and social nature and unique personality in terms of dynamic integrity, instability, creativity, and openness, is a key feature of Joyce’s design. Having undertaken the task to verbalize visual, auditory, olfactory, tactile and gustatory experiences, the writer manages to uncover unexpected areas of the human body, consciousness and sensations.

Of course, these multifaceted representations of odour in James Joyce’s novels and short stories have been thoroughly studied, though among many recent comments on the subject, an in-depth analysis in Bernard Benstock’s essay “James Joyce: The Olfactory Factor” (Benstock 1991) and Laura Frost’s chapter “James Joyce and the Scent of Modernity” in her *The Problem with Pleasure* (Frost 2013) should be singled out.

Thus, having changed, figuratively speaking, our “anthropological gaze” to an “anthropological smelling”, the following aesthetic functions of odour should be further elucidated:

(1) Odour in scenes of integrated sensory expression as regards Joyce’s concept of man; from this standpoint, the way Joyce verbalizes the phenomenon of synesthesia will be overviewed;

(2) The olfactory factor in Joyce’s model of memory; the case of Stephen’s painful memories of his mother’s death will be viewed by way of example;

(3) Odour as a means of anthropologizing the fictional universe of *Ulysses* through odour; a smellscape of Dublin will serve as an illustration.

Synesthesia in *Ulysses*

Interconnectedness of the senses in human perception is the key idea in interdisciplinary sensory scholarship². The extra normal (or abnormal) connection of sensory realms is a focal point of the neurological phenomenon known as “synesthesia”. According to Cytowic, synesthesia is “an involuntary joining in which the real information of one sense is accompanied by a perception in another sense” (Cytowic 1989: 1), that is, “it denotes the rare capacity to hear colors, taste shapes, or experience other equally startling sensory blendings” (Cytowic 1995). For instance, a synesthete claims the ability to shape sounds, to smell voice or taste colours. Scholars argue that visual and auditory information plays a pivotal role in the cognitive process; consequently, sight and sound are involved much more often in synesthetic procedures than other senses. Interestingly, smell rarely serves as the trigger or as the synesthetic response (ibid.: 5).

Multisensory fusion, which is the basis both of synesthetic experience and all forms of art, suggests that synesthesia can be determined as an artistic phenomenon. Alleging that art and synesthesia go hand-in-hand, Dr. H. Heyrman defines literary synesthesia as “a poetic expression or metaphorical articulation of a sensorial correspondence” (Heyrman 2005).

Thus, stemming from the fact that a great number of olfactory nuances are represented in *Ulysses* interacting with a whole set of human sense perceptions, it is important to consider literary manifestations of olfactory synesthesia in Joyce’s metatext.

Though Joyce is not listed as a synesthete, a sufficient number

² For instance, “Intersensoriality, or the multi-directional interaction of the senses and of sensory ideologies”, (*Empire of the Senses* 2005, 9) preconditions cultural meanings of human sensorium in the anthropology of the senses; “intersensory unity of the world” is the basic notion in Merleau-Ponty’s phenomenology of perception (Merleau-Ponty 2013).

of synesthetic metaphors are introduced in *Ulysses*³. Moreover, the writer often exploits smell, characterized in terms of touch, sight, or taste, despite the difficulty in verbalizing this sensory modality precisely. The following examples express odour in the synesthetic metaphors:

“palatable odour” (*U* 16: 570), “dainty scented hand” (*U* 15.515), and “a cloying breath” (*U* 15.451) convert smell into taste;

“cold smell” (*U* 5.77), “cosy smell” (*U* 8.148), “tepid effluvium” (*U* 15.477), and “shrivelled smell” (*U* 5.81) render smell in terms of touch;

“melonsmellonous osculation” (*U* 17.686) vice versa touch brings forth smell;

“red reek” (*U* 2: 28), “a putrid carcased breath” (*U* 15.447), and “ashen breath” (*U* 15.541), describe smell in terms of sight.

Some synesthetic metaphors are more complicated, rendering smell through two or more senses: “heavy, greasy smell” (*U* 15.451), “heavy, sweet, wild perfume” (*U* 7.118), and “a sweet smoky breath” (*U* 14.381). To summarize, synesthetic metaphors in *Ulysses* illustrate Joyce’s excellence linguistic skills in rendering non-articulated phenomena.

It is worth noting that Joyce never declared himself a synesthete, whereas such an announcement plays a key role in determining one’s synaesthesia. In our opinion, his cross-sensory metaphors represent both his acute inter-sensory perception of the world and his successful effort to artistically recreate what was defined by Merleau-Ponty as “an absolute reality”. The latter can be explained as a com-

³ The synesthetic metaphors in Joyce’s works require special attention, taking into account a considerable theoretical corpus of studies on this type of metaphor. We adhere to the definition proposed by Werning, Fleischhauer, Be, seo’glu: “A metaphor is synaesthetic if and only if its source domain is perceptual. It is only weakly synaesthetic if its target is not also perceptual, and strongly synaesthetic if its target domain, too, is perceptual” (Werning, Fleischhauer, Be, seo’glu 2006, 2365-2366). Based on this definition, the subtypes and the functions of synesthetic metaphors in the novel are to be thoroughly studied. The goal of this paper is to determine the presence of a great number of synesthetic metaphors as a means of verbalizing olfactory phenomena in *Ulysses*.

plete co-activity of all senses in creating artistic images when one sense calls forth the corresponding others: "... a thing would not have that color if it did not have this form, these tactile properties, that sonority, or that odor; and that the thing is the absolute plenitude" (Merleau-Ponty 2013: 332-333). Thus, sensory fusion can be considered an essential component in Joyce's literary aesthetics, and *Ulysses* exemplifies literary synesthesia, creating a unique universe of smell, colour, touch and sound.

It can also be assumed that Joyce's synesthetic ability to mix senses is a result of his half-blindness. According to Ellmann, in his university years, "nearsightedness was becoming part of his personality" (*JIII*: 64); then during the rest of his life the writer experienced sporadic blindness (*JIII*: 574). Although the biographer emphasizes that Joyce was not permanently blind (*JIII*: 716), this state was obviously very familiar to him.

The episode in which Bloom is escorting a blind young man, a synesthete-character, across the street in "Lestrygonians" lends insight into synesthesia activated by blindness:

Do you want to cross? [...] The blind stripling did not answer. His wallface frowned weakly. [...] There's nothing in the way. The cane moved out trembling to the left. Mr Bloom's eye followed its line and saw again the dyeworks' van [...] How on earth did he know that van was there? Must have felt it. See things in their forehead perhaps: kind of sense of volume. Weight or size of it, something blacker than the dark. Wonder would he feel it if something was removed. Feel a gap (*U* 8.172-173).

Joyce is very precise in rendering the excellent ability of some blind people to differentiate sounds, shapes and forms. Furthermore, working on several textual levels simultaneously, the writer shifts from capturing Bloom's reflections on the event to a metatextual commentary on synesthesia. Enclosed in Bloom's stream of consciousness, the author's explanation of how the lack of sight

boosts other sensory modalities, the sense of odour among them, is directly related to a scientific description of the phenomenon:

Sense of smell must be stronger too. Smells on all sides, bunched together. [...] Tastes? They say you can't taste wines with your eyes shut or a cold in the head. Also smoke in the dark they say get no pleasure. [...] And with a woman, for instance. [...] Kind of a form in his mind's eye. The voice, temperatures: when he touches her with his fingers must almost see the lines, the curves. His hands on her hair, for instance. Say it was black, for instance. Good. We call it black. Then passing over her white skin. Different feel perhaps. Feeling of white.... (U 8.173).

In reporting the redistributing and transmission mechanisms of different human senses (in our case, vision and temperature induce taste), Joyce reflects on the emergence of perceptual illusions in the process of their verbalization (touch induces colour), and points out that they are activated by imagination, according to his artistic expression, "in his mind's eye". Verbalizing the interconnectedness of odour and other senses, Joyce does not give precedence to sight or hearing, smell or touch. He endows his characters with sense-modal plasticity, as a characteristic of a person. No less important is that the writer registers and depicts the slightest reactions, tiny movements and transformations, e.g., "his wallface frowned weakly", "the cane moved out trembling", which are a direct follow-up to sensory perception.

Thus, the sensual organization and the bodily dynamics of the characters in *Ulysses* form a psychosomatic unity. Indeed, it is important to discuss Joyce's anthropological discourse in terms of a particular artistic innovation which incorporates the phenomenon of synesthesia and images of smell.

It is also essential to consider that Joyce significantly expands the concept of smell in *Finnegans Wake*. In particular, the complication of the synesthetic metaphors pertaining to olfactory percep-

tion, combined with an infinite number of neologisms and puns that run through the novel, can be illustrated by an episode in chapter 1.4. During proceedings brought on ambiguous charges, Earwicker, identified, among many other names, by his initials H.C.E., one of the trial participants declares:

Sure, 'tis well I can telesmell him H_2CE_3 that would take a township's breath away! Gob and I nose him too well as I do meself, heaving up the Kay Wall by the 32 to 11 with his limelooking horsebags full of sesameseed, the Whiteside Kaffir, and his sayman's effluvium and his scentpainted voice ... (*FW*, 95).

First, the focus needs to be on the metaphor "scentpainted voice". This conceptual synesthetic metaphor operates on the abstract concepts of sound, smell and vision. Determining "voice" by "scent" and "paint", Joyce breaks a general rule as regards the metaphorical rendering of abstract concepts via concrete (non-metaphorical) terms. Actually, he is playing with the very notion of metaphor, which can be defined as "the main mechanism through which we comprehend abstract concepts and perform abstract reasoning" (Lakoff 1993, 244). Secondly, though it is not exactly clear who says the phrase, Earwicker's character is rendered negatively, since his initials, H.C.E., transformed into H_2CE_3 , are thus associated with the formula of an acid. In our view, this is H_2SO_4 , sulfuric acid which, smelling of rotten eggs, is able to "take a township's breath away". Finally, the word "telesmell", prefixed with tele-, renders the idea of the "transmission of odour over a long distance". The writer anticipates a new level of olfactory interactivity as well as new artistic synesthetic experiences linked to the development of tele/computer technologies in the late 20th century. In current research, smell as a "travelling" sense is attributed to the phenomenon of tele-synesthesia defined as "a synesthetic experience evoked by a telematic use of new media" (Heyrman, 2005).

Memory model and odour in *Ulysses*

Ulysses, as Franca Ruggieri outlines, provides “a new synchronical and diachronical theatre of the mind, of memory and imagination that can both confirm our own identity and open us to the experience of others” (Ruggieri 2014: 13-14). In the novel, each spontaneous sensation or image created in a character’s consciousness entails complex mental processes in which a “short-circuit between memory and imagination” (Ricoeur 2009: 5) occurs. Without doubt, it is all-important to consider how Joyce connects the mechanisms of memory and imagination with a large range of sensory correspondences that accompany each recollection. Although considered the most subtle of the human senses, smell is also a powerful enhancer of remembrance.

It is therefore not surprising that smell is fully inscribed in a complex set of memory structures in *Ulysses*. Indeed, all Joyce’s main characters are endowed with olfactory memory. Yet, the most complicated memory model in the novel is associated with Stephen’s mother’s death, a persistent and painful vision which evokes numerous memories of the smell of her dead body. The dream where the mother appears after her death is repeated twice in *Telemachus* almost unchanged:

Silently, in a dream she had come to him after her death, her wasted body within its loose graveclothes giving off an odour of wax and rosewood, her breath, that had bent upon him, mute, reproachful, a faint odour of wetted ashes... (*U* 1: 5).

The writer, as is evident, accurately conveys Stephen’s painful impressions of past experiences together with the affective marks left in his mind. In Ricoeur’s conceptualization, “inscriptions-affectations” leave “mnemonic traces” which save, and after a considerable length of time, can evoke personal memory-images:

The inscriptions-affectations contain the secret of enigma of the mnemonic trace: they would be the depository of the most hidden but most original meaning of the verb “to remain”, synonym of “to endure.

(Ricoeur 2009: 427)

Thus, representing an instance of the author's highly traumatic, autobiographic memory, the image of Stephen's mother's "wasted body within its loose graveclothes" serves as an illustration of the mnemonic phenomenon, that is, "the exact superimposition of the image present to the mind and psychical trace, also called an image, left by the initial impression" (Ricoeur 2009: 430). The precision of "superimposition" in Stephen's recollections consists of the fact that the visual and mental processing of a traumatic event is accompanied by olfactory memories of those esters which are released by a decomposing body, in Joyce's rendition, "a faint odour of wetted ashes" associated with the human "smell of death".

In *Ulysses*, mnemonic impulses revive this painful olfactory recollection in Stephen's mind twice more during the day – in connection with his reflections on Sargent's mother in *Nestor* (*U* 2. 28), and in the vision of his mother "breathing upon him softly her breath of wetted ashes" in "Circe" (*U* 15. 539-540). This recurrence of odour fits in what Nabokov identified in his lecture on *Ulysses* as "a deliberate pattern of recurrent themes and synchronization of trivial events" which is "one of the most striking features" of the novel (Nabokov 1980: 289).

In Joyce's memory model, particularly in recollections of human death, odour is shown as an extension of the body; accordingly, smell is regarded as a two-component phenomenon within which a mental act doubles as a physiological process.

In this regard, it should be stated that the writer depicts threshold forms of corporeality in *Ulysses*. In "Circe", the image of the dead mother's body is close to final decay:

Stephen's mother, emaciated, rises stark through the floor, in leper grey with a wreath of faded orangeblossoms and a torn bridal veil, her face worn and noseless, green with gravemould. Her hair is scant and lank. She fixes her bluecircled hollow eyesockets on Stephen and opens her toothless mouth uttering a silent word (*U* 15. 539).

In this scene, the author gives an example of a “short-circuit between memory and imagination”, creating the image of Stephen’s mother in the final stages of decomposition that could be only imagined, not remembered. Furthermore, demonstrating the idea that “a strong imagination and memory always employs synesthetic imagery and a metaphoric reading of life” (Heyrman 2007), he complements its visual presentation with the smell of “an ashen breath” and voice “moaning desperately”.

The words “I was once the beautiful May Gouilding” (*U* 15.539) uttered by the ghost of the mother are of vital importance in “Circe”, because they expand the perception of the character as regards Joyce’s metatext, dynamizing it diachronically. This offers an opportunity to reinvent an inherently interrelated unity of her artistic image, and to decode its sensory characteristics through evolutionary dynamics. From this perspective, the first mention of Stephen’s mother at the very beginning of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* assigns an olfactory significance to the character, emphasizing the pleasant smell she exudes: “His mother had a nicer smell than his father” (*P.* 223), and even her slippers “had such a lovely warm smell” (*P.* 226).

As can be seen, Joyce chooses smells to be the signs of the human life cycle – from “such a lovely warm smell” of the mother in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* to her “faint odour of wetted ashes” in *Ulysses*.

Another image of the dead body is illustrated in “Proteus”; again on the border between life and death, Joyce portrays the body of the man drowned nine days earlier: “A corpse rising salt-white from the undertow, bobbing landward, a pace a pace a porpoise [...] A bag of corpsegas sopping in foul brine” (*U* 3.49). In this case, by utilizing smells and crossing the threshold between life and death the writer situates human life in the circle of nature: “God becomes man becomes fish becomes barnacle goose becomes featherbed mountain. Dead breaths I living breathe...” (*U* 3.49).

All in all, by putting smell at the center of the human sensory experience, Joyce creates a concentric memory model in *Ulysses*: individual olfactory memory and perception are enclosed in the whole

cycle of human life, which, in turn, is part of the cycle of nature. And what is most important in our case is that Joyce manages to harmonize the olfactory image of the individual life span with a universal image of smell.

Dublin Smellscape

The discussion of the urban space in *Ulysses* occupies a significant place in Joyce studies. The debate was triggered by the famous claim of the author “to give a picture of Dublin so complete that if the city suddenly disappeared from the earth it could be reconstructed out of his book” (Budgen 1972: 69). Among the many and varied points of view, there prevails an opinion that confirms Joyce’s implementation of an artistic project “to outlive the physical city, that was more real and vital and convincing than the historical Dublin” (Levitt 2002: 191). On the other hand, in “Making Space in the Works of James Joyce” Valerie Benejam argues that the novel paradoxically exposes the limited scope of Joyce’s visual rendering of the space, and suggests that the architectural space of *Ulysses* can be more fruitfully investigated in its acoustic rendition, since acoustic elements constitute a key element in Joyce’s construction of Dublin’s spatial environment (Benejam 2012: 66).

In our opinion, the smell factor is an equally important component in mapping the city. In order to portray a “real and vital and convincing Dublin”, Joyce constructs a smellscape of the early 20th-century metropolis. In contemporary humanities, the term “smellscape” is used “to describe the totality of the olfactory landscape, accommodating both episodic (fore-grounded or time limited) and involuntary (background) odors” (Henshaw 2013: 5). That is exactly how Joyce determined his priorities. When writing *Ulysses*, he explained to Arthur Power that he “tried to give colour and tone to Dublin [...] the drab, yet glittering atmosphere of Dublin, its hallucinatory vapours, its tattered confusion, the atmosphere of its bars...” [Power 1999: 113].

It seems necessary to specify, that the notion of “atmosphere” is crucial in Joyce’s representation of space, ranging from Bloom’s speculations about “the terrestrial atmosphere” (*U* 17.653) and “line of

demarcation between troposphere and stratosphere” (*U* 17.653), through to his remark that “the body feels the atmosphere” (*U* 13.359) and the dynamic picture of the olfactory aura of Dublin streets, e.g., with “the distinctly fetid atmosphere of the livery stables” (*U* 16.569) and “the congenial atmosphere of the Old Ireland tavern” (*U* 16.597). By capturing the diversity of urban smells and identifying their sources – restaurants, bakeries, baths, drug shops, brothels and body odours of Dubliners – Joyce recreates a mimetically precise atmosphere of Dublin.

In representations of space, which always involve a viewer’s perspective, a distinction between “route-maps” and “survey maps” is often traced. In *Ulysses*, Joyce chooses a model in which space is organized by the trajectories of his characters’ movements. Primarily, this is the route of Bloom, whom Bernard Benstock qualifies as “olfactory priest of olfactory imagination” (Benstock 1991: 153) because “his receptivity to the entire range of olfactory sensations, his tolerance for the rank odour and his pleasures in appreciating the most fragrant consists of both effluvia and manufactured scent” (Benstock 1991: 145). Moving around the city, Bloom passes through “hot mockturtle vapour and steam of newbaked jumpuffs rolypoly poured out from Harrison’s” (*U* 8.150); turns “Combridge’s corner” where he is met by “perfumed bodies, warm, full” (*U* 8.161); and, in a moment “in the door of the Burton restaurant ... Stinky gripped his trembling breath” (*U* 8.161). Later, he recalls the smells emanating “in Lombard street”, a place of artists’ gathering, – “Like flowers. [...] Violets. Came from the turpentine probably in the paint” (*U* 13.357), and at night he inhales “with internal satisfaction the smell of James Rourke’s city bakery [...] the very palatable odour indeed of our daily bread, of all commodities of the public the primary and most indispensable” (*U* 16.570).

Bloom’s identification of urban odours is very important from an anthropological point of view. Depicting the character’s personal olfactory perception of the city (which is critically reasoned, though more positive than negative), Joyce shapes his worldview, and therefore, more fully reveals his human characteristics. Besides, the author

acknowledges that it is impossible for people to perceive an entire smellscape simultaneously; thus, the image of Joyce's Dublin absorbs the social odours of the lower-middle-class city, i.e., the environment being keenly experienced by Leopold Bloom, as well as by Stephen Dedalus.

In sum, olfactory modalities are crucial in producing a lively and airy atmosphere of the city truly inhabited by sentient characters. By locating the phenomenon of smell at the very core of Dublin identity, and imbuing the metropolis with multiple shades of odours, Joyce creates a truly dynamic "personality" profile of his home town.

Conclusion

Ulysses is permeated by so many nuances of smells that Joyce's artistic language becomes a generator of olfactory knowledge. The writer's experiments with a language representing smell evidence the artistic rediscovery of the human condition in modernist fiction. They clearly confirm that "it is sufficient to define modernism just as that: the surfacing of the olfactory as an essential element in writing" (Rindisbacher 1992, 146).

It is hoped that an anthropological inquiry into the vast area of odour in Joyce's oeuvre will continue. The ineradicable presence of intersensoriality in the portrayal of his characters and their environments serves many tasks in representing the basic structure of the human being, the incompleteness and openness of the human world, and dual dialogical relations – with Others and with the inner Self.

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‘YES, YES: A WOMAN TOO. LIFE, LIFE’: LUCIA
AND THE LIFE-WRITING ASPECTS OF JOYCE’S
NOVELS

Introduction

Recent critically acclaimed graphic narratives have ostensibly been inspired by the fiction and life of James Joyce. Alison Bechdel’s *Fun Home* and Mary M. Talbot’s *Dotter of Her Father’s Eyes* are graphic memoirs that explicitly engage with Joyce’s work and some aspects of his personal life. Both tell stories of daughters who reflect on their relationship with, and the often harmful proclivities of, their fathers. Bechdel’s father Bruce was a closeted homosexual who, Alison came to suspect, killed himself shortly after her revelation to her parents of her homosexuality and Bruce’s own admission to her of his. Talbot’s work tells the story of her struggles growing up in the shadow of her father, Joyce scholar James S. Atherton, who was often aloof, had a foul temper, and was constantly occupied with his academic work on Joyce. Talbot also draws parallels between her experiences and those of Lucia Joyce. These self-writing texts are worth consideration not only because they depict lives lived and understood in reference to Joyce and his works, but also because they raise questions about the nature and characteristics of the great Irish writer’s fiction.

Scholars and biographers of Joyce have remarked that his works are autobiographical—yet, this often seems to be taken as a foregone conclusion that no longer requires any proof. Nevertheless, Joyce’s penchant for fictionalizing actual events, personalities, family members, friends and acquaintances, and even intimate personal experiences has been pointed out in studies, such as those of Richard Ellmann,

Brenda Maddox, and John McCourt, that investigate his fiction alongside letters and other accounts of his life and times. Yet, while many commentators take such a view of Joyce's fiction for granted, it is not always evident whether and to what extent Joyce's works are autobiographical. Would his works satisfy the requirements of a definition of autobiography? And supposing for a moment that Joyce's works were indeed autobiographical, what features and decisions with regard to his texts would allow us to consider them as such?

I would like to show here that considering graphic novels that relate to Joyce's life and work enable us to highlight and investigate some of the life-writing characteristics of Joyce's works. Comparing the graphic narratives with Joyce's fiction can underline the features of the latter. For instance, these graphic memoirs tell the stories not only of one self, but of self and others (in fact, many others). *Fun Home* is Bechdel's coming of age narrative, which interconnects with her father's more tragic story. *Dotter* is simultaneously Talbot's memoirs—recollections of a childhood dominated by the fear of a distant and constantly irritable father—and a condensed biography of Lucia Joyce that depicts her promise, anguish and ultimate fate. Now if these graphic narratives have a relational character, might one be justified in describing Joyce's work, supposing it is autobiographical to some degree, as utterly self-concerned, as Terry Eagleton suggests in his review of Carol Loeb Schloss' book *Lucia Joyce* (2004: 17)? I contend here that this question can be approached by first discussing if it might be justifiable to speak of Joyce's fiction as autobiographical. I wish to demonstrate here that Joyce does identify with his main male protagonists. Second, the self-concern of the author which is displayed in his fiction is paired with the near-invisibility of the daughter in the narrative world, which in turn mirrors the marginalization Lucia suffered in real life. However, I will also point out towards the end of this paper that there is a movement from utter self-concern to a more other-regarding tendency in Joyce's later work, a dynamic that is attested to by the proliferation of probable references to Lucia. Joyce's fiction moves from an almost exclusive self-regard to a relationality comparable to that of the above-mentioned graphic memoirs.

Autobiographical Joyce

Philippe Lejeune's now classic and widely contested definition of autobiography claims it is a "retrospective prose narrative written by a real person concerning his own existence, where the focus is his individual life, in particular the story of his personality" (1989: 4). The writing self thus needs to be the same as the written self. As Lejeune adds, "the author, the narrator, and the protagonist must be identical" (5). He also speaks of a pact that is implicitly entered into by the author and reader: that the former tells the truth and that this truth concerns the author herself or himself. While certain qualifications need to be made given that they are rendered in a graphic medium, Lejeune's basic definition applies to the graphic memoirs of Bechdel and Talbot. Their works do not only consist of texts that establish identity between author, subject, and narrator—they also contain self-portraits that make this identification more visible and concrete. How about Joyce's writings? Considered in the light of this definition, Joyce's works cannot be said to be autobiographical in any simple or straightforward sense. Lejeune's understanding of autobiography applies, for instance, to the *Confessions* of St. Augustine. We know that the author of this work is the same as its narrator and subject. It is Augustine who, lying and crying under a fig tree, experienced hearing a child's voice saying, "take it and read" (1961: 177), and it is the same person who narrates this turning point in the book. In Joyce's case, however, we would hesitate to attribute the fictional work *Ulysses* to the fictional characters Leopold Bloom or Stephen Dedalus, for instance.

Yet particular works by Joyce have actually been described as life-writing texts. John McCourt comments, for example, that Joyce's unpublished long poem *Giacomo Joyce*, which is an account of Joyce's infatuation with one of his wealthy English-language students in Trieste, is "more autobiographical than his other fiction" (2000: 204). Note that this is a comparative statement that suggests that the other works of Joyce bear autobiographical features as well. After all, McCourt's work is devoted to tracing the roots of Joyce's fiction to the many years he spent in the beautiful coastal city of Trieste. Brenda

Maddox, on the other hand, makes a more general statement by saying that Joyce's writings are autobiographical—yet, she adds, “none more so than *Exiles*” (1988: 129). This is not at all surprising as Nora is the focus of Maddox's work and it has been established by biographers that Joyce and Nora knowingly played out their parts in the Triestine drama that involved Roberto Prezioso. It was a bizarre situation that humiliated the latter, allowed James and Nora to affirm their commitment to each other, and which eventually became the basis of the plot and characters of Joyce's sole play, as well as some plot elements in *Ulysses*.

I would like to note further that commentators have not only determined parallels between characters and plots in the creative work on the one hand, and the Joyces and the vicissitudes of their life on the other. There are indications that while Joyce's fiction does not perfectly fit Lejeune's definition, other texts point to elements that might justify calling his novels autobiographical. We know for instance, that *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and its earlier incarnations are stylized fictionalizations of the life, experiences, and aspirations of the young Joyce, who decided to call himself “Stephen Dedalus” in the work of fiction, thus combining Christian and pagan figures in that name (Ellmann 1982: 148). Add to this the fact that Joyce also signed correspondence as “Stephen Dedalus”, for instance on a 1912 postcard sent from a holiday in Galway to Ettore Schmitz (see photo inserts in McCourt 2000). In addition to this, prior to their self-chosen exile away from Ireland, in a letter to Nora Barnacle Joyce speaks of his story “The Sisters”, an early version of which had then recently come out in *The Irish Homestead*, as written “by me (Stephen Dedalus)” (Maddox 1988: 36). These two instances show that however Joyce's estimation of Stephen eventually developed, he did identify with this male protagonist.

Joyce's fiction could therefore be called autobiographical insofar as he consciously incorporated details of his own life into his creations, transformed real life persons into his characters, and established in writings apart from the fictional texts that there is some degree of identification between the author, narrator, and protagonist(s) in his

work. Although it cannot simply be said that Joyce's novels are autobiographies in the sense we consider a work like Augustine's *Confessions* to be, they do share some aspects of this self-regarding genre as they relate the development of the written self that could be identified with the writing self. If Joyce's fiction is self-concerned, in the sense of the artist's preoccupation with his art, as well as the degree of attention given to male characters that the author and narrator could identify with, might this not be considered consistent with the picture of the writing self we gather from the biographies: one who constantly and skilfully promoted his own self-interest—in many cases to the detriment of loved ones and friends?

The largely self-regarding autobiographical qualities of Joyce's novels can be made more obvious when contrasted with graphic memoirs that engage with his life and work. In *Fun Home*, Bechdel draws parallels between her relationship with her father and the encounter of Bloom and Stephen. Talbot goes further in *Dotter of Her Father's Eyes* by interweaving her own coming-of-age narrative with that of Lucia Joyce. The tragi-comic memoirs of Bechdel and Talbot express their writing selves *and* create space for the unfolding of the narratives of others.

Graphic Narratives and Joyce

The life and work of Joyce figure prominently in both Bechdel's *Fun Home* and Talbot's *Dotter*. The former relates Alison's development from being the daughter of intellectual parents in a provincial town in Pennsylvania to a young adult who comes to an awareness of her homosexuality, all of this described with the help of drawings and literary references. There is no question about the autobiographical character of her narrative—Bechdel even uses documentary evidence, such as family photographs and letters, reproducing them by hand in the pages of her book. But it is not only her own story that she narrates in the graphic medium: employing allusions to *Portrait* and *Ulysses*, which respectively frame the first and last chapters of the memoir, she tells the story of Bruce, a lifelong closeted homosexual who simultaneously hid and expressed his true self through his preoccupation with

the restoration of their Gothic home, interior design, and literature. Bechdel surmises that he was wracked by guilt and shame for not having the courage to come out, and that this was part of the reason why he committed suicide by jumping into the path of an oncoming truck.

More importantly, Bechdel engages with Joyce for reasons she explicitly states in her memoir. First, she tells us that the literary references are not only “descriptive devices”, but also a way for her to make sense of her parents (who were highly reserved and uncommunicative) as they are according to her “most real to me in fictional terms” (Bechdel 2006: 67). *Fun Home* is steeped in literary allusions, from references to Ovid’s *Metamorphosis* to Henry James’ *A Portrait of a Lady* and Joyce’s *Ulysses*. Key life moments are narrated in reference to characters and episodes from these books. Second, one also learns that it is her way of negotiating her relationship with her deceased father, whose favorite author was Joyce. Bechdel admits that when she had to take a seminar on *Ulysses* in college, a time when she wanted to remain free from the influence of her parents, she asked for her father’s advice about the course, and yet spent most of her time reading feminist and lesbian literature. The difficulty of Alison’s attempt to connect with her father is depicted in what she calls their “Ithaca moment”: an entire page with a series of panels that show them in a car, on their way to the cinema, sitting side by side and avoiding each other’s gaze. They awkwardly talk about their sexual experiences. Bechdel would reveal later on that she would not have such a conversation with her father again.

Dotter of Her Father’s Eyes is also a graphic narrative about daughters and fathers. It is Talbot’s own memoir, chronicling the experiences of a girl who grows up with an imperious father and Joyce scholar. The latter is often depicted as sitting in his study in front of a typewriter, smoking and working, or venting his anger on the raucous children of the house. From the point of view of a little girl, he was entirely consumed by work and showed little concern for anything or anyone else. “He was always muttering Joycean phrases to himself. It sounded like nonsense. But he seemed to enjoy it”, Talbot recalls (2002: 20). The suggested similarities between Atherton and Joyce are

obvious: both were intellectual men, committed to their artistic and scholarly pursuits, mostly aloof, and experienced by their daughters as a “cold, mad, feary, father” (*FW* 628.02). Given the comparable experiences with the kind of fathers they had, Talbot likewise draws parallels between her and Lucia’s lives—with the crucial difference that Lucia ended up in a *maison de santé*, alone and far from Joyce who had to flee France on the outbreak of the Second World War, while Talbot struck out on her own, finding love and eventually success as a university professor.

In addition to the references they make to Joyce in view of their fathers’ preoccupation with his work, these two graphic narratives are also generically related to Joyce’s fiction—that is, if we take the latter as bearing autobiographical features. They relate the life and trace the development of a written self who is identifiable with the text’s narrator and author. Yet the graphic memoirs differ from Joyce’s fiction in a crucial way: they tell stories of the person is perhaps more often than not marginalized in Joyce. Looking at Joyce’s novels through the lenses of autobiography highlights their self-regarding character.

“Yes, yes: a woman too. Life, life”. If Joyce the man was intensely disinterested in anything but his own concerns, this trait can, to a certain degree, be found in his fiction too, which tends to follow the thoughts, desires, and misadventures of its male protagonists. Could it be said that Joyce’s fiction reflects details of Joyce’s personal life? If this is so, then it would seem that when we read about Bloom, Stephen, and HCE, we read about Joyce speaking about himself. Might Eagleton be right in describing Joyce’s work as concerned with nothing but itself—just as Joyce the author was intensely concerned with nothing but himself and his art? Such a reading of his texts would seem to be consistent with what we know about him. Maddox quips, commenting on the fact that his younger brother Stanislaus had to learn to protect himself from the demands of Joyce, that the latter was “outrageously indifferent to interests other than his own” (Maddox 1988: 40). Indeed, Joyce had a penchant for putting his own concerns ahead those of others, constantly and adroitly promoting himself and his work, as well soliciting moral and financial support from friends

and benefactors. Just as Joyce focused on himself and his interests, his fiction centered on male protagonists and their quests, which in *Ulysses* is one of realizing paternity. The outcome of Joyce's self-centering in his life and fiction is the marginalization of others close to him, in particular of the daughters that he produced.

For instance, we read in *Ulysses* that Leopold's only daughter, Milly, is referred to first as "a sweet young thing" or the "photo girl" found by Bannon in Mullingar and who Stephen hears about (*U* 1.685-86). Later, she appears again through a letter addressed to her "Dearest Papli" (*U* 4.397). The reader learns from the missive that it was Milly's birthday recently; she received presents from her parents; she is elsewhere working as a photographer's assistant; she knows and spends time with a student named Bannon; and she also knows Blazes Boylan. At this point, we do not know much else apart from these few details. Later on, Milly will drift in and out of Bloom's thoughts and memories, but she does not enjoy the same presence or visibility as Stephen, Leopold, or any of the many other minor characters in this lengthy work. Unlike Gerty McDowell or the other girls in the "Nausicaa" episode, we do not see Milly depicted in any concrete way, nor do we hear her speak in her own voice, except through the thoughts and remembrances of others. For instance, Bloom recalls his daughter in "Hades": "Molly. Milly. Same thing watered down. Her tomboy oaths. O jumping Jupiter! Ye gods and little fishes! Still, she's a dear girl. Soon be a woman. Mullingar. Dearest Papli. Young student. Yes, yes: a woman too. Life, life" (*U* 6.87-90).

These lines refer back to the original letter through which Milly is introduced to the reader and is allowed to "speak" in the "Calypso" episode. We learn more about her through Bloom: it is clear that he thinks that she is much like her mother, a younger if diluted version if you will. Molly appears first as a voluptuous body in the fifth episode, then returns in flashes as a hand out of a carriage window, a mistress and unfaithful wife in Bloom's fantasies in "Circe", then as a presence in a room in the deep of the night in Ithaca. She returns at last as a remarkable voice in "Penelope", possessed of a full personality that causes the reader to see the narratives and desires of Stephen and

Bloom in a different light. Alas, we do not even hear Milly's own voice. As Katherine Ryan convincingly points out in her reflection on Bloom's anxiety about paternity and inheritance, Milly is a "blind spot" in both the mind of Bloom and the critical discussions of the relations at the core of *Ulysses* (2014: 18). She stays in the margins and even when Bloom's wanderings and death-wary consciousness drifts towards her, she does not become present forcefully enough to disrupt the patterns of Bloom's aspirations and desires.

As autobiographical texts, it would be no surprise to see in Joyce's *Portrait* and *Ulysses* that much attention is given to the main male protagonists with whom at one time or another Joyce as author identified. However, this comes at a price: the daughter (and other related themes, such as mother-daughter relationships) could at most only be marginally present. We have seen this to be the case in *Ulysses*, where Milly, Bloom's beloved daughter and the fictional version of Joyce's real one, appears for the most part as a thought or memory. This sort of situation contrasts sharply with what one finds in the graphic memoirs that allude to Joyce which I have considered above. As we have seen, they not only tell the story of daughters, but also establish cross-discursive links with texts that concern Joyce's life and works. However, if as Schloss points out, Lucia is inscribed in Joyce's fiction in the figures of daughter and wife (2003: 8), can the same things be said of *Finnegans Wake*?

Daughters in the *Wake*

In her highly controversial biography, Schloss makes an argument for a different reading of Lucia's life, endeavors and ultimate fate. She argues that no conclusive diagnosis of Lucia was made by any of the doctors that saw and treated her. Concomitant to this claim is the assertion that the opinions of non-experts and amateur psychiatrists prevailed and influenced the decisions made by the Joyces. Schloss also suggests controversially that an unwanted, and ultimately aborted, pregnancy was the real reason behind Lucia's abandoning her dancing career. Perhaps more importantly, however, Schloss takes pains to demonstrate that Lucia was an artist in her own right: she was a writer

of poems and a novel, a talented and promising dancer who trained with the best instructors of her day, and even her later efforts at illustration had some merit. Sadly, her ambitions were derailed by the strict views of her parents and were sacrificed in favor of the genius of her father. Another positive aspect of the narrative that Schloss constructs is the claim that Lucia collaborated in the creation of what was then known as *Work in Progress*: she knew that her father was a keen observer, so the words in her letters and some of her dramatic actions were intended to catch his attention and provide him with material for his next literary masterpiece.

Notwithstanding the shortcomings and dangers that scholars like McCourt (2003-2004) and Finn Fordham (2009: 18) have already pointed out, Schloss' remarks on Lucia and *Finnegans Wake* become relevant here. She observes first of all that daughters in Joyce's fictional and actual worlds were pushed to the side in favor of male protagonists and the genius of the author. Furthermore, while some of her assertions and methods are questionable, Schloss is able to trace some of the likely coded references to Lucia in *Finnegans Wake*. Lucia is inscribed into the book as a little girl cloud, "a Nuvoletta, a lass" (*FW* 159.05-9), one of the delightful rainbow dancers who "leap so loopyly, loopyly, as they link to light" (*FW* 226.26-28), the lovelorn and "gloomy Isa" (*FW* 226.4), and as the schizophrenic sister Issy, etc. In addition to entertaining ambitions of becoming an artist and training to become a performer, Lucia was aware early on that her father watched her closely. As she learned, performed, gave up her career, and sank into a worrying state, the fact she was the "dotter of his eyes" (*FW* 372.03) took on various meanings. She was the apple of her father's eyes, an object of growing concern, one who also enabled her father to see, and a fellow artist who wished to collaborate in the creation of Joyce's next literary offspring. Lastly, taking into account the inscriptions of Lucia into Wakean language, along with the other transmutations of members of the Joyce family and circle of friends, Schloss goes on to suggest that Joyce's last great work is an epic that encodes the actual history and vicissitudes of a particular family (2003: 436).

Part of Lucia's tragedy was that she too was a victim of Joyce's—as Maddox puts it—“malignant self-absorption” (1988: 292). We have seen above that the fictional character Milly in *Ulysses* in some ways shared her fate: she was deprived of the chance to become fully visible, to come into her own. Yet, when we read of probable equivalents or transmutations of Lucia in the *Wake*, we find a different picture. This last work of Joyce does not limit itself to its male protagonists: mothers and daughters are definitely present, more conspicuous, and enjoy more significant roles in the narrative world. Schloss is not alone in pointing out that Lucia is encoded in *Finnegans Wake* in multiple ways. Finn Fordham demonstrates, by correlating drafts, proofs, and letters that mention Lucia and her worsening mental state, that veiled references to Lucia can be identified in the *Wake*, and that they also displayed Joyce's changing attitudes toward his daughter and her condition. Joyce makes certain changes to his *Work in Progress* that reflect his evolving understanding of Lucia: her identification with lightning, along with its connotations of clarity and clairvoyance, eventually gives way to her figuring as Electra, with the signification of identification with the father and the mad urge to inflict violence upon the faulted mother (Fordham 2002: 352). At this point, we can appreciate that the contrast with *Ulysses* and its depiction of Bloom's daughter Milly is striking. If Milly is modeled on Lucia, then we can see that both were marginalized. *Finnegans Wake*, as a work with (auto)biographical dimensions, is capacious, protean, and multivalent enough to contain varied references to daughter figures and their real-life correlate, Lucia. It seems then that whereas *Ulysses* bears a tendency quite opposed to that which we find in the graphic memoirs we considered above, *Finnegans Wake* shares their relational dynamic.

Conclusion

In this paper I considered the question of whether Joyce's works are autobiographical. In addition to noting that Joyce's creative process involved both the transmutation of personal experiences into a profoundly stylized kind of realist fiction, I also pointed out that Joyce

partly identified with his main male protagonists. Stephen Dedalus is a clear case in point. Given this fact, Joyce's works in a certain sense meet the requirements of a widely discussed understanding of autobiography. Then, I brought to the fore a characteristic of life-writing that takes on a high degree of intensity in Joyce. Like other life-writing texts, *Ulysses* is characterized by a persistent focus on the self. This is a feature that it shares with two graphic memoirs that make explicit references to the life, times, and writings of Joyce. *Fun Home* and *Dotter* are graphic narratives that depict writing selves that wish to come to terms with their past and their relationships. However, these works are also relational at their core in that they not only tell the personal stories of their creators, but of other individuals too: of past and lost loved ones, as well as those of strangers and even of fictional characters. *Dotter* even contains a biography of Lucia Joyce. These graphic memoirs share with *Ulysses* an obvious self-concern; yet *Ulysses* differs from them as it puts premium on its own male protagonists, thus reflecting Joyce's narrow self-interestedness. One outcome of this is the marginalization of the daughter figure—a dynamic that mirrors the manner Lucia Joyce was seen and treated, as well as her ultimate fate.

Interestingly enough, what was largely absent or undeveloped in *Ulysses* gains more visibility in *Finnegans Wake*. Consistent with the plurality of meanings engendered by its words, there is a multiplicity and a certain protean aspect to the daughter figures it evokes. Commentators have demonstrated that these refer to and/or are modeled on Lucia. Schloss reads the whole story as the history of a particular family told in a coded fashion. Others find parallels and even causal connections between real-life events that involved Lucia and her deteriorating psychological condition, and particular female figures in *Finnegans Wake*. It would seem then that this later work of Joyce, in addition to its being an extraordinary kind of life-writing text, shares a crucial feature of the graphic memoirs that we have considered here. Like *Fun Home* and *Dotter*, the *Wake* provides space not only for one figure's narrative; Joyce wrote it in such a way that the other, and in

particular the daughter, becomes both visible and able to speak in her own, albeit transmuted, voice.

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WORD AND WORLD, FICTION AND REALITY IN
ULYSSES: JOYCE AS REALIST/HYPERREALIST/
ANTIREALIST

The assumption that literature more than any other art (and fiction more than any other genre) necessarily represents, reproduces and imitates individual and broadly cultural human experience is so widely accepted that it has become almost a commonplace. Many novelists and critics have laid claim to the novel as distinctively capable of representing reality, associating such mimetic capacity with the referentiality of its linguistic medium, which is also the substrate of culture. To name but a few notable examples, Henry James categorically states in “The Art of Fiction” that “the only reason for the existence of a novel is that it does attempt to represent life” (1972: 30), while in his essay entitled “The Function of Fiction in Shaping Reality”, Paul Ricoeur has more recently highlighted the central role of language in enabling imagination to create a fictional world: “imagination at work – in a [fictional/literary] work – produces itself a world” (1979: 128). Fictional writing, therefore, is both an imitative and a creative act, in that it necessarily evokes in the mind of the reader a wide array of pre-existing concepts, images and sociocultural entities, as well as elements other than those explicitly referred to by the words on the page. Therefore, we respond to literary language by recognising in it a familiar representation of the reality we inhabit and, at the same time, fashioning an imaginative world sufficient to provide context and continuity for whatever is specifically described in the text. Such world-evoking capacity of the genre is based on an implicit pact with the reader, who is able to construct a whole out of a narrative that is necessarily only given to a certain extent, because it is based on conventions of selectivity and relevance. This seems to hold true throughout the whole his-

tory of the novel, regardless of the degree of faithfulness to subjective or objective reality that every fictional work may display.

In *Ulysses*, a book combining realism's adherence to facts with modernist formal experimentation, "Joyce never abandoned", as Clive Hart argues, "the realist side of the book represented by the drive towards seamless continuity. He merely coupled the development of the illusion of continuity with its vigorous breakup. [...] *Ulysses* pretends to offer a complete account of Bloomsday, but of course it is full of gaps – huge gaps. Despite its local densities and continuities, it is very porous. Joyce is the most synecdochic of writers. In the case of the represented world, at least, most of the gaps invite filling-in by the reader" (1993: 434). Other scholars as well have noted the apparent contradiction between the novelist's endeavour to include everything in his "sort of encyclopaedia"¹ and the objective impossibility of doing so. As Olson remarks, "by cataloging the experiences of a single day, *Ulysses* both attempts to represent the reality of a particular moment in Dublin 1904 and necessarily gestures toward what cannot be included in a literary text, acknowledging a difference between an ordinary event and a representation that often changes the event into something extraordinary" (2009: 34). In his seminal work *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*, Erich Auerbach acutely perceives that modernist writers "invented their own methods [...] of making the reality which they adopt as their subject appear in the changing lights and in the changing strata" of subjectivism (2003: 545). In other words, they blurred the distinction between the physical and the psychic – a distinction that Freud proved to be far from definite – and adopted a kind of psychological realism which could faith-

¹ I am of course referring to the famous letter to Carlo Linati dated 21 September 1920, in which Joyce describes *Ulysses* in these terms: "it is an epic of two races (Israelite – Irish) and at the same time the cycle of the human body as well as a little story of a day (life). [...] For seven years I have been working at this book – blast it! It is also a sort of encyclopaedia" (*Letters I*: 146). *Ulysses* qualifies as an "encyclopedic narrative" also according to Edward Mendelson's definition of the genre: cf. Mendelson 1976, as well as Saint-Amour 2015.

fully represent human nature in all its complexity, in both its inner and its outer aspects. While Auerbach perceives the stream-of-consciousness novel as widening the scope of Western realism, and Joyce's *Ulysses*, in particular, as "an encyclopedic work, a mirror of Dublin, of Ireland, a mirror too of Europe and its millennia" (547), Georg Lukács, in his *Studies in European Realism*, considers such a form of psychologism as a deviation from the realist norm. He briefly mentions Joyce as belonging to the group of what he names the "psychologists", arguing that their "punctilious probing into the human soul and their transformation of human beings into a chaotic flow of ideas destroy [...] every possibility of a literary presentation of the complete human personality" (1964: 8).

Joyce's well-known declarations of intent in writing *Ulysses* reveal a deep interest in the problematic relationship between word and world, fiction and reality, as well as the attempt to mediate between the opposing terms of such dichotomies by changing psychological realism and even surrealism into a form of post-modernist hyperrealism *avant la lettre*², in which the fictional world purports to substitute the real one, while exposing its own patently unreal, artificial character. Joyce's realist attitude was not just synonymous with faithfully recreating hard, dry facts, whether outside or inside the mind; he notoriously took pains to develop a range of techniques and devices which could be instrumental in evoking the subconscious dimensions of the characters as well as the collective psychic milieu in which they exist, thus immensely enriching our experience of the fictive world of the novel. In his conversations, for instance, Joyce appears to consider his masterpiece as faithful to a realist spirit, and "Circe" – quite surprisingly – as the result of his strenuous effort to approach reality. As he declared to Arthur Power, his aim was to record experience without the delusions of romantic idealism:

² On the supposed "postmodernity of Joyce" see Attridge 1995, Butler 1990 and Dettmar 1996.

In realism, you are down to facts on which the world is based: that sudden reality which smashes romanticism into a pulp. What makes most people's lives unhappy is some disappointed romanticism, some unrealizable or misconceived ideal. In fact you may say that idealism is the ruin of man, and if we lived down to fact, as primitive man had to do, we would be better off. That is what we were made for. Nature is quite unromantic. It is we who put romance into her, which is a false attitude, an egotism, absurd like all egotisms. In *Ulysses* I tried to keep close to fact.

(Power 1999: 113-114)

In another conversation, however, he expands his notion of objective realism by making the concept comprehensive of the fundamentally subjective perspective of the inner workings of the mind. Interviewed by Djuna Barnes, he famously affirmed: "in *Ulysses* I have recorded, simultaneously, what a man says, sees, thinks, and what such seeing, thinking, saying does, to what you Freudians call the subconscious" (Barnes 1922: 65). It is instructive that the two tendencies – faithfulness to hard, observable facts, described in minute detail on the one hand, and the psychological, even irrational and unconscious, sphere on the other – are not mutually exclusive, but rather overlap and combine in the name of an accentuated form of realism. Such an attitude is evident in another conversation with Power, where, in an apparent paradox, Joyce conceives of "Circe" – notably his most visionary, unreal or even surreal episode – as the point of greatest realism in the whole novel: "in my Mabbot Street scene [...] I approached reality closer in my opinion than anywhere else in the book, except perhaps for moments in the last chapter. Sensation is our object, heightened even to the point of hallucination" (1999: 86). Unsurprisingly, therefore, Rosa Maria Bosinelli points out that "Joyce's representation of the world constantly oscillates between reality and imagination", and that his writing strategy reminds one "of the oscillation between a maniacal representation of reality and its projection into dreamy scenery that is typical of pictorial movements such as surrealism and hyper-realism" (2014: 52-53).

Maria Grazia Tonetto (2012) has convincingly argued that “an evolution of the categories of imitation and realism took place in Joyce’s aesthetics between the completion of *Dubliners*, the rewriting of the *Portrait*, and the early stages of *Ulysses*. The articles, lectures, and examination papers that Joyce wrote during those years of study and self-refashioning, were of special significance in bringing to a reconciliation early dichotomies”. The elusive concept of realism – denoting a kind of writing which aims to represent what is material, chiefly what is external, verifiable and empirical, as authentic objective reality – first appears in Joyce’s critical essays in the 1899 piece “Royal Hibernian Academy ‘Ecce Homo’”, where, though discussing painting, he refers to “the sense of life, the realistic illusion” and distinguishes realism from mimetic faithfulness to reality and from the “execution of faultless forms”; more than a mere copy of the world, what he commends is, rather, “the infusion of life” (*OCPW* 17). In his critical writings praising drama, and especially the drama of Henrik Ibsen, Joyce advocates an unmediated realism, a style that he believes accurately reflects everyday experience. In “Drama and Life” (1900), the realist attitude coincides with an attempt to record life “as we see it before our eyes, men and women as we meet them in the real world, not as we apprehend them in the world of faery” (*OCPW* 28). Inspired by Ibsen’s aesthetics of the ordinary, Joyce seems to overlook the Norwegian dramatist’s symbolism, emphasising instead how he breaks with literary conventions to make art out of commonplace experiences. In “Ibsen’s New Drama” (1900), for instance, Joyce praises Ibsen for portraying “average lives in their uncompromising truth” (*OCPW* 45), a description that certainly foresees his own early work. The two essays on James Clarence Mangan (1902, 1907), however, show a progressive refining of the author’s notion of realism. Here he mentions a method which looks at “present things and so works upon them and fashions them that the quick intelligence may go beyond them to their meaning, which is still unuttered” (*OCPW* 53), also referring to those “dreams” (55) which, for the artist, are no less real than reality itself. To put it differently, Joyce here hints at a more comprehensive and authentic experience of the real, which can only be

attained through art, thus reformulating his own personal vision of literary realism by means of an expansion of the very category of reality.

It is my contention in this paper that the different forms of realism – realism *tout court*, psycho-realism, surrealism – that Joyce advocates in his conversations and critical writings can be subsumed under the idea of hyperrealism emerging from what he always recognised as his chief purpose in writing *Ulysses*, that is, the famous declaration to Frank Budgen that he intended “to give a picture of Dublin so complete that if the city one day suddenly disappeared from the earth it could be reconstructed out of [his] book” (Budgen 1972: 69). The imitative as well as creative nature of Joyce’s realism revealed by this bold statement has become a true critical commonplace: it is widely recognised, as Hugh Kenner points out, that Joyce is “reputedly the supreme exponent of a fiction subdued to scrupulous documentation” (1978: xii), or that in *Ulysses*, as Nicholson argues, “we are provided [...] with texture, fabric, and character, an ambience so convincingly constructed that, should indeed Dublin never have existed, the city of Joyce’s novels would be sufficient to fill the gap” (2008: 389). However, scholars such as Rosa Maria Bosinelli have pointed out that “Joyce’s realism is not so closely linked to reality as is often argued”, or suggest that the author’s statement to Budgen “should not be taken at face value as is often the case in Joyce criticism” (2014: 41). Discussing the paradoxical nature of Joyce’s claim, Anne Fogarty has highlighted the coexistence of dichotomous aspects, most notably the interplay between referentiality and self-referentiality, in *Ulysses*. As she interestingly remarks,

Although Joyce suggests that fiction can wholly substitute reality, he simultaneously maintains that his text makes fullest sense in terms of its referentiality. Dublin, it would appear as well in the double take of Joycean aesthetics, is both mirrored and eclipsed by the fictional work conceived in its likeness. The material realities of life on June 16, 1904, supply significant coordinates for our reading of *Ulysses* and yet seem also to be erased by the very processes of fictionalization and re-invention. Joyce’s memorial-

izing textuality obliterates, rearranges and deconstructs the history and geopolitical spaces that he also pretends to safeguard and salvage (2004: 56).

Joyce's novel, therefore, refers to or reflects reality and at the same time *creates* its own reality, or a fictional world ideally replacing the real one. In so doing, it both adheres to and violates realist principles. This mainly happens either through deviations from mimetic norms – that is to say through errors and patent divergences from the truth, which represent an antirealist drive at work in the novel – or through a plethora of superfluous details, in other words through a form of hyperrealism intentionally disregarding the conventions of relevance and significance on which fiction as genre is based. Moreover, it is precisely by means of a mistake, or perhaps a revealing slip of the pen, that the central dichotomy between word and world, fiction and reality is foregrounded in the novel. I am of course referring to one of Martha Clifford's solecisms in the love letter she writes to Bloom – "I called you naughty boy because I do not like that other world. Please tell me what is the real meaning of that word?" (*U* 5.244-246) – which represents just one example among the "many instances of factual error, misinterpretation, misreading, and misunderstanding on the characters' part, and even narrative errors such as some plainly wrong mathematical calculations in 'Ithaca'" (McCarthy 2013: 196).

More often than not, mistakes and inaccuracies in *Ulysses* derive precisely from the strenuous effort to stick to facts and objectively depict reality. It is well known that Joyce was so obsessed with precise details that he compulsively verified the exactness of the particulars inserted in his novel by means of other people's evidence, as his letters clearly demonstrate. Furthermore, he made extensive use of instruments such as almanacs, anthologies, dictionaries, maps, encyclopaedias and, chiefly, the 1904 *Thom's Official Directory of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland*, which supplied *Ulysses* with the most disparate details about Dublin life, including the time of sunrise and sunset, ships in Dublin port, weather conditions, births and deaths, as well as alphabetical lists of street addresses, residents and

trades by category. However, it has become apparent that not all of these facts are exact. In their *James Joyce's Dublin: A Topographical Guide to the Dublin of "Ulysses"* (2004: 14), Ian Gunn and Clive Hart suggest that *Thom's* itself is replete with mistakes such as misprints, inconsistent spellings, duplications of addresses, wrong shop names. Therefore, Joyce may have inadvertently and/or on purpose transposed them, and created several errors of the same kind. While all of this emphasizes the author's commitment to a realist aesthetics, it also shows his own attempt to expose the limits of realism. The errors in *Ulysses* are of a transgressively innovative modernist text which subverts the idea of correctness: despite his claims, Joyce devised a narrative containing inaccuracies and inconsistencies that undermine its apparently authoritative status as an encyclopaedic, totalising account of Dublin on June 16, 1904. Joyce's reliance on *Thom's Official Directory* highlights his concern with the particular, to the point that Sam Slote draws a basic analogy between the two texts: "both *Thom's* and *Ulysses* aim toward the comprehensive and the commodious" (2011: 192). However, although Joyce made extensive use of the directory and imitated, on the level of style, its comprehensiveness, he did so imperfectly, perhaps to *mine* – other than *mime* – his source, and chiefly to show that his own purposes in writing the novel were not just confined to topographical exactness.

Patrick McCarthy defines *Ulysses* as "a book of many errors" (2013: 199), showing how its author intentionally violated and redefined most norms of writing (and of reading) while meticulously sticking to others. Moreover, Fritz Senn finds it both "annoying and wholly appropriate" that Joyce's text is full of "derailment[s], deviation[s], dislocation[s], omissions, chance delays, and collisions", and argues that such apparent flaws are actually "intrinsic" to the programmed "malfunction" of the novel (1986: 161, 164)³. One could also add that perhaps no work can claim to be comprehensive unless it also includes

³ On the theme of Joyce and error, see also McCarthy 1990, Conley 2003, Lamos 2004, Creasy 2011.

error: as Joyce's attempt was to reproduce a reality far from faultless, the presence of mistakes can be considered as appropriate, even essential, to the representation of Dublin life in *Ulysses*. It seems evident, therefore, that realism conceived as fidelity to true facts on the one hand, and deliberate errors or deviations from realist principles on the other, are complementary opposites in *Ulysses*. Similarly, the overabundance of details and, paradoxically, the concomitant impossibility of keeping up with the world outside the novel appear to be mutually determining conditions. The seemingly infinite number of verbal elements contained in the text suggests that, no matter how comprehensive the narrative is, it can never totally exhaust reality. The tension between the traditional rooting of the realist text in objects and facts, the presence of mistakes or other forms of "unreality", and the surplus of details in *Ulysses*, creates a form of realism that is unique to the novel, merging realist, antirealist and hyperrealist stances. By means of his special technique, Joyce expands the concept of realism and at the same time, as Karen Lawrence argues, "abjures the notion of closure and shape to which fictions usually submit; the details of the text overflow all neat aesthetic patterns, signifying the arbitrariness and pluri-significance of life. *Ulysses* is both spectacularly artificial and, in its own way, realistic" (1981: 12). The critic, for instance, attributes this way of flouting mimesis, which I also mentioned above, to the multiplication of details and the change from initial to later styles occurring more or less midway in the novel, where form begins to work against content, veiling it from the reader. She interestingly remarks that "as the styles and forms of the chapters proliferate, so do the 'facts' included in the narrative. The book becomes an encyclopedia of possibilities of plot as well as style, deliberately breaking the conventions of selectivity and relevance upon which most novels are based" (10). Other scholars, instead, have attributed the antirealist quality of *Ulysses* to the opacity that language progressively acquires throughout the novel:

The proponents of an antirealist Joyce would extend that inward turn to language. The language of *Ulysses* no longer functions as

an instrument of knowledge; instead it becomes self-absorbed. This self-absorption manifests itself in the multiplication of styles, especially in the second half of *Ulysses*. [...] As a result of the multiplication of styles, the language of *Ulysses* becomes impenetrable; language, the book, Marilyn French has argued, becomes world. Or, as Brook Thomas has extended this line of thought, Joyce forces one to read the book as book, reminding us of the book's counterfeit nature – that there is no real connection between book and world.

(Yee 1997: 46-47)

Whatever the reason for the fissure, or rather the dichotomy, between word and world, fiction and reality in *Ulysses*, the question is evident most explicitly in the errors and inaccuracies disseminated in the book, many of which are deliberately introduced by the author to undermine the principles of realism, or result from his inexhaustible experimentalism. For instance, in playing with proper nouns in the later chapters of the novel, Joyce seems to destabilise language by showing how the idea that words express particular fixed significations is merely illusory. In “Sirens”, where the one-to-one correspondence between lexical items and objects begins to break down, the names “Simon” (Dedalus) and “Leopold” (Bloom) merge in “Siopold” (*U* 11.752). Although the reader understands such a bizarre occurrence in the light of the overall style of the episode, as far as the realistic surface of the novel is concerned there is no physical entity which corresponds to “Siopold”, just as there is no individual that might be associated with “Lionelleopold” in the same chapter (*U* 11.1187), or with the many identities assumed by Bloom in his Circean metamorphoses or, finally, with the mysterious “*L. Boom*” – the mere product of a typographical error – appearing on an inexact list of participants in Patrick Dignam's funeral in “Eumaeus” (*U* 16.1260). Not only does Joyce play with names and their referents, he also sets up realist norms – spatial as well as temporal – and self-consciously violates them, as though to raise metanarrative questions about fictional correctness. The result of this self-reflexive ludic exercise is the recur-

rence of topographical errors, anachronisms and historical inaccuracies. To quote one example among many, in “Telemachus” the impersonal narrator mentions Stephen and Mulligan as having “halted, looking towards the blunt cape of Bray Head that lay on the water like the snout of a sleeping whale” (*U* 1.181-182). However, as Gifford (1988: 17) notes, Bray Head, the headland that rises 791 feet above the shoreline, is approximately seven miles south of, but not visible from, the Martello tower at Sandycove, where Joyce’s fictional characters stand. The artful “arranger” of the first episodes also takes other liberties, and anachronisms frequently appear alongside topographical displacements. In the “Nestor” episode, for instance, Mr Deasy seeks Stephen’s assistance in publishing a letter on the implementation of urgent measures against foot-and-mouth disease, although we know that there was, in fact, no outbreak of it in Ireland before 1912. In other words, there was no historical incident which would cause Deasy to write a missive aimed at the “*prompt ventilation of this allimportant question*” (*U* 2.305-306). To quote another example, in “Circe”, Bloom’s oriental fantasies (adumbrated for the first time in “Calypso”) eventually come to the fore, and the “*chief rabbi*” even appears in the long and detailed stage direction describing a list of eminent figures attending Bloom’s mock ascension to power (*U* 15.1398-1449). As a matter of fact, the Chief Rabbinate was established only in 1919, which allows us to interpret what we read in this episode as an instance of narrating time intruding into the narrated time. It frequently happens that some events which took place during the historical time when Joyce was planning and writing *Ulysses* came to be transposed to the period about which he was writing. On the one hand we, as readers, feel comfortable with the idea that anything can be expected to happen in “Circe”, a dramatisation of the unconscious, where the real and the fictional merge and where it is impossible to distinguish between what takes place in the characters’ minds and what occurs in the external world. On the other hand, we cannot refrain from enquiring about the ways and the reasons these and many other patent inaccuracies coexist with Joyce’s maniacal search for truth or verifiable facts. Why would a meticulous writer allow for textual errors in his

novel? Remembering Stephen's famous claim that "a man of genius makes no mistakes. His errors are volitional and are the portals of discovery" (*U* 9.228-229), we may attribute the decision to a confidence that the erroneous elements would somehow fit into the text's ever-expanding network of meaning.

Ulysses is an elaborate contrivance, a complex web of correspondences, motifs and symbols, capable of expansion beyond any assumed authorial intention. Therefore, many textual elements which appear as inexact or anomalous in a linear, mimetic narrative may attain validity if interpreted as part of a particular network of meaning. In other words, an item which is a mistake of one sort or another when considered in isolation might prove not only appropriate, but also essential, in combination with other textual elements. The truth is that Joyce was both a realist – at times even a hyperrealist – and an antirealist; or rather, it was precisely his commitment to true facts and myriads of minute, verifiable details that allowed him to violate basic norms of verisimilitude and economy. Indeed, we are so familiar with the image of Joyce as a modernist-realist divided between the two poles of self-imposed meticulousness and self-conscious innovation that such errors and inconsistencies – unless we can boast an extremely vast knowledge, or rely on critical apparatuses – mainly go unnoticed. If they don't, we perceive them as knowingly devised, or as the result of the author's innate experimentalism. As a matter of fact, it is only towards the end of the book that readers come to understand that not only inaccuracies, but especially the plethora of superfluous details typical of certain episodes – "Ithaca" first and foremost – actually detach them from reality. In *Ulysses*, Joyce attempts to recreate in all possible conformity and with microscopic exactitude – both spatial and temporal – an existing state of affairs in the urban reality of Dublin, amid which he places his characters with their past, present and future incidents. As with hyperrealist painters, however, Joyce's depiction of June 16, 1904 becomes infinitely dilated as it gradually aspires to be more real than the real; by playfully laying bare narrative conventions and assumptions, it ends up by drawing attention to its own artificiality and unreality.

As Henry Staten has pointed out, “mimesis in *Ulysses* is entangled with its deconstruction in complex ways” (1997: 382) and errors are manifestations of a self-reflexive strategy to foreground fictional writing. However, Joyce’s antirealism is also evident from the long catalogues, lists, and questions and answers in “Cyclops”, “Circe” and “Ithaca”, where the author intentionally includes excesses and irrelevances to eschew the traditional economy of fiction and demonstrate the arbitrariness of the very realist principles upon which his novel rests. Considering Joyce’s endeavour to record the exact history of one day in Dublin, some scholars have focused attention on the enumerations that populate the prose of the novel, particularly in the final chapters. Liesl Olson aptly remarks that, in *Ulysses*, lists constitute both a mimetic and an anti-mimetic strategy, as they “attempt to register and record the variety of ordinary moments that flood experience, while gleefully acknowledging realism’s defeat” (2009: 35). As a matter of fact, they represent a technique that is functional to the comprehensive and encyclopaedic aspect of the novel, while pointing to ambiguous qualities such as openness and arbitrariness. On the one hand, just as the many inventories of *Ulysses* cannot totally capture reality – though virtually infinite elements can be added to them – so the novel, all-inclusive as it may be, cannot keep up with the complexity and variety of experience; on the other hand, no element on a list is more relevant than the others, as the use of parataxis shows⁴. The critic also maintains that “the lists in *Ulysses* contribute to Joyce’s epic reconstruction of June 16, 1904, while challenging the notion that one day can be accurately recorded. Lists are part of what makes *Ulysses* an overwhelmingly descriptive novel, in which Dublin 1904 is brought to life: the ethos of the novel is totalizing. And yet the list always points beyond itself and remains open” (ibid.).

As the “Ithaca” chapter demonstrates, lists may synecdochically represent the whole book, thus foregrounding its artificial and constructed character. For instance, Bloom’s “budget for 16 June 1904”

⁴ See also, in this regard, Thwaites 2009.

(*U* 17.1455) sums up his experience and accounts for what he has done during the day by way of how much he has spent. The “*Debit*” list begins with the morning activities (“Pork kidney”, “Copy *Freeman’s Journal*”, “Bath and Gratification”, “Tramfare”, “In Memoriam Patrick Dignam”), goes on with “lunch” and ends with the expenses at the cabman’s shelter (“Coffee and Bun” and “Loan” to Stephen Dedalus) (*U* 17.1456-1478). In substance, the list recapitulates, though in a different form, what the reader has traced in previous episodes, from Bloom’s breakfast in “Calypso”, his self-indulgence in “Lotus-Eaters”, Paddy Dignam’s funeral in “Hades”, to the final communion with Stephen in “Eumaeus”. It is interesting to note, however, that missing from Bloom’s budget is, among other things, the expenditure of eleven shillings at Bella Cohen’s, which readers surely remember from “Circe”. Therefore, the event is deemed to be uncertain (is it truth, or a mere hallucination?) and this also suggests that Bloom’s inventory of expenses is not totally accurate. Just as the list cannot include all elements of experience, not even of a single day in the life of a character, so the trustworthiness of the fictional text as a faithful representation of reality is once more called into question. To quote Olson again, “the catechistic prose of ‘Ithaca’ also reveals how even the most exacting language of lists cannot render a clear account of action [...], but in fact makes events seem far removed from the language describing them” (2009: 50). Apart from the bizarre enumerations characterising some of the stage directions in “Circe”, which readers interpret in the light of the surreal tone of the episode, another interesting example of overabundance of details which produces, paradoxically, separation between world and word is the description, in the form of a list, of the Citizen’s girdle in “Cyclops” (*U* 12.176-199). The chapter is famous for its catalogues and inventories of the most disparate items: foreign delegates witnessing a public execution (*U* 12.555-569), clergy attending a committee meeting on the revival of Gaelic sports (*U* 12.927-938), wedding guests with fanciful horticultural names (*U* 12.1269-1278), Irish popular sites – mistakenly including Fingal’s cave, which is in Scotland – (*U* 12.1451-1461), and a procession of saints and martyrs featuring a detailed description of their

clothing and accessories (*U* 12.1676-1719). The list of “Irish heroes and heroines of antiquity” (*U* 12.176) engraved on the citizen’s girdle – very few of which are Irish – is emblematic because it so evidently departs from the novel’s realism and verisimilitude to point to the arbitrariness of list-making (including disparate items that in no way fit) and eventually of all fictional language.

“Ithaca”, together with “Sirens”, “Cyclops” and “Circe”, is undoubtedly the episode whose style most dramatically illustrates the gap between reality and its representation. Through this and many other instances of *mise en abyme* or self-reflexivity, Joyce plays with the conventions of realism, pushing it to the extremes of hyperrealism and at the same time unveiling its unreal, artificial character. Or, as Saint-Amour puts it, “by interrupting its bid to encompass the world in order to be the encyclopedia of itself, *Ulysses* engages in an immanent critique of any totalizing project, enacting the tendency of a supposedly total model or portrait to refer more insistently, more accurately, and more meaningfully to itself than to the world” (2015: 258).

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JAMES JOYCE'S *ULYSSES* – A MENIPPEAN SATIRE?

This article is going to argue that James Joyce's *Ulysses* is written in the tradition of Menippean satire, a literary mode which may be considered a predecessor and rival to the well-made novel¹ or even as a kind of anti-novel. Whereas the well-made novel appeared in eighteenth century England and Europe, the Menippean mode emerged in the North-African periphery of the Hellenistic world of antiquity. The Menippean tradition derives its name from its founding father Menippus, a Cynic philosopher who lived in the ancient city of Gadara, in the Lake Kinneret region, and wrote his works in the third century B.C. His first documented follower is Meleagrus who worked in the same city in the first century B.C.

Lucian, whose fantastic and eccentric works were composed in second century A.D. Syria, another North-African stronghold of Hellenistic culture, should not only be acknowledged as one of the most important followers and rewriters of Menippus, but should first of all be considered a key Menippean figure who, via François Rabelais as an early modern mediator, inspired the Irish Menippean tradition of Jonathan Swift, Laurence Sterne, James Joyce, and Flann O'Brien.²

¹ See Koppenfels 1981: 17 “Die Menippea ist, historisch gesehen, nicht zuletzt eine Vor- und Konkurrenzform des bürgerlichen Romans.”

² Lanfers 2007: 480-481.

Although Mikhail Bakhtin, Northrop Frye and others³ wrote about Menippean satire in great detail, the Menippean mode has remained a relatively little known literary phenomenon. As Frye remarked in 1975, before he wrote about Menippean satire in *The Anatomy of Criticism* (1957), “there was not one in a thousand university English Teachers [...] who knew what Menippean satire was: now there must be two or three.” (in Weinbrot 2005: 11).

To distinguish the Menippean mode from the literary form of the novel, one has to bear in mind that Menippean satire challenges the Western mainstream world-picture that the well-made novel represents: the Aristotelian notion that human life is designed in a teleological manner, which means that our life is structured in a linear fashion with a beginning followed by a series of cause-and-effect-related key incidents which trigger off a logically plausible end.⁴ This is exactly the kind of story told in the well-made, coming-of-age novel where a character is born, grows up by encountering identity-forming key events, successfully searches for the meaning of his or her life, finds his or her place in society, marries and ends up as a wise and mature person. The epistemological concept behind this novel-centered approach may be described as the enlightenment belief that the world functions as a clockwork-like system governed by laws of reason, and that this system can be comprehensively understood by way of logical scrutiny.

Menippean satire, by contrast, challenges this novel-centered Aristotelian approach to the world. As I have shown elsewhere,

the Menippean worldview is deeply rooted in the pre-Aristotelian philosophy of Socrates, owing to its claim that the highest wisdom

³ See, among others, Bakhtin 1984: 109–114, Frye 1957: 308–314, Helm [1906] 1967, Korkowski 1973, Kirk [alias ‘Korkowski’] 1980, Rijkonen 1987, Relihan 1993, Weinbrot 2005, Fuchs 2006, von Koppenfels 1991 & 2007.

⁴ See Kristeva 1982.

attainable for man is to acknowledge that all we can know is to know that we know nothing at all – hence the Socratic maxim which summarizes the Menippean approach to human knowledge in a nutshell: ‘I know that I know nothing’. If we address the ultimate questions of our existence – the nature of the Gods, the limits of the universe, the question of life after death, the meaning of life –, we have to admit that there are no convincing final answers despite all our intellectual effort.

(Fuchs 2017: 341-342)⁵

Referring to its roots, the Menippean tradition features Socratic stock figures: Socrates-figures, who acknowledge the limitation of human knowledge and thus turn out to be wiser than their fellow-people, and mock-Socratic would-be philosophers in quest of absolute knowledge, which inevitably results in epistemological disappointment.⁶ Whereas the truly insightful Socrates, who ironically claims to be ignorant, turns out to be a wise fool in the best sense of the word, his mock-Socratic counterpart is debunked as a brainless person dressed up in a philosopher’s cloak.⁷

In a Menippean context, the pseudo-Socratic quest for absolute knowledge is not limited to the everyday world featured in the novel. In contrast to the world of the novel represented by way of circumstantial realism and the picaresque landscape of the country road or cityscape, Menippean satire features a quest which not only leads through the world we know, but also through heaven and hell. This is not the Christian heaven and hell we know from Dante’s *Divine Comedy*, but the classical Underworld of Hades and the realm of the

⁵ See also Bakhtin 1984: 109–114. A more detailed archaeology of Menippean discourse and its Socratic heritage disseminated via the Cynic movement is presented in Fuchs 2006: 7–26.

⁶ As far as the epistemological dimension is concerned, see Relihan 1993: 46–47, 110–113 and Rütten 1997: 124.

⁷ Frye (1957: 309) calls this Menippean stock figure “philosophus gloriosus.”

Greco-Roman Gods on Mount Olympus as they feature in Lucian's highly fantastic works.

Fusing the empirical here and now with unknown spheres inhabited by Gods, supernatural beings and deceased persons from the past, the Menippean quest for the meaning of life is, topographically speaking, compatible with Homer's *Odyssey*, the archetypal quest story of the western world, whose epic landscape blends everyday realism with the unknown spheres mentioned above. Like the traveling philosophers searching for knowledge in Menippean satire, the Homeric Ulysses not only interacts with humans from the world of the living; he also interacts with Olympian Gods and demigods, and travels the Underworld to hear a prophecy from Tiresias, meet the ghost of his mother and interview the heroes of the past. Hence it is far from coincidental that the Menippean tradition rewrites the *Odyssey* in a playful and parodic manner. As noted by Joel C. Relihan, the pre-novelistic traditions of

romance and Menippean satire have similar origins, and their histories touch at a number of points. The *Odyssey* is for both genres a thematic starting point, whether as the wanderings that precede the reuniting of lovers and families or as the fantastic adventures of a narrator whose most practiced art is that of lying (1993: 179).

If one reads James Joyce's *Ulysses* from a Menippean vantage point, one realizes that the Joycean text enacts both a Socratic quest for knowledge and an Odyssey through heaven, earth and the underworld. As the entry on the "Scylla and Charybdis" episode in the Linati-Schema⁸ makes clear, Leopold Bloom not only functions as a counterpart to Ulysses, but also as a correlative of Socrates and others: "Ulysses: Socrates, Jesus, Shakespeare."

⁸To be more precise, variant Buffalo V.A.1.b. known as "The Beach Schema". Quoted from Ellmann 1972: Appendix.

Leopold Bloom not only thinks like Socrates with his philosophically insightful there is “no known method from the known to the unknown” (*U* 17.1140-1), echoing the Socratic dictum “I know that I know nothing” in the “Ithaca” episode. He is also seen as a modern counterpart of Socrates by way of analogy and a chain of correspondences which, as outlined in the quotation from the Linati-Schema, includes the *persona* of William Shakespeare. Like the “henpecked Socrates” (*U* 15.111) ruled by his shrewish wife Xanthippe, Bloom is referred to as a “[h]enpecked husband” by Zoe Higgins (*U* 15.3706) and Stephen observes that “[w]e have shrewridden Shakespeare and henpecked Socrates” (*U* 15.111). These Socratic links are further intensified when Bloom looks into the mirror and sees “[t]he face of William Shakespeare [...] crowned by the reflection of the reindeer antlered hatrack in the hall” (*U* 15.3821-4). Like Leopold Bloom cuckolded by Molly and like Socrates who is unable to tame his shrewish wife Xanthippe, Shakespeare is depicted as a cuckolded husband ruled by an unruly wife.

Stephen not only claims that “[m]aybe, like Socrates, [Shakespeare] had [...] a shrew to wife” (*U* 9.665), he also calls Shakespeare’s wife an unfaithful “Penelope stay-at-home” (*U* 9.620), a link between Socrates, Shakespeare and Bloom which is extended to the Homeric Ulysses. This tie is reinforced by Stephen’s claim that, like the Homeric Ulysses, Shakespeare left his home for twenty years: “Twenty years he lived in London” [...] “But all those twenty years what do you suppose poor Penelope in Stratford was doing behind the diamond panes?” [...] “Sweet Ann [sic], I take it, was hot in the blood” (*U* 9.648-50, 668-69). Like the unfaithful Molly, Anne Hathaway is depicted as a mock-Penelope.⁹

When Buck Mulligan refers to Bloom as a person who is “Greeker than the Greeks” (*U* 9.614-5 & 1210), Joyce’s *Ulysses* also alludes to Lucian’s Menippean satire, “Dialogues of the Dead”, a series of interviews in the underworld conducted by a character loosely

⁹ For a more detailed analysis of this aspect, see Fuchs 2011.

based on the founding father of the Menippean tradition, Menippus of Gadara. With a grain of salt, Lucian's Menippus figure, who dies, crosses the Acheron river and enters Hades, may thus be considered "a portrait of the (Menippean) artist as a dead man." One of the persons interviewed by Menippus is the deceased Socrates. Referring to the circumstance in which he finds the Hades-bound philosopher in the company of men in the Underworld who died young, Menippus alludes to the well-known defamatory rumour that Socrates was a pederast and thus "Greeker than the Greeks":

Menippus: Bravo, Socrates! Still following your own special line here! Still an eye for beauty!

("Dialogues of the Dead": 35)

Stephen's insinuation that Bloom is "Greeker than the Greeks" may thus be considered an intertextual allusion to the underworld encounter of Menippus with Socrates, who is satirized as a dirty old man in pursuit of young boys in Lucian's "Dialogues of the Dead".

Joyce's *Ulysses* also alludes to Lucian's "Necyomantia – Menippus or the descent into Hades", which, like "Dialogues of the Dead", parodies the journey of the Homeric Odysseus into the realm of the dead in Hades as a Menippean stock-motif. In "Necyomantia", Lucian's Menippus figure sneaks into the underworld as a living person and thus parodies Ulysses' descent into the underworld in the Homeric myth. In order not to be identified as an intruder from the world of the living, Lucian's Menippus imitates the dress code of three mythological figures who succeeded in traveling into Hades *and back*: Orpheus, who enters Hades to rescue his wife Eurydice; Heracles, who abducts the infernal watchdog Cerberus; and, finally, the Homeric Ulysses, who descends into Hades to learn about his future from Tiresias.

Like Orpheus, who had been taught to play the lyre by Apollo, the Lucianic Menippus carries a dulcimer. Like Heracles, who killed the Nemean Lion and dressed in its fur, he wears a lion's skin. And, like the Homeric Odysseus, who was famous for wearing a felt cap,

the Lucianic Hades traveler wears a similarly unconventional hat. As the felt cap, or *pilos* (πίλος) as the ancient Greeks called it, was not a Greek but a foreign, and thus barbarian, fashion accessory, this uncommon headgear stresses that the Homeric Odysseus (very much like the Jewish Dubliner, Leopold Bloom, as his Joycean counterpart) is presented as an outsider among his fellow-countrymen. Being widely known as an unfashionable, even comical, hat, the felt cap may be considered a sort of fools-cap. Like the truly wise Socrates, who ironically claims to be ignorant, the Homeric Ulysses is featured as a master ironist who plays the fool as a cunning strategy of deceit. Although he is truly knowledgeable owing to his guidance by Pallas Athena, the Goddess of Wisdom, Ulysses assumes the role of a madman in order to avoid being enlisted in the Trojan War.¹⁰

As the Menippean tradition features parodies of Socrates and Odysseus alike (see Richardson 2000), one may say that this literary mode tends to depict these characters as wise fool figures, an aspect which culminates in the conflation of these Menippean stock-figures in James Joyce's *Ulysses*. As far as Socrates is concerned, his Menippean representation as a wise fool is not only motivated by his ironic acknowledgement that he knows that he knows nothing, but also by the fact that Menippus, as the founding father of the Menippean tradition, was a follower of Diogenes the Cynic, who followed Socrates in such a radical way that Plato called him "[a] Socrates gone mad" (Diogenes Laertius VI; 54). This led Relihan to the conclusion that "if, as Plato is reported as saying, Diogenes the Cynic is a mad Socrates, we may say that Menippus [the Cynic] is a madder Socrates" (Relihan 1989: 59). As both Diogenes and Menippus embrace the Cynic movement as a radicalized form of Socratic philosophy, the conflation of Socrates and Ulysses is also motivated by the fact that Anthistenes, the disciple of Socrates who founded the Cynic movement, considered Ulysses a proto-Cynic (cf. Stanford 1978: 96-100).

¹⁰ Joyce discussed Ulysses playing the madman with his friend Frank Budgen in Zürich (Budgen 1960: 16).

With the sartorial allusions to the three Hades travelers, Orpheus, Heracles and Odysseus in mind, Lucian's Menippean Satire, "Necyomantia – Menippus or the descent into Hades", introduces the comic Odysseus-figure Menippus as follows:

A Friend: Isn't this Menippus the Cynic? [...] Then what is the meaning of that strange costume – a felt cap, a lyre, and a lion's skin? [...] Good day, Menippus; where under the sun have you come from?

Menippus: I come from Dead Men's Lair and Darkness Gate
Where Hades dwells, remote from other gods.

(*Necyomantia* 73)

Wearing a felt cap and traveling the underworld, Lucian's Menippus is presented as a parody of the Homeric Ulysses, whose Hades-journey is assisted by Circe the sorceress. In the "Circe" episode of Joyce's *Ulysses* there are hints that Leopold Bloom is featured not only as a counterpart of the Homeric Ulysses, but also as a correlative of Menippus, whose *persona* encompasses the figures of Orpheus, Heracles and Odysseus in Lucian's "Necyomantia".

When Bloom approaches Dublin's red-light district of Nighttown in the "Circe" chapter, "he walks on towards hellsgates" (*U* 15.577f.), the entrance to the Underworld. Like Heracles, who has to outwit Cerberus to pass the infernal gates, Bloom meets a number of dogs as he enters and leaves the realm of the dead (*U* 15.578, 15.659ff, 4722ff). As a reference to the "Heracleian" dimension of the Lucianic Menippus and his lion-skin, Bloom's first name "Leopold" may be of importance. Of further significance is the fact that he is called "Lionel" (*U* 15.753) and addressed as "the lion of the night" (*U* 15.447).¹¹ As a parallel to Odysseus, who wears a barbarian hat to

¹¹ The reading of Bloom *alias* "the lion of the night" (*U* 15.447) as a Heracles figure is further emphasized by the fact that the ancient Greeks attributed the constellation of Leo, which appears in the night sky, to the Nemean Lion killed and skinned by Heracles.

mark his status as an outsider in the ancient Greek world¹², Bloom and his ancestors are presented as wearing a large number of distinctly foreign, and thus un-Irish, head-coverings throughout the Lucian-inspired “Circe” episode: a “smokingcap” (*U* 15.249), a “brown Alpine hat” (*U* 15.270), a “purple Napoleon hat” (*U* 15.464), a “billycock hat” (*U* 15.539), a “high grade hat” (*U* 15.720/1787), a “red fez” (*U* 15.728), an “apache cap” (*U* 15.1356), an “Egyptian pshent” (*U* 15.2309), a “plumed sombrero” (*U* 15.2480), a “red schoolcap with badge” (*U* 15.3318), a “caliph’s hood” (*U* 15.4324), and so on. In addition, Bloom appears as “Henry Flower” who (an allusion to Orpheus) plays a lyre-like musical instrument:

(From left upper entrance with two gliding steps Henry Flower comes forward to left from centre. ... He carries a silverstringed inlaid dulcimer ...)

Henry (in a low dulcet voice, touching the strings of his guitar)
There is a flower that bloometh.

(*U* 15.2478-2490)

As an unacknowledged source for Joyce’s rewriting of the Odysseus myth, Lucian’s Menippean satires on the Hades-traveling Odysseus contribute to a considerable degree to a more comprehensive understanding of *Ulysses*.

In fact, the elitist focus applied in T. S. Eliot’s analysis of Joyce’s “mythical method” tends to obscure our perspective of the tradition of Menippean satire as an anti-elitist parody of the Odysseus myth. When we look at Joyce’s *Ulysses* from a Menippean vantage point, we thus begin to realize that Joyce’s rewriting of the Odysseus

¹² When Joyce fashioned Leopold Bloom as a Hungarian Jew in Ireland, he was inspired by Victor Bérard’s (1902) hypothesis that Greek aristocrats considered Ulysses an outsider owing to the fact that he has a Semitic rather than Hellenic background.

archetype does not only encompass the canonic tradition of Homer, Dante, Shakespeare and Tennyson, but also its all-but-forgotten, and thus apocryphal, Menippean counterpart.

Although it has become common knowledge that the Menippean satirist Lucian shaped what Mercier has called “the Irish comic tradition” to a considerable degree, it is also the case that scholars have so far turned a blind eye to Lucian and his Irish imitators. A Menippean-informed reading of Joyce’s fiction, heuristically speaking, not only functions as a key to intertextual meanings yet unknown. Keeping in mind that Menippean satire functions both as a predecessor of the well-made novel and an anti-novel, a Menippean reading also helps us to re-conceptualize the generic design of Joyce’s *Ulysses*. According to Max Nänny,

Joyce [...] welded the realistic novel to the Menippean tradition – he no longer used the term ‘novel’ when referring to *Ulysses* after mid-1918 – and thereby advanced the Menippean genre [...]. Critics in their ‘novel-centered’ dealings with *Ulysses* have turned a blind eye on its Menippean predecessors.

(Nänny 1985: 529-30)

Seen from such a point of view, *Ulysses* transcends and decidedly deviates from the form of the well-made novel which emerged in the eighteenth century and whose rise coincides with the rise of enlightenment philosophy based on the Aristotelian concept of the here and now. As a cultural archeologist, Joyce reconstructs the pre-Aristotelian mode of Menippean satire, which Julia Kristeva considers a rebellion “against Aristotelianism” (1980: 85) and a “struggle against Christianity and its representation” (1980: 80). As a part of this anti-Aristotelian tradition, Joyce’s *Ulysses* rewrites the archetypal western quest narrative of the Homeric *Odyssey* and fuses it with the pre-Aristotelian philosophy of Socrates to elucidate the Menippean insight that the search for absolute knowledge must, of necessity, be disappointing.

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STEPHEN “(LOOKS BEHIND)”: A NEW PARADIGM
FOR READING STAGE DIRECTIONS IN “CIRCE”

In the “Circe” episode of *Ulysses*, directly before Stephen proclaims, “So that gesture...would be a universal language” (*U* 15.105-6), a stage direction asks Stephen to make a very subtle gesture: “(*looks behind*)”. This seemingly functional direction actually disembodies Stephen in order to give him an authorial voice. The word “behind” signifies a distinctly marked offstage location from which directorial power emanates. Throughout the episode, Joyce has used parentheses to trace the textual voices that battle to inhabit this space and thus author the text. Each time a character succeeds in entering the direction, the text expands the stage to include that voice, exiling the characters from the position of director/author and ultimately erasing the on-stage/offstage boundary. This unbounded performance moves the singular directing voice completely outside the novel. The implied voice of an author established by this dynamic then commands Stephen to do the impossible, to join it. In other words, the direction “(*looks behind*)” asks Stephen to speak from a location in the universal atemporal realm of the author. The erasure of an offstage space, however, has left Stephen’s body no way to exit: only his “look” passes beyond the performance. Thus, Joyce severs Stephen completely from the temporality of the novel and from his own body to allow him to speak directly to the textual audience. The result is an apparition, trapped in a gesture, speaking successfully but silently to us from across the parentheses that divide text and world.

Before the late seventies, it was common practice to divide “Circe” into two realms, the “real” fictional narrative of Bloom and Stephen in nighttown, and the psychological hallucinations playing out on the stage implied by the direction (Gibson 1994: 3). This division implied a single reliable authorial voice in the direction. Criticism in the eighties and nineties moved from this single voice towards a complex multiplicity of voices. In “A Battle of Voices: the Authorship of the Stage Directions in ‘Circe’”, Mariangela Tempera argued that rather than an authorial voice, the direction is “an extremely complex set of writing strategies which cluster around different personae” (Tempera 1986: 196). In other words, Joyce uses the formal trappings of a play to mark the tension between two authorial “personae”: the author and director. She argued that increased direction reveals an author curtailing “the freedom of the director” (197). A decade later, Katie Wales developed this tension, calling the competing voices a “dramatic” versus a “novelistic impulse” (Wales 1994: 273). Developing Tempera’s dyadic tension into a more complex array of characters, she argued that the voices of preceding chapters were continuously “displacing the impersonal voice of the director” (273). Essentially, she adds the concept of textual memory to Tempera’s original argument. In the last decade we have forgotten these essays, returning to a singular authorial voice. I argue that we have yet to fully pursue the implications that theatrical form has on Joyce’s construction of authorship in this episode.

Antony Hammond opens his seminal analysis of direction with this qualification: “The first, broad and general assumption, is that we all know what a stage-direction is, or in other words that it presents no intellectual problem of interpretation” (Hammond 1992: 71). As Tempera and others have pointed out, this formal assumption is actually necessary to set up the parenthetical text in “Circe” as stage direction. After the riot of formal ingenuity in the previous episodes, the reader “lowers his guard when confronted with the apparent stylistic simplicity of ‘Circe’” (Tempera 1986: 195). Tempera goes so far as to call the parentheses an “unmistakable typographic conventions” (195). They are “unmistakable”, and yet this is precisely why we have mistaken

them for almost a century. The problem is not so much our assumption, but the double assumption that has replaced it. First, we assume the chapter is a play; then we assume that we understand direction. Neither is the case.

When I first read “Circe”, I adhered to the general assumption that stage directions originate with the playwright. In fact, direction is often supplied by both directors and actors. Wales points out that Edward Gordon Craig saw them as a “personal insult” (Wales 1994: 243), and we are all familiar with directors resisting or reinterpreting a play for a modern production. While we might argue that these reinterpretations do not affect the text itself, there is no reason to assume “Circe” represents a published play-text and not a performance. In fact, a central effect of a play-in-a-novel is to invoke both text and performance. The play sets the stage upon which the novel is performed. Given this relationship, it would be more appropriate to call the episode either a prompt-book or a working script. Its location within a novel means that on one level it clearly functions to guide the performance of Bloom and Stephen’s narrative: they go to nighttown, get in a fight, etc. This means the parenthetical text could represent a director’s or an actors’ addition to the text written by the playwright this form implies.

Wales and Tempera established the concept of competing voices and stopped there. The concept is easy enough to establish; the problem is making it useful. How exactly do we identify specific cases of a director/actor voice in tension with the playwright? Comparing earlier drafts of the episode to the published version might give us a sense of an author at odds with himself; however, even in genetic inquiry we tend to treat each draft as distinct in its relationship to the writer. Assuming a single author leaves us few strategies for locating actor-director-author tension in the stage directions. Research detailing the kinds of direction a director or actor typically resists or reinterprets, allows us to identify direction in the chapter that arguably represents this tension. While specific research into the relationship between directors and playwrights remains anecdotal, we have excellent research on tracing authorial tension between actors and the playwright.

According to Hammond, actors are particularly apt to ignore gestural direction. He notes that “what an actor did on stage was his professional business, and was out of the prompter’s control anyway” (Hammond 1992: 79). Facial expressions, anxious pacing, hand movements, etc. are an actor’s particular area of expertise. Thus, gestural direction is almost nonexistent in prompt-books. Setting the scene or describing a costume is one thing, but telling an actor how to act is clearly impinging upon that actor’s expertise. According to Hammond, gestural direction has historically been seen as “an attempt by someone—usually, in the Jacobean period, the author—to take away some of the actor’s autonomy, to exercise control over an aspect of performance which had traditionally been the actor’s prerogative” (81). This means that any gestural direction, particularly extreme cases—for example if the script asks an actor to “cover his left eye with his left ear” (*U* 15.1841)—points to a possible tension between playwright and actor over control of the performance. Likewise, if we can trace a systematic increase in the pressure put upon this kind of direction—in other words, if we see the direction ballooning out and asking actors to do all kinds of increasingly hallucinatory and impossible actions—we can argue that this tension contains its own narrative arc in which actor and playwright serve as protagonist and antagonist. One story is *nighttown*, the other is the battle over who controls the text and its performance. While the first narrative would climax in the world of the novel and/or the play, the second would consist of a character’s success in defending himself from the playwright’s direction, and we could read the climactic moment—when Bloom names the final apparition “Rudy!”—as a character forcing the novel to produce his dead son (*U* 15.4962). The tension developed through the well-documented resistance of actors to gestural direction creates a formal possibility for narrative to manifest as a tension between an actor and the playwright, a narrative arc defined by the degree to which actors are able to resist performing direction and succeed in directing the play themselves.

The actor-playwright tension over gestural direction allows us to locate two authorial voices; we can locate a third if we consider en-

trances and exits. Hammond points out that prompt books often fail to signal exits (Hammond 1992: 79). To some extent, this is an effect of performance, as “once the actor was on stage, there wasn't much the prompter could do to get him off again” (Hammond 1992: 79). This means we can read an exaggerated call for an exit as a prompter trying to control an action typically left up to an actor. This opens up the possibility of the prompter as a third authorial voice in “Circe”. Temporality differentiates this prompting voice from the director’s or the playwright’s. A prompter performs the direction in the present time of the performance; the direction from the playwright or director comes from either the past moment of writing (playwright) or rehearsal (director). If we can locate a voice that demands an actor to exit, and if the text places the temporal moment of this aggressive prompting in the here-and-now of the performance (as opposed to the past of the textual script), we can argue that Joyce’s text presents the authorial voice of a prompter. The prompting voice’s position in the quasi-present moment of immanent performance means we now have three temporal fields: the moment of writing (playwright), the performance (actors), and a mediating space where an authorial voice intends to direct the action directly before it occurs in the performance (prompter).

In “Circe” the voice calling for exits and entrances uses words that render the dividing line between onstage and offstage unclear: “appear”, “fades”, “pass through”, “jerks past”, “vanish, there, there”, “roll past”, “peep from behind”, and “thrown/limps/steps/sues/press/stumps/throng/thrust” followed by the word “forward.” This blurring of boundaries undermines actor agency, making one of the simplest and most important tasks of an actor, when and how to get off stage, impossible to perform. Additionally, once actors are called onstage, they cannot leave. The result is a play where characters suddenly appear onstage without an entrance, as if they never left, and when they do enter, they come “forward” out of some vague, unidentified space. This also results in a stage slowly filling with actors. “Circe” is marked by huge crowds, forcing upon Bloom a mass of drunk, angry, lewd actors and voices, jamming the performance space until he exclaims how much he hates crowds, effectively marking his resistance to the direction.

One way to read this blurring of the offstage boundary is as an indefinite expansion of the stage itself, a voracious cannibalizing of any voice that appears.

Locating direction pertaining to gesture and entrances/exits has allowed us to locate tension between three authorial voices: playwright, actor, and prompter. As we have seen, this tripartite tension produces the following effects: three distinct texts (script, prompt-book, and novel); three authorial temporalities (time of writing, quasi-present prompting moment of immanent performance, and performance); an erasure of onstage/offstage boundary (demonstrated by crowds and an ever-expanding stage); a dialogical narrative arc (the arc of tension between voices attempting to take on the authorial role). These divisions are marked by a formal graphic code (parentheses) that we have always assumed as mere stage direction.

We can address this complex set of tensions by examining how Stephen's "*(looks behind)*" represents a directing voice challenging actor agency. Although Stephen's statement is fundamental to his intellectual inquiry, the direction asks Stephen to look away as he says it. In his discussion of editing, E. A. J. Honigman points out that "when an editor adds 'Aside' he often implies that the speaker would not have dared to utter the same words openly" (Honigman 1976: 120). He notes that labeling asides as such in *Hamlet*, for example, reduces the character's agency: "Hamlet enjoys insulting those he despises to their face" (120). An aside is at least directed at the audience. The word "behind" goes so far as to ask Stephen to turn away completely. This is akin to the direction asking the actor to speak one of his most important lines unintelligibly.

Joyce sets up three kinds of aside in the chapter: an aside directed "behind" a body part onstage (hand or back), an aside directed to the onstage audience (the gallery), and an aside simply directed "behind". Each of these represents an increasing distance the aside must travel. When Joyce assigns an object to the word "behind"—for example, Private Carr speaks an aside "behind his back" (*U* 15.616) and Bloom "behind his hand" (*U* 15.769)—this implies sending the aside a short distance and unseen by the audience. When Bloom

speaks an aside inside the performance, the direction asking him to “turn to the gallery” (*U* 15.785), he must send his voice out into the audience of the trial within the play. We will see that the final “behind”, lacking any defining limit, sends the actor’s voice the furthest, and specifically asks him to speak as the author.

From behind a hand, to the gallery, to the unlimited term “behind”, these three types of asides indicate a spatial hierarchy, each one directing the actor’s voice further from themselves and the stage. Joyce makes “behind” the most radical of these directions by defining it as offstage. To understand this, we must consider that Joyce sets up looking or peeping as a kind of entrance. Later in the chapter the NYMPHS entrance is signaled by a “peep out” (*U* 15.3341) and Patricia Egan’s entrance is a “peeps from behind” (*U* 15.4502). This does two things: first, it adds the verb “peep” to the list of alternative entrances/exits; second, it uses “behind” to refer to offstage, the Egan example defining “behind” as the place from which Egan enters. The spatial reference makes sense as the majority of entrance actions bring characters “forward”, a term implying some line from *behind* which actors come. Finally, THE NYMPH refers to a voice heard “from behind” (*U* 15.3395), implying a voice we hear but cannot see, which is the very definition of an offstage voice. With these three examples in mind, Stephen’s “looks behind” begins to look less like an aside directed behind a part of his body or directed at the audience, and much more like a command to look much further, into that vaguely defined offstage from which characters like Egan appear.

The difficulty with this argument is that the fluidity of entrance and exit has erased a clear concept of offstage space. This is also precisely the point. While the word “behind” directs Stephen to look offstage, the stage has expanded indefinitely so offstage is a location always on the run from the characters and their voices. This direction not only attempts to control how and where Stephen speaks his aside, but the authorial voice also asks Stephen to do the impossible, to look at a place this same directing voice has systematically erased using a series of fluid entrances and exits. In addition, this seemingly impossible direction creates a tension between Stephen’s voice and his

body. On a stage without boundaries, voices offstage are no longer offstage, they are simply disembodied voices, calls emanating from bodies forever retreating just beyond the expanding stage. Stephen's "(looks behind)" asks him to direct his statement toward this retreating space. Because the word "looks" can act as an entrance, the direction also asks him to enter this location; however, as his body is trapped onstage without the ability to exit, it cannot follow his gesture, and so this direction effectively severs his ability to communicate with his body. He is forced to race toward an ever-retreating authorial space, to chase his own voice.

This pursuit is expanded indefinitely through the verb tense used in Joyce's direction and the alternative narrative it establishes. The direction in "Circe" is present tense as opposed to progressive. Katie Wales notes that the present-progressive direction signals an action taking place simultaneously with dialogue, present tense implying an action preceding it. Compare the following:

HANNA (eating a pear): Delicious.

HANNA (eats a pear): Delicious.

The first implies that as Hanna eats, she says "delicious". In the second, she eats the pear, finishes, and then says "Delicious". The present tense divides narrative time into two separate realms, the division marked by parentheses. Thus, we see a temporality developing in the direction separately from the dialogue. This parallel chronotope grows to extreme proportions, calling for absurd sequences that would take days if not decades; despite its brevity, "*looks behind*" is just as undefined in its temporal reference. The present tense renders parenthetical action indefinite and unbounded. Even this short two-word direction opens a time-space gap as flexible as the one necessary to build the "forty-thousand room" kidney-shaped "Bloomusalem" (*U* 15.1548-59).

Noting this unlimited expansion of time and space in such a short direction does little but create an unlimited and unspecific interpretation, unless we consider what this particular direction is saying: STEPHEN (*looks behind*), i.e., Stephen looks behind. Here we can

read the authorial voice stating that Stephen “looks” like he is late, that he is running “behind”. Only twice in the chapter do we get this kind of authorial commentary: first when a voice in the direction states that “*a daintier head of winsome curls was never seen on a whore’s shoulders*” (U 15.2587-8) and, second, when Bloom nods his “*gratitude*” to Stephen “*as that is exactly what Stephen needs*” (U 15.4915-6). These moments of direct authorial comment alert us to the fact that “STEPHEN (*looks behind*)” could also be commentary. Oddly enough, inside long, detailed direction where the hyper-creative use of multiple voices might seem to open space for a direct authorial voice, Joyce uses clear subjects and distinctly tagged character voices to diligently reject it. The phrase “looks behind”, both grammatically and semantically, can be read as external authorial commentary. An actor who is stuck looking away into the indefinable distance for an indeterminate amount of time will certainly fall behind. Stephen’s gesture, as long as he performs it, blocks the arrival of his dialogue, and as the space he has entered is infinite, he is forever trapped “behind”. As we will see, it is the very impossibility of the task set out in this direction that forces Stephen forward and allows him to deliver his dialogue. This can be explained through examining the difference between fictional and functional direction.

Designating direction as either functional or fictional determines the power the playwright has to force actors to perform gestural actions. Fictional direction pertains to world building that is not necessary for the plot. Hammond calls this “the dramatic fiction” of the work (Hammond 1992: 72). A lengthy description that opens an act is often mostly fictional, structuring the larger world beyond what we see on stage. While it functions centrally for the textual reader, it functions only secondarily for a director. The director decides how much of that opening description to build into the set. The extreme battles between Beckett and production companies reveals just how real this tension can be in the twentieth century.

While the director has a primary relationship to fictional direction, the performance audience occupies a secondary position, world-building completely invisible to them except for those things seen

through the filter of the director's staging or actor's interpretation. The actors lie somewhere in between the director and the performance audience, equal to the director in having read the direction in the script (and thus possessing knowledge the performance audience does not), but still forced to base their actions on what actually exists on the set itself, something the director decides. To put it plainly, the director builds the world, the actor acts within it with a knowledge of the original author's world, and the audience gets only the actor's inhabiting of the director's world. This means there is little difference between textual audience, director, and actor in epistemological terms (we all read all of the direction), although there is an extreme gap in terms of agency (our ability to act within the bounds of that knowledge). The textual audience, who sees fictional direction as much a part of the play as dialogue, has no agency to resist these descriptions.

This changes radically when it comes to functional direction; in this case, the descending hierarchy of agency—from director to actor to audience—collapses into equal subservience to the playwright/author. Hamlet stabbing Polonius is functional and thus a director can little afford to ignore it. It is functional in the sense that it is so important it cannot be changed without fundamentally changing the play. It is easy to differentiate Hamlet's accidental butchery from something like the vague and ambient sound of a whistle. The director can easily decide to change the whistle's tone, or cut it altogether, without radically altering the performance of the play. This seems simple enough until a play begins to blur the functional/fictional distinction. If a whistle were to become a character and speak to us, a director would no longer be able to ignore it, and the playwright would, in essence, be forcing this direction into the performance. The same goes for Stephen's "*looks behind*". If the playwright can convince us this is functional, the actors, director, and audience are all forced to follow this direction.

There are two ways for the playwright to make direction functional: first, to make it a fundamental part of narrative; second, as I mentioned above, to transform fictional description into character (as Joyce does with the very first character in the episode, the call of the

whistle). To transform fictional direction into a functional part of the narrative, the text must convince the director it is fundamental. If the director interprets a direction as unimportant or indecipherable (for example, is it important/interpretable if an actor looks behind or just to the side), the performance audience will never get the opportunity to see this direction. If, however, character is used to make this transformation, there is no need to convince the director of the narrative necessity of that direction. When direction seeps over into dialogue, like Joyce's whistle, the director has much less power to overturn this decision. It is interesting to note that Stephen briefly takes over the role of director to order the only officially titled "exit" in the play (*U* 15.4730). When the text turns direction into a character voice like this, the director and actor are left little power to challenge it.

Stephen's "*(looks behind)*", however, cannot be read as a character's voice. I argued that it could be considered authorial commentary, but this is something the director and actor would be *most* apt to disregard, especially as it delivers a gestural direction aimed specifically at acting: it tells Stephen to look like he is behind. It is also difficult to read this direction as fundamental in terms of the play's plot. Does it really matter if the performance audience sees Stephen looking behind or up or down? This is precisely the conundrum Joyce faced. It does not matter if a direction represents a highly complex set of voices all vying for control of a text if there is no way to force the reader to actually read the text as such. Joyce solved this problem by turning the direction into an impossible hallucination.

Joyce presents us with fictional direction (not fundamental to the play) that seems to play at being unreal, a hallucination that not only seems indecipherable but actually defies our ability to imagine it. He then posits the central narrative of the chapter as hallucination itself, a move that renders this unexplainable/impossible direction fundamental thematically and therefore functional. For example, he gives us a direction in which a "*skeleton judashand strangles the light*" (*U* 15.2277) and a final scene that asks the protagonist to call his child's name while also not calling it. These images, like hallucinations, ask us to superimpose the impossible on the real. Because of the impossi-

bility of performing such a thing, the director and actor are forced to change or ignore it, the performance audience is left completely in the dark about what happened, and the reader sits alone, the only one in a position to hear the author's voice.

In short, a writer who creates a play-in-a-novel with impossible hallucinatory direction is using the authorial position of the implied playwright to destroy the possibility of performance precisely in order to overpower the director and the actors, forcing the performance out of the novel and into the textual reader's lap. If we play the role we are meant to, a reading audience that does not ignore or miss the significance of Joyce's "*looks behind*", we see that this direction is functional because it reflects one of the central themes of the chapter. The gesture of looking "behind" is a direct experiment in the possibility of communication. Stephen is trapped in an infinite gesture of pursuing his own voice into the authorial realm. It is an impossible action to complete, thus, the director ignores it, the actor fails, the audience never sees it, and only the reader is forced to hallucinate, to see Stephen doing something he cannot. We are faced with a formal construction that produces an apparition of a communicative act only the reader has the position to enact. Joyce has essentially forced the textual audience to join him in forcing even the most seemingly mundane and unimportant gestures upon characters who continue to fail in the impossible performance of his novel. Eternally attempting to communicate with us, to look/enter into the retreating space of the author, Stephen himself is left behind, trapped in the very gesture necessary for his voice to sound.

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“A HANDFUL OF TEA”: MONEY AND MONSTER
NOVELS

In his Preface to *The Tragic Muse*, which began appearing in *The Atlantic Monthly* in 1889, Henry James ponders on what he memorably calls “large loose baggy monsters” – novels like Thackeray’s *The Newcomes* (1855), Dumas’s *The Three Musketeers* (1844), or Tolstoy’s *War and Peace* (1869) that take in the sweep of generations and countries, that engage the social, political, historical, religious, and philosophical issues of their day, and that have become renowned for their encyclopaedic marshalling of detail. It is now well-known that if you wish to become minutely informed about early 17th century France you read *The Three Musketeers*; mid-Victorian England, *The Newcomes*; the impact of the Napoleonic Wars on Tsarist Russia, *War and Peace*. But what do these huge works, James asks himself – *War and Peace* runs to some half a million words (587,287 to be exact) – “with their queer elements of the accidental and the arbitrary, artistically *mean*?” (James 1937: 84).

James is principally concerned with three issues. The first has to do with unity. He had originally conceived of *The Tragic Muse* as a theatrical story and a political story. But, he explains:

A story [is] a story, a picture a picture, and I had a mortal horror of two stories, two pictures, in one. The reason for this was the clearest – my subject was immediately, under that disadvantage, so cheated of its indispensable centre as to become of no more use for expressing a main intention than a wheel without a hub is of use for moving a cart.

(James 1937: 83-84)

I will return to the issue of “a main intention” when I relate James’s “Preface” to the question of the role money plays in *Ulysses*, but for the present I would like to suggest that James’s “main intention” foreshadows in a general way Stephen Dedalus’s speculations about “wholeness” (*integritas*) in *A Portrait* as one of the “phases of apprehension”, without, as far as James is concerned, the mediating influence of Aquinas.

The second aesthetic issue that James canvasses has to do with “composition” – a trope he employs in many of his Prefaces to give expression to what mysteriously forms on the page from the fusion of the writer as *vates* (or seer) with the writer as *ποιηη* (or maker) (Shelley 1977: 480-508). “I delight in a deep-breathing economy and an organic form”, James assures his reader. In conceiving of *The Tragic Muse*, “[m]y business was accordingly to ‘go in’ for complete pictorial fusion, some such common interest between my two first notions as would, in spite of their birth under quite different stars, do them no violence at all”. “Were there not”, he further observes, “certain sublime Tintorettoes at Venice, a measureless Crucifixion in especial, which showed without loss of authority half a dozen actions separately taking place?” How could the plenitude of “life”, that is life that was valued rather than life that was “wasted” – all those unquestionably enriching but peculiar “elements of the accidental and the arbitrary” – be incorporated in a structure that did not, as a result, turn into a loose baggy monster? (James 1937: 83-84). What again comes to mind, I suggest, are Stephen Dedalus’s speculations about “harmony” (*consonantia*) and his image of the artist as God paring his fingernails behind the scenes, indifferent to the clamorous and seemingly random particularities of his creation.

The third aesthetic principle that James considers is “beauty”. A picture without composition”, he argues, “slights its most precious chance for beauty” (James 1937: 84), by which, I suggest, he is alluding to that capacity for transcendence that great works of art possess and that, as before, foreshadows Stephen Dedalus’s speculations about aesthetics, specifically what he calls “radiance” (*claritas*); beauty for

Stephen, of course, requiring the simultaneous apprehension of *integritas*, *consonantia*, and *claritas*.

I have offered these parallels between Henry James's musings and Stephen Dedalus's speculations to provide criteria for proposing one possible solution to the aesthetic problem of whether or not *Ulysses* is a "loose baggy monster". In conceiving and writing *Ulysses*, or what he himself once called his "damned monster novel" (Ellmann 1972: 187),¹ Joyce faced issues similar to those James discusses in his "Preface". There is the problem of the main intention – something Joyce pondered during the seven years it took him to write the book; and something that has preoccupied many critics since. Is the main intention of *Ulysses* heroism, forgiveness, domesticity, modernity, colonialism, the representation of consciousness or of the unconscious, or something else? Did Joyce have a "main intention"? Then there is the issue of composition: two seemingly incompatible stories – a realist bourgeois Edwardian novel of adultery (Kuch 2017) that somehow needed to be seamlessly joined to the tripartite Homeric epic of the *telemachia*, the *odyssey*, and the *nostos*. Embedded within this is the problem of detail – those elements of the "accidental and the arbitrary" that engender verisimilitude (whether psychological, sociological, political, spiritual, or historical) – that were they to be incorporated would not only need to be meaningful, need to relate to the main intention, but would also need to be organic elements of the composition. Finally, there was the question of beauty, of aesthetic value. What, in its conception and composition, would prevent *Ulysses* from becoming a loose baggy monster; or is it, according to James's criteria, indefensibly one?

The representation of money in *Ulysses*, I suggest, provides one way of answering these questions. My first proposition is that Joyce's main intention, whether presupposed or discovered, was to write about

¹ However, the letter referred to in "*Ulysses*" on the Liffey is to Carlo Linati, 21st September 1920. Stuart Gilbert, ed., *Letters of James Joyce* (London: Faber, 1958), 146-47, translates the phrase from the Italian as "my three times blasted novel".

fidelity. If it is agreed that Homer's *Odyssey* affirms certain forms of fidelity, then Joyce's *Ulysses*, as it were, deconstructs them. For Joyce fidelity became the axel, to use James's metaphor, that united and supported the epic and the novel of adultery, that enabled him seamlessly to compose what at first seemed two incompatible stories. The Latin root of fidelity is *fidēlitāt-em*, < *fidēlis* faithful, < *fidēs* faith. The word comes into Middle English at the beginning of the 16th century through the French *fidélité*. The *Oxford English Dictionary* gives three pertinent senses of the word:

1. The quality of being faithful; faithfulness, loyalty, unswerving allegiance to a person, party, bond, etc. Const. *to, towards*.
2. Conjugal faithfulness" in the sense: "to make fidelity: to take an oath of fealty.
3. Strict conformity to truth or fact" in the sense "Of persons: Honesty, truthfulness, trustworthiness, veracity (*obs.*).²

The first two have been thoroughly investigated by Joyceans. It is the third that interests me here, particularly as it relates to the plural "persons". What does the depiction of money in *Ulysses* tell us about fidelity, specifically the conflicted fidelities central to *Ulysses* – Molly's sexual infidelity; Bloom's numerous psycho-sexual infidelities; the Blooms' fidelity as parents – and to what extent can the depiction of money in the book indicate whether or not *Ulysses* is a "loose baggy monster"?

Two documents from the second drawer of the walnut bureau in No. 7 Eccles Street provide one way of considering these issues. The first is the "certificate of possession of £900, Canadian 4% (inscribed) government stock" purportedly yielding four per cent interest (*U* 17.1864-65),³ commonly, though not universally, considered by Joyc-

² *OED* online edition, s.v. "fidelity".

³ Danis Rose, "The Source of Mr. Bloom's Wealth", *James Joyce Quarterly* 25, no. 1 (1987): 129, notes that "'The most valuable of Bloom's assets, the Certificate of possession of £900, Canadian 4% inscribed government stock (free of stamp duty)' was added to

eans to guarantee the Blooms a measure of financial security. But as I have shown elsewhere, by examining the stock market reports of the day and by looking at the advice to investors offered by Lord Dunraven in the columns of the *Freeman's Journal* of 9th March 1904,⁴ the very newspaper for which Bloom canvasses, this particular Canadian stock was problematic. It did not yield 4% as has been commonly assumed,⁵ and Bloom's principal, his £900, was not secure, despite the stock being described as "guaranteed" in the newspaper and market reports of 1904, and in *Ulysses*. By 1920, when Joyce was writing "Ithaca", the Canadian Government had nationalized the assets associated with the stock with the result that Bloom would have lost his £900. The second document in the walnut bureau is "an endowment assurance policy of £500 in the Scottish Widows' Assurance Society", a financial institution that was and still is regarded as impeccably sound (Mormont, 2011-2012).⁶ As Mark Osteen has conclusively shown, Bloom's approach to spending and saving is governed by the strategy of covering risk with security (Osteen 1995: 72-74), and it is this risk/security binary that enables Joyce seamlessly to blend the two incompatible money stories, the Canadian stock and the Scottish policy, within his elaboration of his main intention, his exploration of fidelity.

the text (and placed in the 2nd drawer) on a gathering of page proofs dated January 27, 1922. This last minute insertion, I submit, was a hasty compromise reached after several months of indecision occasioned by Joyce's knowledge of Bloom's past". See also Joyce 1975: 675.

⁴ See also "Lord Dunraven on the Land Act", *Freeman's Journal*, 30 May 1904, 5: "The Canadian Guaranteed 4 per Cent are not a trustee security at all, as they are redeemable in 1908, 1910, 1913, and are always above par; also the three classes yield respectively £2-10s-9d, £3-1s-6d, £3-6s-9d according to Coates's list".

⁵ *The Stock Exchange Official Intelligence*, published annually by the London Stock Market, shows that this "book value" was rarely if ever achieved. As Davis and Gallman point out, "Canadian government 4 per cent stock offered British investors a return of 3.1 per cent" (Davis and Gallman 2001: 379-83).

⁶ *Every Man's Own Lawyer* carried advertisements for the Scottish Widows. The amount for Milly was raised from £100 in the *Little Review* to £500 for the first edition; also "coming into force at 21" raised to "coming into force at 25" (Joyce 1975: 675).

The first observation that I would like to make about these two documents is that they are more closely woven into the texture of *Ulysses* than the way money is depicted in many of the monster novels of the 19th century – and I would instance all of Jane Austen, much of *Middlemarch*, particularly book VI, all of Proust’s *a la Recherche* and much of Dickens, especially *David Copperfield*, *Great Expectations*, *Martin Chuzzlewit* and *Little Dorrit* (O’Gorman 2007). In all of these money appears and disappears in terms of thrift or spending, inheritance or property, fortune or crime – free of the processes and exigencies of contemporary financial institutions and local, national, and international economics, *Bleak House* and the machinations of Chancery being perhaps the notable exception. In *Ulysses* both the Canadian stock and the Scottish policy are firmly grounded in the financial practices and institutions of the day.

Furthermore, they are not simply employed as plot devices, as class markers, indices of fortune or symbols of morality, but relate in complex, quintessential ways to the main intention of deconstructing fidelity. The endowment assurance policy of £500 in the Scottish Widows’ Assurance Society “intestated Millicent (Milly) Bloom” offers a case in point (*U* 17.1857). Aware for some time that Molly is unsettled in their marriage, Bloom has privately made provision for his daughter. The policy, with the best agency of the day, ensures she will have an independent income, or sufficient means to secure one, should he pre-decease her. The policy is in Milly’s not Molly’s name. The fidelity here is to his daughter and to his conception of himself as her father rather than his fidelity to Molly as husband and provider. Knowing, as I have conclusively proved elsewhere, that it is possible for Molly to divorce Bloom and for him to divorce her, the assurance policy is one form of fidelity to Milly that Bloom places beyond Molly’s reach.⁷

The Canadian stock is equally if not more complex. It is not clear how Bloom has acquired the £900 to buy the stock. It is hardly

⁷ Peter R. Kuch 2017.

likely that Bloom inherited it from his father, as his father's suicide appears to have been associated with a failed business venture (U 18.982-83). It is also unlikely that Bloom could have saved such a large amount of money since he started working twenty-five years ago, in jobs ranging from door-to-door salesmanship to being employed as a tally clerk in the cattle yards.⁸ To include the £900 in a statement of assets, as Osteen does, is to assume that Bloom has saved the entire sum; he might equally have borrowed some or all of it at an interest rate lower than the interest he is receiving from his Canadian bonds. If there was a call on borrowings – something not unknown in the stock market debacles of the eighteen-nineties and early nineteenth-hundreds – then selling his Canadian stock could also prove problematic. Authoritative sources, such as *The Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*, and financial columns, such as the *London Times's* "Finance and Commerce" and the *Daily Mail's* "Chat on Change", record the extreme volatility of the Canadian market throughout the first half of 1904. As one investment analyst noted in 1908, "the lowest price at which its 4% guaranteed stock has sold in four years was 95½ in 1904" (Snyder 1907: 329). That Bloom has chosen to invest in risky stock, even if, as some critics have speculated, it is to cover his rent at No. 7 rather than purchase a house for himself and Molly in town or in one of the new suburbs, is not a decision that generates confidence in Bloom's financial acumen or in his commitment to Molly. It is a decision, however, that chimes with his characteristic strategy of offsetting risk for himself and Molly by providing security for Milly.

There is also a further aspect of Bloom's investment in Canadian stock that, to my knowledge, has not been noted. As Lord Dunraven pointed out in his detailed warning to small time investors in the *Freeman's Journal* in May 1904, "The Canadian Guaranteed 4 per Cent are not a trustee security at all, as they are redeemable in 1908,

⁸ To save £900, Bloom would have had to put aside £36 per year every year since he began working, assuming that he bought the Canadian stock in 1903.

1910, 1913”.⁹ Has “slyboots” Bloom invested all his life savings in a high-risk/high-yield investment that he can redeem within a few years if it turns out that Molly’s relationship with Boylan does not progress beyond their single encounter on 16th June 1904? Fidelity here is fidelity to himself in terms of “strict conformity to truth or fact” in the sense “Of persons: Honesty, truthfulness, trustworthiness, veracity” – that is, Bloom facing the fact that Molly might very well cheat on him. But it also signals his fidelity to Molly in the broad sense of “Conjugal faithfulness” “to make fidelity: to take an oath of fealty”. It seems Bloom has decided he will try to make as much money as he can from his savings by investing in stock he can either sell or redeem should his marriage withstand the likelihood of an adulterous affair.

But what about Molly and the “handful of tea”? You may recall that during her early morning reverie Molly’s irritation at their straightened circumstances provokes her into thinking about some of the ways her affair could change her life: “sure you cant get on in this world without style all going in food and rent when I’ll get it I lash it around I tell you in fine style I always want to throw a handful of tea into the pot measuring and mincing” (*U* 18.467-69). Is this merely one of those “elements of the accidental and the arbitrary” that Henry James identified as characteristic of the “loose baggy monster”? To propose that it is not, I would draw attention to Bataille’s observation about the psychological impulse driving the erotic: “We want to feel as remote from the world where thrift is the rule as we can:– that is hardly strong enough; we want the world turned upside down and inside out. The truth of eroticism is treason” (Bataille 1962: 170-71). While it is only after Molly has seduced Boylan that she begins to commodify her sexuality in terms of money, presents, travel and a career, the handful of tea nevertheless belongs to the same feelings of irritation that have led her to think about money and that are partly responsible for her embarking on her affair. The handful of tea is not “accidental and arbitrary”; it is a psychologically realistic response to

⁹ “Lord Dunraven on the Land Act”, 5.

a sexual impulse that is in revolt against a penny-pinching domestic economy that has become unendurably burdensome.

Much has been made of Joyce's preoccupation with betrayal; but its binary opposite is fidelity, and *Ulysses*, it seems to me, is not a "damned monster novel" or a "loose baggy monster" given the way its main intention, Joyce's exploration of fidelity, seamlessly blends the twin stories of the novel of adultery and the epic within a sequence of narratives that incorporate all the accidental and arbitrary elements of life in Dublin in 1904. To use the seemingly "accidental and arbitrary" to argue that *Ulysses* is not a "loose baggy monster" is also, to use Henry James's words, to pay tribute to Joyce's "valour" and to "recognise" that for him "sundry things had begun much further back than he had felt them even in their dawn" (James 1937: 84).

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A MIRROR UP TO NATURE: THE ARTISTIC ROLE
OF REFLECTION IN JAMES JOYCE'S *ULYSSES*

James Joyce's *Ulysses*, like any form of artistic production, "holds a mirror up to nature," as it creates an alternative reality. The mirror as a metaphor for art is as old as it is obvious; but though a worn cliché, when deconstructed in *Ulysses* its bright surface reveals forgotten depths. While a mirror image is a direct reflection of a given scene, this reflection is inherently *not* the thing itself and so contains opportunities for obscurity, subversion, and distortion; opportunities which Joyce does not fail to employ.

Joyce uses the mirror in *Ulysses* as symbol, metaphor and object, directly alluding to the visual phenomenon of the image. The motif of the mirror is prominent throughout the novel, but in the first episode, "Telemachus", all different aspects of it are manifest, as we are introduced to the physical object of Buck Mulligan's shaving mirror; are informed of its optical characteristics; the literary allusions pertaining to it and their symbolic meanings; and the characters' personal associations and psychological reactions to the mirror.

The inclusion of optical phenomena hints at a link between Joyce's text and the visual arts. From Lessing's *Laocoon* we have been accustomed to defining visual art as working in the spatial sphere and narrative art in the dimension of time.¹ Joyce, however, did not agree with this division, as voiced by Stephen in *Stephen Hero*, who

¹ See Mitchel 1989.

“wondered how the world could accept as valuable contributions such fanciful generalization” (in Isaak 1986: 23). And indeed, many scholars view modernism in art and literature as establishing “a genuine connection with each other” (ibid.: 24) by attempting to depict the dimension of time in visual art and the dimension of space through narrative art.² In *Ulysses* Joyce stretches time almost to a standstill, writing a book of more than seven hundred pages that captures the action of a mere twenty-four hours. By pushing the boundaries of the literary genre Joyce brings the creation of illusion to the fore.

This essay is an attempt to show the affinities between Joyce’s use of reflection as symbol and technique in *Ulysses*, and a specific visual art movement, Impressionism. I will not deal with well-established influences of the Impressionists on Joyce, but with a theoretical comparison, alluding to no direct or conscious influence. However, it is instructive to point out that Joyce writes at a time of a major turning point in the plastic arts, when abstract and conceptual art begins to emerge, and his textual experiments co-occur with modernist artists’ visual ones. Nonetheless, not much has been written on the subject, perhaps partly due to Joyce’s voluble refutations of visual art, as well as his acknowledged poor eyesight. Other than Jo Anna Isaak’s study of Joyce and Cubism in *The Ruin of Representation in Modernist Art and Text*, no in-depth attempt has been made to connect Joyce and the visual arts, though there are such studies which try to find general affinities between him and different art movements from his time.³

It is also noteworthy to point out that I do not attempt to define Joyce’s text as impressionistic, but to compare it to an art form of the same name. Though literary impressionism is an interesting subject in itself, more so because it is not rigidly defined, and some of its charac-

² See Joseph Frank’s formative essay “Spatial Form in Modern Literature” (Frank 1945).

³ Archie K. Loss on Joyce and symbolism, and Robert S. Ryf on Joyce’s relationship with the cinema are examples of this type of study.

teristics can be usefully linked to *Ulysses*, my purpose is not a re-definition of this term.⁴

The mirror and techniques of reflection have a long history in the visual arts, perhaps the most explicit use of which was made by the Impressionists in the second half of the nineteenth century. The Impressionists' manifest agenda was to capture moments in time; in light of contemporaneous advances in technology they saw that reality can be viewed as constantly changing, and were interested in fragmentations caused by light-breaks on reflective surfaces. Most importantly, the Impressionists did not presume that reality is a normative given, that there is one objective way of viewing it, but, they supposed that by including the artist's point of view in their paintings they can get closer to a realistic portrayal of nature. Hence the Impressionists can be seen as forerunners of modernism.

Both Joyce and the Impressionists employ similar techniques, which cause fragmentation of the scene or episode they construct. They depict scenes from the artist's or character's specific point-of-view, a technique which creates obstructions and distortions. Also, they both induce a diminishing of hierarchies; Joyce's and the Impressionists' creations have no obvious centre. The painters create compositions in which there is no focal point and no defining textures, while in *Ulysses* on the textual level descriptions are sporadic, and on the story level there is no hierarchy between the sacred and the mundane. Hence there is an awareness, and a subversion, of the critical human gaze. These art forms attempt to portray reality, while reminding the viewer/reader of the impossibility of objective depiction.

An example of the double fragmentation of hierarchy, in text and content, can be seen in "Telemachus" when Stephen looks at his

⁴ An instructive summary of Ford Maddox Ford's study of literary Impressionism can be found in Max Saunders' "Modernism, Impressionism, and Ford Maddox Ford's *The Good Soldier*". Among other criteria, he defines Impressionistic writing as "writing of intense visuality; writing which moves on rapidly (by analogy with the speed of Impressionist brushstrokes) without full elaboration; a preoccupation with the processes of perception rather than the thing perceived" (18).

own image in the mirror: “Stephen bent forward and peered at the mirror held out to him, cleft by a crooked crack. Hair on end.” The hair and the crack have the same precedence in the description, though one is “really” part of Stephen, and the other is only there in the mirror image. It is the surface of the mirror that is cracked, reminding Stephen of the mirror itself, its flat surface which changes his appearance, while the alliteration “cleft by a crooked crack,” reminds the reader of the text which functions as a mirror of reality.

We can clearly see the likeness of this method in Edgar Degas’s 1873 painting *The School of Dance* (figure 1); there is no focal point on which to rest the eye as the room’s perspective is awry and asymmetrical. This indicates to the viewer that no one point is more important than any other; the dancers, the staircase, and the back wall are all equal parts of the artist’s immediate perception, and the composition does not lead the eye to one single place. The artist’s point-of-view defines what we see, and so our view is obstructed by the stairs on the left, as it is distorted by the dancers’ movement. Also, there is no illusory texture to distinguish between materials; cloth, skin, and wood are all painted using the same brushstrokes. These features make the painting seem flat, and though we may try to perceive its depths we are constantly brought back to the surface. For instance, we can see there is depth perspective by the diminishing size of the dancers and the diagonal of the right wall, but by making the farthest wall a bright yellow Degas makes it pop forward again and distorts the perspective. Also, the curve made by the dancers that diminish in size as they are farther away, completes a circle with the dancers closer to us, and again the viewer is pulled back to the surface. These techniques “flatten” the view and in so doing remind the viewer of the canvas and paint just as a reader is aware of the paper and ink; the all-encompassing mirror of illusion.

Art as mirror means art that is aware of its removal from reality; it is not a window to reality but a mirror, in which the world, depictions of it, and the mirror itself, are reflected. This is enacted in the story when Stephen “swept the mirror a half circle in the air to flash the tidings abroad in sunlight now radiant on the sea” (*U.* 1.129). The

mirror captures light reflected from the sun on the sea and flashes that light back towards the air; all is reflected in the mirror and is generated outwards again by the medium of light, but what we are left with is the blinding reflection of the mirror's surface.

Joyce reminds the reader of the text's materiality, much in the same way as Degas reminds the viewer of the canvass by revealing the artist's brushstrokes. The author writes the first chapter in a style that mimics a young, self-important writer.⁵ This makes the reader constantly aware of the text. There is no delving deeply into a fictitious world as one is always diverted back to the surface. For instance, such phrases as "pain that was not yet the pain of love fretted his heart" (*U.* 1.103); "with anxiety and growing fear" (*U.* 1.60); "He shaved evenly and with care, in silence, seriously" (*U.* 1.99); and others, overburdened by adverbs or reeking of cliché, give the effect of "pushing" the reader out of the imagined reality of the novel, out of the looking-glass, and back to the text's surface.

Inclining towards the promised fantasy world and being pushed out again and again, the reader of *Ulysses* is kept in a state of constant frustration. As the curved line made by Degas's dancers brings us into the dressing-room's interior only to be thrown out again by the back wall's bright color, Joyce pushes and pulls his readers from illusion to text. This is repeated at a symbolic level as well, as Joyce notoriously uses immense quantities of encumbering symbolical allusions which all relate to each other beautifully, building a paradoxical structure that remains erect, but as in an Escher print, can never be constructed in reality. The mirror serves as different symbols which reflect upon each other, so to speak, until meaning is deconstructed; as Carl Jung put it, "what is so staggering about *Ulysses* is the fact that behind a thousand veils nothing lies hidden" (124).

Another important motif which also serves as a reflective surface in "Telemachus" is the sea, which is variously associated with the

⁵ Termed "narrative (young)" in the Gilbert schema (Gifford and Seidman 1988: 12).

different mirrors introduced the episode. Buck Mulligan's mirror is first introduced to the reader while lying on a bowl of lather, which associatively reminds Stephen of the vomit-filled bowl from his sick mother's bedside. The mirror is then linked to the sea as both reflect sunshine, and so sea and bile become associated:

The ring of bay and skyline held a dull green mass of liquid. A bowl of white china had stood beside her deathbed holding the green sluggish bile which she had torn up from her rotting liver by fits of loud groaning vomiting. (*U* 1.106-8)

The sea is connected to Stephen's mother not just by the visual feature of colour, but also symbolically by Mulligan's invocation of a passage from Swinburne: "great sweet mother,"⁶ There is no distinction between the "great sweet mother" and the "green sluggish bile" as all is reproduced impressionistically, and indiscriminately; the mother's aging and grotesque body is no less central than the sublime heights of poetic association. The seeming randomness of description, seen as though through spontaneous vision and suggestive memory, is repeated in the irreverent lack of hierarchy in the content of the following passages which describe Mulligan's mock mass and shaving "ceremony." This is significantly typified here when he makes "rapid crosses in the air, gurgling in his throat and shaking his head" (*U* 1.12).

The sea symbolism is expounded further, used by the author as a reflective surface, a mirror, but one which is susceptible to frequent change and obscurity. The sea is termed by Mulligan as "the snotgreen sea" (*U* 1.74), a phrase connecting the colour to that of Stephen's dirty handkerchief, his "nosserag" (*U* 1.76), and again to the mother's "greenish bile." Mulligan states that snotgreen is "a new color for our Irish poets" (*U* 1.80), and so the "nosserag" serves as the author's palate which then colors the sea as well as Stephen's memories of his mother's sickness. Mulligan confounds art and poetry by referring to

⁶ As interpreted in the Gilbert schema (Gifford and Seidman 1988: 15).

color as the medium of poets, and “our new Irish poets” might clearly include Joyce himself. Mulligan then cries out “Epi oinopa ponton” (*U* 1.78), which in Greek means the wine-dark sea, an ambiguous epithet used in *The Odyssey* and *The Iliad*. Mulligan, here, alludes to the way poetic imagery functions. The wine-dark sea is a description of colour in text and its meaning has been much debated. Whether the Aegean Sea was painted red by marine algae, the Greek’s wine dyed blue by tinted water, or the language lacked words for colors, the use of words to describe images is seen here as problematic. Described as “wine-dark” or “snotgreen,” the sea in “Telemachus” is colorless text.

The “snotgreen noserag” is only one of the artist’s tools used by Joyce, through Mulligan, to “paint” this episode. I wish to argue that the shaving episode is a portrayal of the process of artistic creation, not a metaphor for creation, but the thing itself. Firstly, Mulligan’s actions are compared to painting when he “dipped the brush in the bowl and lathered cheeks and neck” (*U* 1.10). The young man sitting on the parapet, looking out at the view, places his props, dips his brush and begins painting. But he does not paint the bay; Mulligan paints himself. Through each of his actions we discover a new part of his face: his right cheek, his chin, the hollow under his lip (*U* 1.11, 1.50, 1.56, 1.115), parts we never dreamed of imagining had his brush not touched them. Mulligan is actually painting himself with shaving cream, while Joyce creates the character by writing him. The character, unbeknownst to himself, is participating in a mock performance of creation.

More obviously, Mulligan is mocking another performance; this time in full awareness, he mimics the Catholic mass. The mass is a description, as well as recreation, of the sacrifice of Christ, just as Mulligan shaving is both a description and creation of himself. The scene mimics mimicry, but the mimicry of the mass is believed by those who participate in it to actualize itself in the process – the wine and bread do not represent, but actually become the blood and flesh of Christ. Simultaneously, the shaving episode is also a mimicry of painting or creation. While the character mimics mass, the author uses him to mimic creation. But, as the narrative describes Mulligan shaving it

is also creating the scene – so Mulligan’s shaving is *really* a scene of creation. The mirror serves both creation and mimicry; the surface as the thing itself.

I turn again to the obscure surface of the sea, the distorting “mirror of water” which, unlike a “real” mirror, has both apparent and actual depth. This surface is susceptible to light and movement, as in “Telemachus” we see, “inshore and farther out the mirror of water whitened, spurned by the lightshod hurrying feet. White breast of the dim sea” (*U* 1.243-4). The sea changes as Stephen looks at it, and though called a “mirror of water,” it becomes a white, rippling surface which reveals neither its own depth nor the reflected height of the sky. Here, again, we are reminded that this is a text representing a mirror which in itself reflects obscurity; the rippling waves are actually “wave-white wedded *words* shimmering on the dim tide” (*U* 1. 246 - my emphasis). This is the texture of the text.

When employing the technique of reflection, both Joyce and the Impressionists distort view as they display it. The Impressionists were fascinated with water because it induces reflection and the fracturing of light, which alter perception and portray movement. In Alfred Sisley’s 1885 *Saint Mammes, Ducks on Canal* (figure 2) the sea reflects the sky while distorting and obscuring it at the same time, and the rapid brushstrokes on the water are an enactment of the ripples which create a white, obscuring layer, making the objects reflected in the water difficult to identify. This naturalistic rendering of movement on water, by its very commitment to reality, obscures the depicted object. It is, so to speak, a realistic depiction of obscurity. Also, the realistic rendering of the water which creates this obscuring surface emphasizes the materiality of the canvas and paint and so flattens the three-dimensional illusion to the two-dimensional reality of the painting. The light-breaks in the mirror fragment reality, as the brushstrokes of the Impressionists diminish naturalism to the point of incomprehensibility. The reflective surface of the sea functions like the novel in its entirety, by portraying the many fragments of “nature” while leaving it incomprehensible. As Isaak writes, “fragmentation is one of the keys to this central aesthetic paradox of certain modernists works, that is,

their non-mimetic, yet intensely realistic nature” (4). Reflections as technique in Impressionism as well as in *Ulysses* cause confusion which results in a constant reminder that this is a (distorted) reflection of reality.

Joyce and the Impressionists are comparable in their attitude to perception as well as depiction; both art forms induce the reader or viewer to ask questions about the objectivity of vision. The Impressionists explicitly claimed to depict reality *as they see* it, which is an admission of subjectivity in perception. But they also understood that reality is *always* subject to perception, hence there is no one objective view of it, and their artworks are an attempt at an oxymoron – an objective impression. *Ulysses* also contains this conflict, as its protagonists’ stream-of-consciousness flows from the cold observation of facts, to inner associations and memories which colour and alter them, while it is at no point clear which is the “true” reality, or which its most important fragment.

The Impressionist paints his own physical point of view, as in Degas’ painting the view of the dancers is obscured by the staircase, and in Renoir’s emblematic painting of the Impressionist movement, the 1876 *Bal du moulin de la Galette* (figure 3), the entire scene is distorted by multiple overlapping. While impressionistic colors are also susceptible to the artist’s viewpoint, it is important to note that they are not an unrealistic expression of feeling or imagination, as in Fauvist or German Expressionist renderings, but are distorted by the fast painting process which tries to capture changes in light. In Joyce’s stream-of-consciousness there exists a similar inclination as the portrayal of the “reality” of the novel is produced through, and altered by, the consciousness of its protagonists. Even when looking directly at the world, we always see it “through a glass darkly.”

In “Telemachus” we receive Stephen’s point of view, which is not just physical and cognitive, but also emotional. For instance, when Stephen looks at the sea after his dispute with Mulligan, it is described as mirroring his anger:

Stephen stood at his post, gazing over the calm sea towards the headland. Sea and headland now grew dim. Pulses were beating in his eyes, veiling their sight, and he felt the fever of his cheeks. (*U* 1.223-4)

Stephen's focalization is both emotional and perceptible, but he does not "color" the landscape expressionistically with his emotional associations; the sea is colored by Stephen's anger as it changes his *physical* eyesight (pulses beating in his eyes). Joyce still depicts a specific reality, but one visually altered by emotion.

It is helpful to look at Joyce's own theory of aesthetics, his "applied Aquinas" as he refers to it in *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, and *Stephen Hero*.⁷ Aquinas explains that the observer perceives an object and imprints it on the mind, which receives the form of the object but not its matter. This process involves both the senses that perceive the object and the mind which contemplates it. Hence, beauty is "objective" as its qualities are contained in the form of the object; nonetheless it is processed in the individual mind which contemplates it as beautiful (see O'Rourke 2011). Thus, beauty is in a sense both objective and subjective, for it exists in the object itself, but can only be perceived by the subject-observer. A similar relationship of objectivity-subjectivity exists in Joyce's narrative style and in Impressionism, which seek to capture reality, and not the artists' feelings. But the Impressionists explicitly refer to their own specific consciousness and thus create an impression of reality. They "were well aware that what they painted was not reality, but the appearance of reality" (Venturi 1941: 36).

Issues of realism, mimesis, and illusion are discussed directly in *Ulysses* through literary allusions. Mulligan holds a mirror up to Stephen and says: "the rage of Caliban at not seeing his face in a mirror... If Wilde were only alive to see you" (*U* 1.143). Oscar Wilde borrowed Shakespeare's Caliban as a metaphor for the bourgeois who refute Re-

⁷ See Phillips (2004) for an interesting study on Joyce's reading of Thomas Aquinas.

alism in art because it reflects their own life, and Romanticism because it does not (Wilde 1993: vii).⁸ Joyce has Mulligan take up this critical debate as regards the object of the mirror. The text itself is asking the reader to question its relationship to reality; it is as if Joyce is asking his readers if art can be a “mirror up to nature.” This phrase, mentioned explicitly in the “Circe” episode in *Ulysses* (*U* 15.3820), and hinted at throughout the book, is another allusion, this time to Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* (Gifford and Seidman 1988: 512-13). By evoking this famous play Joyce reminds the reader of the illusory nature of the novel, as in *Hamlet* the action of the play is mirrored in a further play within the play, and the audience is reminded that what they are watching is also a representation of reality; a mirror is held up to nature.

This is repeated in the further deconstruction of the mirror in “Telemachus,” as Mulligan’s mirror is said by Stephen to be “a symbol of Irish art. The cracked lookingglass of a servant” (*U* 1.146). Joyce reminds us through Stephen that the mirror is a metaphor for mimesis in art, and it is apparent therefore that the “symbol of Irish art” can refer in some degree to the book itself. Here we return to the mirror as metaphor, the painting itself, in which further reflections and fragmentations of nature are portrayed.

Modernists consider art as an object in itself – the art-piece is no longer valid as an image of reality but has its own functionality in the world. To be considered as such, art consciously shies away from realism. As Isaak notes, “it is an era of high aesthetic self-consciousness, and nonrepresentationalism, in which art turns from realism and humanistic representation towards style, technique or form” (3). This is what Joyce does in *Ulysses*, mirroring real and unreal to infinity, until all that we are left with is the mirror itself, “cleft by a crooked crack” (*U* 1.135). Joyce looks closely at the world and renders its particulars so thoroughly that it is left fragmented.

⁸ See Gilbert’s schema (Gifford and Seidman 1988: 16).

Unlike Joyce, the Impressionists' explicit agenda is to copy nature, to document its movement and change. But by over-awareness to movement and reflection in nature they disintegrate it in their paintings. The outcome is a mirror of mirrors; a painting reflecting reflections. Like Stephen waving the small looking-glass around to capture the fragmented whole, the Impressionist is "as one who takes a mirror and turns it round in every direction" (Venturi 36). After Impressionism, art gradually moves away from realism,⁹ but the Impressionists, perhaps unawares, look at the world and create a distorted image of it. Their emphasis on the artist's point-of-view renders a subjective image of reality. Modernist art

is not the possessing or attaining of a "truth" so that it is finished, no longer to be considered, because owned and "in the bag," but the realizing of the 'known' so that it becomes again the 'given,' thereby not arresting reflection, but renewing and stimulating it.

(Isaak 1986: 20)

A further study could peruse the affinities between Joyce and ready-made art or hyper-realism, and the way in which getting too close to "the real thing" creates a distance from reality. Or a comparison could be made with such postmodernists as Blinky Palermo and Gerhard Richter, and their induced leakage from content to form, from painting to frame. But the study of Joyce and Impressionism does something that these hypothetical (and interesting) investigations do not, precisely because Impressionism is not yet modernism "proper." Because of the naiveté that can be seen in the Impressionists' attempt to "really" depict nature, the inherent problem of perception and depiction comes to the fore, and this is how the metaphor of the mirror serves us – by directly tackling the awareness that every depicted reality is "merely" a mirror, and not the thing itself.

⁹ Of course, there is a constant shift back and forth from realism to abstract art, but the fully abstract, once achieved by Kazimir Malevich in 1918, was never completely abandoned.

While speaking of any concept in Joyce many things must be left unsaid and the analyses of the motif of the mirror in *Ulysses* can take many different turns. What I have tried to show in this paper are the visual qualities of the novel and their relation to the question of art, which, implicit in all art, becomes explicit in Joyce and in modernism in general. The mirror is a metaphor for art, but also for vision, in its obvious qualities of reflection. It is used by Joyce to symbolize that aspect of his writing which fragments reality. The Impressionists thought of light as the medium of vision, and their paintings conveyed the fragmentation of reality in their levelling brushstrokes, which like Joyce's spiralling symbolism, deconstruct the hierarchies we assert that we perceive in nature. As too-bright rays of sunlight illuminate to the point of blindness, the illusion is broken at every turn, the mirror is cracked. Like every symbol in Joyce, the mirror is part of an ever-spiralling fractal, which by infinite meaning (or reflection) becomes meaningless. The supposed depth of perspective constantly returns to the glassy surface.

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Figure 1. Edgar Degas, *School of Dance*, 1873. Oil on canvas, 62.5 cm x 48.3 cm Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, USA.



Figure 2. Alfred Sisley, *Saint Mammes, Ducks on Canal*, 1885, Oil on canvas, 73 cm x 54 cm, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, PA, US.



Figure 3. August Renoir, *Bal du moulin de la Galette*, 1876, Oil on canvas, 131 cm × 175 cm, Musée d'Orsay, Paris.



REALISM AND ALLEGORY IN “CYCLOPS”

In spite of its boundless stylistic variety, the section of *Ulysses* running from “Sirens” to “Oxen of the Sun” seems to convey a mysterious sense of unity. With the addition of “Wandering Rocks”, Michael Groden recognizes in these episodes a “structural unit”, a “middle stage of work” within the overall structure of the novel (Groden 1977: 37). The ingredient providing a subliminal unity to this section is the *primal matter* used by Joyce in its making: pre-Socratic philosophy.

To prove my claim, I will focus on “Cyclops”, in which striking realism hides an allegorical dimension since the choice of characters, the setting, the repetition of certain words and the two-fold stylistic layout of the episode derive from the philosophy of Heraclitus of Ephesus. The very physical appearance of Heraclitus provides the model for the description of the Citizen: Lucian of Samosata wrote a dialogue between a crying Heraclitus and a laughing Democritus (Lucian 1905: 190-206), which inspired a famous fresco by Donato Bramante in which Heraclitus is depicted as “broadshouldered deepchested stronglimbed redhaired freelyfreckled shaggybearded widemouthed largenosed longheaded” (*U* 12.152-54).

Lucian, along with Plutarch, Horace, Juvenal and Seneca, called Heraclitus “the weeping philosopher” and Bramante highlights “The eyes in which a tear and a smile strove ever for the mastery” (*U* 12.161-62). The parallelism between “the weeping philosopher” and the Citizen is confirmed in “Circe”, when the latter “brushes aside a tear in his emerald muffler” (*U* 15.1617), and in “Nausicaa”, where he is nicknamed “that bawler” (*U* 13.1215). According to the tradition,

Heraclitus died of dropsy (Diogenes Laërtius, IX, 3), and the Citizen runs after Bloom “puffing and blowing with the dropsy” (U 12.1784-85).

Here is a synthesis of Heraclitus’ philosophy, which was handed down to us in 130, *százharminc* fragments:

Everything changes and nothing in the world remains still (*panta rhei*), since every being holds within itself its opposite, and the opposites identify one another: living and dead, awake and asleep, young and old are the same. Out of discord comes harmony; contrast and war generate all things.

Fire [...], in some fragments appears to be a symbol of the permanent transformation whereby all things are generated and destroyed, while in others it seems to be a primal matter that moves [...] following the same and only way, upwards and downwards [...]. All things are an equal exchange for fire and fire for all things, as goods are for gold and gold for goods. When everything returns to being fire, in a sort of universal conflagration, the world agrees to unity and perfect peace [...]. Civil laws, as well, derive from universal reason, and mankind must obey them.

(Abbagnano 1982: 88, translation mine)

To grasp the immanent presence of Heraclitus’ philosophy in “Cyclops”, each point will be dealt with separately.

- 1) *Every being holds within itself its opposite, and the opposites identify one another.*

The Brunonian theory of the *coincidentia oppositorum* plays a fundamental role in *Finnegans Wake*. In January 1925, Joyce explained it thus to Harriet Weaver: “His [Bruno’s] philosophy is a kind of dualism – every power in nature must evolve an opposite in order to realise itself and opposition brings reunion etc. etc.” (SL 305-06). However, as early as 1903, in an essay entitled *The Bruno Philosophy*, Joyce recognized in Heraclitus the forerunner of such a theory:

Is it not strange, then, that Coleridge should have set him down a dualist, a later Heraclitus, and should have represented him as saying in effect: “Every power in nature or in spirit must evolve an opposite as the sole condition and means of its manifestation; and every opposition is, therefore, a tendency to reunion.”? (*OCPW* 94)

One of the characteristic features of “Cyclops” is the frequent pairing of terms with opposite or complementary meanings, from “the vendor” and “the purchaser” (*U* 12.35-37) to “Brother Aloysius Pacificus and Brother Louis Bellicosus” (*U* 12.1707-08). Bloom dramatizes the concept of opposition when, before defining love as “the opposite of hatred”, “he collapses all of a sudden, twisting around all the opposite” (*U* 12.1479-85).

2) *Living and dead, awake and asleep are the same.*

This concept, often expressed by Heraclitus, is personified in “Cyclops” by the alive-dead Paddy Dignam and the awake-asleep Bob Doran. In turn, Alf Bergan, who believes that he has seen Dignam with his own eyes, represents man’s inability to see and understand, criticized thus by Heraclitus: “Eyes and ears are bad witnesses to men if they have souls that understand not their language” (Burnet 1892: 133). When the bad witness Alf Bergan finds out that Dignam is dead, he is “flabbergasted” (*U* 12.337), a synthesis of the incomplete fragment: “Knowing not how to listen or how to speak” (Burnet: 134). Bob Doran is fast asleep at the beginning of the episode and, once awake, he barely returns to the real world. Such a propensity is criticized by Heraclitus in several fragments such as: “Other men know not what they are doing when awake, even as they forget what they do in sleep” (*ibid.*).

When the Narrator of the episode accuses Bloom of being capable of arguing that “dying was living” (*U* 12.1363), he is in fact quoting Heraclitus, according to whom “Mortals are immortals and immortals are mortals, the one living the others’ death and dying the others’ life” (Burnet: 138).

3) *Out of discord comes harmony; contrast and war generate all things.*

The whole episode concerns discord and contrast, and contains a number of sentences like “I dare him and I doubledare him” (*U* 12.27, 100) or “We’ll put force against force” (*U* 12.1364). Wars, the Irish and the Jewish questions, racism and colonialism are the topics of conversation, in which unusual curses like “holy wars” and “bloody wars” are used (*U* 12.765, 1849). The first character mentioned in the episode is old Troy, a name that recalls the most famous war in ancient times, and the first dialogue the Citizen engages in deals with the Russian-Japanese War (*U* 12.140). The idea of physical confrontation is implicit in various sporting activities mentioned, in particular, the brutal “butting match” (*U* 12.1322-24) and the Keogh-Bennett boxing match (*U* 12.939-87), which also symbolizes the long-lasting conflict between Ireland and the United Kingdom. As for Garryowen, its tendency to xenophobia derives from Heraclitus’ fragment: “Dogs bark at every one they do not know” (Burnet: 141).

4) *Fire seems to be a primal matter following the same and only way, upwards and downwards.*

Most pre-Socratic philosophers believed that all things draw their origin from a certain first principle, or *arché*. Heraclitus’ *arché* is fire, which, in John Burnet’s translation, follows “the way up and the way down” (Burnet: 138). Such *arché* is personified by the chimney sweep (*U* 12.001-03), whose task is to set free the way *up* followed by fire; hence the overuse of the preposition “up” in “Cyclops”. At the end of the episode, Bloom’s chariot of fire follows the axis of Little Britain street instead of soaring freely in the sky (*U* 12.1915-18), because “The way up is one and the same” (Burnet: 138).

The Homeric biscuit tin hurled by the Citizen becomes “an incandescent object of enormous proportions” (*U* 12.12879-80); the Citizen is described as an active volcano (*U* 12.162-66) and, in “Circe”, he is nicknamed “that fireeater” (*U* 15.221). In “Ithaca”, “Cyclops” is

coupled with “Holocaust” (*U* 17.2051), the rite foreseeing a sacrifice by fire which, in 1922, was not yet equivalent to genocide. And the Linati Schema (Ellmann 1972, appendix) places Prometheus, who was punished by Zeus for giving fire to mortals, at the top of the list of the “Persons” of the episode.

- 5) *All things are an equal exchange for fire and fire for all things, as goods are for gold and gold for goods.*

Heraclitus sees a symbol of the transformation of matter in economic transactions. Many such transactions take place or are mentioned in “Cyclops” and, contrary to the other episodes of *Ulysses*, the money with which drinks are paid for is constantly mentioned. The word “gold” appears a dozen times and the final events of the episode are conditioned by the outcome of a horserace called “The Gold Cup”. The Narrator is a debt collector and Lenehan looks “like a fellow that had lost a bob and found a tanner” (*U* 12.1215-16). Joyce identifies in swindling and betting an interesting example of transformation of matter: the sale of false tickets for Canada, the swindle of the fake Hungarian lottery and the double-dealing sale of horses to the British Army are all commented upon. Before the boxing match, Boylan misleads the gamblers by spreading wrong information about Bennett’s fitness while Bloom, ultimately, is accused of having transformed five shillings into five pounds, which is the reason why, if ‘Throwaway’ is a horse, the odds are twenty to one.

- 6) *Civil laws derive from universal reason, and mankind must obey them.*

In “Cyclops”, Homeric and Heraclitean correspondences often coincide, for example in Bloom’s burning cigar, which also represents the club with which Ulysses blinded Polyphemus. Similarly, as in the “Odyssey”, the Cyclops are described as “free from all constraint of law” (IX, 121-22), Homeric and pre-Socratic correspondences clash perfectly in the setting (near the courthouse), in the conversation top-

ics and in many characters of the episode: “old Troy of the D. M. P.” (U 12.001) is only the first in a long list of people and institutions representing the law, not to mention the magazine “Police Gazette” (U 12.1165) and a beer brand nicknamed “imperial yeomanry” (U 12.1318). In order to solve the problems connected with Dignam’s insurance policy, Bloom is going to meet the government official Martin Cunningham, who is accompanied by a police officer (Jack Power) and a former Tax Office clerk (Crofton). Reference is often made to law offices, solicitors, magistrates and legal action. And while the Citizen is chasing Bloom, the Narrator tries to stop him, cursing: “Arrah, sit down on the parliamentary side of your arse” (U 12.1792).

Hanging and whipping, two much discussed ways of administering justice, are the subject of many Heraclitus’ fragments: “The Ephesians would do well to hang themselves”; “Homer should be turned out of the lists and whipped, and Archilochos likewise” (Burnet: 141). H. Rumbold offers his services as a hangman in a letter written in a straight line, conjunctions and punctuation missing (U 12.415-31), which recalls Heraclitus’ style, thus criticized by Aristotle:

It is a general rule that a written composition should be easy to read and therefore easy to deliver. This cannot be so where there are many connecting words or clauses, or where punctuation is hard, as in the writings of Heraclitus. To punctuate Heraclitus is no easy task, because we often cannot tell whether a particular word belongs to what precedes or what follows it. Thus, at the outset of his treatise he says, “Though this truth is always men understand it not”, where it is not clear with which of the two clauses the word “always” should be joined by the punctuation.

(*Rhet.* III, 5, 1407b)

This passage is taken from the third book of the *Rhetoric* that Joyce carefully analyzed shortly before drafting “Cyclops”, as testified by over twenty notes that he wrote in note-book VIII.A.5 of the University at Buffalo (*Notes and Early Drafts* 25-26). Finally, it is worth remembering that H. Rumbold owes his name to an authentic, distin-

guished Officer of the Law, the British Minister to Bern during the First World War, who refused to solve the controversy between the British Consulate in Zurich and the theatre company founded by Joyce. Likewise, the English boxer (battered by the Irishman Keogh) is given the name of the British Consul involved in the controversy (*JJII* 429-47).

7) *In a sort of universal conflagration, the world agrees to unity and perfect peace.*

When the Citizen hurls the Heraclitean, incandescent biscuit tin, a “terrific and instantaneous” universal conflagration takes place (*U* 12.1858) and many officers of the law perish, enabling the beginning of that new social order desired by Heraclitus. After the conflagration, a circumstantial report announces that the removing of the corpses has been organized (*U* 12.1888-96), as the philosopher intimates: “Corpses are more fit to be cast out than dung” (Burnet: 139).

Even a genetic approach to “Cyclops” seems to endorse my statements. In the early draft V.A.8, Joyce outlined a scene in which, walking towards the courthouse, Bloom is crossing the market area, i.e., the place where goods are exchanged for gold. Here, the Heraclitean concepts of economic transaction, hanging, law, punishment, contrariness, opposition, war and even tear-shedding meet:

Like culprits. Be taken to the prison from whence you came and there be hanged by the neck till you are ~~bought~~ sold and may the Lord. Emmett. Martyrs. They want to be? My life for Ireland. Romance. Girl in a window watching. Wipe away a tear. Hung up for scarecrows. Quite the contrary effect. Of course - Where was it battle of Fontenoy they charged. Remember Limerick.

(Notes and Early Drafts: 154)

Bloom recalls the battle of Fontenoy and the siege of Limerick which, in the published version, are mentioned by the Citizen (*U* 12.1380-82). Similarly, the expression “a roasted fart” is said by a non-

specified character in V.A.8, by Ned Lambert in another early draft and by the Citizen in the published version (Groden: 135). In V.A.8, “Joyce wrote out much dialogue apparently without knowing which character was talking” (ibid.: 134): such a technique seems to prove that the primary function of much dialogue is to allude to the philosophy of Heraclitus. In a provisional schedule of the episode, the scene indicated as “Whipping” substitutes the hanging scene (*Notes and Early Drafts* 129-30). And in V.A.8, the Citizen’s anger towards Bloom is caused by the Hungarian lottery swindle (ibid.: 137); in both cases, Joyce may have substituted one situation with another as they both evoke Heraclitus’ doctrine.

As for the *gigantic* paragraphs, “In the final version the parodies halt the narration” while, in V.A.8, they “serve as the means of narration. In revising, Joyce either eliminated such passages or rewrote them” because “They do not serve to complement, to contrast, or to comment the narrative” (Groden: 129-30), which is a very Heraclitean explanation. The *gigantic* paragraphs, by themselves, reflect one aspect of the philosophy of Heraclitus, as their redundancy acts as an element of contrast and contrariness in respect to the perfunctory speech of the Narrator and the other characters. Also, they are a concrete example of transformation, occurring by word rather than by fire. *Panta rhei* and, in this case, everything changes according to the linguistic register, as happens in the noble exchange of compliments between Bob Doran and Bloom, immediately brought down to earth by the Narrator’s sarcastic comment (*U* 12.780-802).

Most of the unused notes for “Cyclops” in the British Museum’s *Notesheets* or the notes in the *Scribbledehobble* notebook are related to the philosophy of Heraclitus. For example:

- Tyrants: men lend them power
- Rule: dead rule living: 1 enslaved by many
- Joy of grief
- Dog & dog
- Pietro il Pittore: la lege z’è per tutti
- Solitudinem faciunt et pacem appellant

- LB. At a cursing duel
- Compare: Giant: giant: : giant : dwarf
- apple and peer leaves
- to have or not to have
- State: monster fed with our blood, must be starved
- Election: 20 fools to elect a genius
- boosiness is boosiness

(Notesheets 81-120)

- no place like home and the fire out
- Mass & rosary my cannon balls
- gun (revolver)
- gold pat of avarice
- of the whole (half) blood
- begin article on Jonson and Johnson

(Scribbledehobble 109-11)

A number of notes for “Cyclops” proves Joyce’s disenchantment about the concept of the legal system which Heraclitus overrates. And his dislike for the philosopher gives rise to a rant which is cryptically hidden in a *gigantic* paragraph describing the departure of Bloom for a mysterious place called: “Százharminczbrojúgulyás-Dugulás (Meadow of Murmuring Waters)” (U 12.1818-19). The translation of this Hungarian word is, different to the one suggested in the text: “Constipation caused by one hundred and thirty portions of veal goulash” (Mecsnóber 2001: 348). Now, as the philosophy of Heraclitus came down to us in precisely 130, *százharminc* fragments, Joyce’s intention of launching a frontal attack on the philosopher seems to be manifest. Such criticism is understandable if we consider that “Cyclops” was drafted in 1919, only a few months after the end of the ‘pointless’ First World War, which the philosopher would most certainly have supported. On the contrary Joyce, who was much more involved in political and military events than is sometimes claimed, could not appreciate a philosophy that glorifies a social system generating intolerance and contrast, and a world war that he perceived as a dramatic, Heraclitean conflagration.

As I stated in the introduction to this article, “Cyclops” belongs to a section of *Ulysses*, running from “Sirens” to “Oxen of the Sun” in which Joyce uses pre-Socratic philosophy as a *primal matter* to be moulded with absolute freedom.

Anaximenes is a philosopher who came from a region called *Lydia*, like the female protagonist of “Sirens”. His *arché* is the same element that affects Bloom’s bowels: air, without which music, sound and vibration, the main components of “Sirens”, could not exist. According to Anaximenes, air gives origin to fire and cloud, a phenomenon allegorically represented by Moulang’s pipes, by a poster showing a mermaid smoking swathed in clouds of smoke and, above all, by Simon Dedalus’ pipe. If in “Cyclops” the reader is led to notice that Bloom “near burnt his fingers with the butt of his old cigar” (*U* 12.1469), in a different context of allegorical representation, the reader’s attention is focused on the clouds of smoke produced by Simon’s pipe (*U* 11.509-14).

Anaximenes ascribes to air the properties of infinity and unceasing movement, which are evoked by Lionel’s air “soaring all around about the all, the endlessnessnessness” (*U* 11.749-50). As there are no writings by Anaximenes, Joyce uses treatises on acoustic physics as a main source for the making of “Sirens” (Bénéjam 2011: 64-65). For example, the scene in which Bloom “looped, unlooped, nodded, disnoded” his elastic band (*U* 704), alludes to the components of the sinusoidal waves produced by a vibration i.e. *nodes*, where the wave amplitude is zero, and *loops* where it reaches its highest range. Likewise, when Lydia sets free “her nipped elastic garter smackwarm against her smackable a woman’s warmhosed thigh” (*U* 11.413-14), she is dramatizing the old-fashioned scientific definition of sound: “Sound is a peculiar sensation excited in the organ of hearing by the vibratory motion of bodies, when this motion is transmitted to the ear through an elastic medium” (Ganot 1872: 157).

“Nausicaa” is somehow set in Ancient Egypt, as John S. Rickard convincingly proved (Rickard 1983: 356-58), and Pythagoras spent twenty-two years in Egypt (Iamblichus 1918: 10). Pythagoras is the mathematician, who, searching for evidence of the perfect rational-

ity of the universe in numbers, unintentionally discovered the irrational number and the same incommensurability empirically experienced by Bloom, who gives up counting “all those holes and pebbles” on the beach (*U* 13.1248-49). The final confirmation that Pythagoras is the philosopher presiding over “Nausicaa” emerges from a device used by Joyce to assign a subliminal unity to the entire pre-Socratic section. Each *arché* contributing to its making is allegorically represented at the end of one episode and at the beginning of the next: air is evoked by Bloom’s emission of air at the end of “Sirens” and by the first words said by the Narrator of “Cyclops”: “Lo, Joe, says I. How are you blowing?” (*U* 12.06). The chimney sweep, allegory of fire, Heraclitus’ *arché*, is mentioned both towards the end of “Sirens” (*U* 11.1242) and at the beginning of “Cyclops” (*U* 12.02). Sun and fire blend into a single entity at the end of “Cyclops” and at the beginning of “Nausicaa”: the scene in which Bloom flies on his chariot of fire “having raiment as of the sun” (*U* 12.1912-13) precedes the image of the setting sun’s “last glow” in the following episode (*U* 13.02).

The *arché* of Pythagoras is number. At the end of “Nausicaa” and at the beginning of “Oxen of the Sun”, the number $3 \times 3 = 9$ is graphically represented by the cuckoo’s call and the invocation to a sort of Solar deity respectively.

The *arché* of Parmenides is earth burning by fire which, in “Oxen of the Sun”, is represented by the turf carried by the bargeman, the only character who is completely foreign to the dynamics of the episode (*U* 14.474-77). In “Oxen of the Sun”, “at night’s oncoming” (*U* 14.71-72), that is, between day and night, Bloom reaches the wide gate of the hospital whereas Parmenides, at the beginning of the poem in which he presents his philosophy, reaches “the gates of Day and Night” which “are closed by mighty doors” whose keys are kept by the Goddess Justice (Burnet 1892: 184). Her keys are evoked by Miss Callan, who mentions the Isle of Man (*U* 14.102), which, in *Ulysses*, is constantly connected with the theme of the two keys because of the advertisement that Bloom is trying to have published in the newspaper.

The doctrine of Parmenides may be summarized as follows:

1) *Being* is, and in no way it may not be, while *not-being* cannot be. This recalls the style of the so-called “Sallustian-Tacitean prelude” (*SL* 251), marked by an excessive reiteration of the verb *to be* conjugated in the gerund and infinitive forms, especially in its last sentence (*U* 14.56-59). While, in “Oxen of the Sun”, the category of *being* is represented by a baby who is about to be born, many entities belonging to the category of *not being*, such as ungenerated or stillborn babies, are evoked.

2) *Being* is not subject to any *becoming*. The conception of the episode is, in itself, contrary to the philosophy of Parmenides, as the simultaneous representation of the development of a human embryo and English literary history implies the acknowledgment of the concept of becoming. Furthermore, if Parmenides holds that movement does not exist, in the last section of the episode the drunken protagonists give a practical demonstration of its existence by rushing out of the hospital.

Now, it remains to be seen why Joyce should use pre-Socratic philosophy as a *primal matter* for the making of a section of *Ulysses*. The question relates to the overall structure of the novel, which aims to achieve that “perfect identification of matter and form” theorized by Walter Pater (Pater 1910: 138, 142). As is often remarked in *Ulysses* criticism, “Sirens” is conceived as a musical score in accordance with one of the cornerstones of Pater’s aesthetic theory:

All art constantly aspires towards the condition of music. For while in all other kinds of art it is possible to distinguish the matter from the form [...], yet it is the constant effort of art to obliterate it. That the mere matter of a poem, for instance, [...] should be nothing without the form, the spirit, of the handling, that this form, this mode of handling, should become an end in itself, should penetrate every part of the matter: this is what all art constantly strives after, and achieves in different degrees.

(Pater 1910: 135)

Joyce adds the metaphysical meaning of the terms *matter* and *form* to Pater's statement: in the Aristotelian lexicon they are the equivalent of *potency* and *act*, where potency is the predisposition of matter to assume a given form and act is what confers to potency that specific form. To explain this concept, Aristotle often gives the example of bronze, a potential statue waiting to be actualized by the artist. On two occasions he associates bronze with gold, whereas the first words of the "pre-Socratic section" of *Ulysses* are: "Bronze by Gold" (*U* 11.001). Such an association had been in Joyce's mind since 1903, when he noted in his *Early Commonplace Book* the sentence: "A sense receives the form without the matter" (O'Rourke 2005: 15). This summarizes a passage from *On the Soul*: "In general we must assume of every sense, that a sense is that which receives sensible forms without the matter, as the wax takes on the impression of the signet-ring without the iron or gold, and receives the impression of the gold or bronze, but not as gold or bronze." (*De Anima* II, 12, 424a)

The bronze-gold association assumes the meaning of *matter* in another passage in which Aristotle proves that matter has, in itself, the principle of change (*Phys.* II, 1, 193a). As the Thomistic scholar Leo J. Elders explains:

Aristotle developed a definitive answer to the problem of becoming by introducing the concept of primary matter, the totally indeterminate substrate, which makes the transition of one substance into another possible. The coming-into-being of material things is not from a mere absence to the presence of a new form, but from a potentiality to its realization. This potentiality is present in the essence of all material things which can change into one another. [...] Consequently primary matter is an entirely indeterminate substrate, a component of being which is really present in the essence of material things and makes change possible by being able to become an entirely new formal determination.

(Elders 1993: 159)

The most striking feature of the pre-Socratic section is precisely the “entirely new formal determination” of each episode: in refined cross-referencing, the primal matter used for the making of a crucial section of *Ulysses*, so amazing in terms of *form*, is the doctrine of four philosophers who investigated the primal matter giving origin to all things. As complicated as such a mechanism seems to be, its final result may be compared with the function of the headings providing a perfect identification of matter and form to “Aeolus”, the episode set in a newspaper office.

The acknowledgment of the function of pre-Socratic philosophy in *Ulysses* contributes to solving the question raised by Weldon Thornton about “Oxen of the Sun” in particular, and the second part of the novel in general:

The basic problem is in finding some reasonable thematic connection between the themes of this chapter and its mode of representation. Not that this problem is unique to “Oxen of the Sun”. It is present to some degree in every episode from “Wandering Rocks” on, and our general failure to solve this problem suggests that there is some basic point that we are missing – a point having to do with the status of the narrative voice in each of those episodes. For when we do come to understand what these episodes are about, when we come to see their underlying thematic unity, that unity should encompass both style and substance.

(Thornton 1993: 159)

The interaction between style and substance, or between form and matter, is the mechanism enabling Joyce “to allow each adventure [...] to condition and even to create its own technique”, as he writes in his famous letter to Carlo Linati (*SL* 271). Such a mechanism underpins each aspect of the structure of *Ulysses*, including the relationship between Dedalus, who is “entelechy, form of forms” (*U* 9.208), and Bloom, who is constantly depicted as *matter*, as having a material nature. But that is another *matter*, worthy of discussion in another context.

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ENCYCLOPEDIC NOVEL REVISITED. JOYCE'S
ROLE IN A DISPUTED LITERARY GENRE

In 1976 Edward Mendelson published an essay entitled "Gravity's Encyclopedia" in the collection *Mindful Pleasures: Essays on Thomas Pynchon* (Levine and Leverenz 1976). That same year, with the article "Encyclopedic Narrative: From Dante to Pynchon", his theoretical proposal reached its most synthetic (and ambitious) definition. Talking about encyclopedic narrative, Mendelson referred to a literary genre that had developed over the course of seven centuries, in which no more than seven works could be counted: Dante Alighieri's *Commedia*, François Rabelais's cycle of *Gargantua et Pantagruel*, Miguel de Cervantes's *Don Quixote*, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's *Faust*, Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick*, James Joyce's *Ulysses*, and Thomas Pynchon's *Gravity's Rainbow*. These books were united by the fact of having been composed by an author "whose work attends to the whole social and linguistic range of his nation, who makes use of all the literary styles and conventions known to his countrymen [...] and who becomes the focus of a large and persistent exegetic and textual industry comparable to the industry founded upon the Bible" (Mendelson 1976: 1268).

Though rigid and pretentious, Mendelson's proposal has enjoyed a moderate but steady success in recent decades, generating a group of studies that deserves interest in and for itself, because of the profound instability that marks its theoretical boundaries with striking distinction. Thus, it is possible to find a number of studies that have

dealt with the topic in various ways: all proposing their own ‘canon’ for the new literary genre and all widely diverging in defining it. And the divergences are not limited to the list of titles and distinctive features, because they also touch upon the very denomination of the genre, which oscillates from “encyclopedic narrative” (or “encyclopedic novel”) to “world-novel”, passing through the “systems novel” and the “mega-novel”, to finally reach the “maximalist novel”. And yet, while individual proposals jar, it is possible to define an extraordinarily compact force field, which affirms its vital permanence in the contemporary critical landscape.

Tom LeClair (1989) talks about the *Art of Excess*, that specific mastery (which is primarily a domain practice) through which an author manages to expand our knowledge by bringing the information channels to the limits of overload: it is in this region that a new, non-reductionist theory unfolds (the “systems novel”), modeled by the systemic logic described by the biologist Ludwig von Bertalanffy. Franco Moretti (1996), on the other hand, focuses on the aspects of openness, incompleteness, and polysemy of the “world-novel”, finally finding a unifying element in the theory of complexity, which expands but does not contradict the logic of von Bertalanffy. Frederick R. Karl (2001), insists on the “oceanic” experience and on the indeterminate elements in the “mega-novel”, resorting to the image of cellular structure to describe its functioning—an image that is connected once again with the dynamics of complex systems.

It is important to notice how Joyce’s role in this theoretical framework, while central in its very inception, is becoming increasingly marginal: both LeClair and Karl, for example, focus their analysis solely on contemporary North-American literature, anticipating a tendency that is now a dominant attitude.

The most recent of these studies, written by Stefano Ercolino (2014), deserves a separate analysis. It is a book that, on the one hand, leads the theoretical debate to its highest level of maturity, while, on the other, it also articulates its most intimate contradictions. Ercolino chooses to lay the foundations of his own investigation on LeClair’s, Karl’s, and Moretti’s studies (while also mentioning Mendelson), but

only to see them objectively and subject them to a close critique. The very proposition of a different denomination (“maximalist novel”) demonstrates how the debate does not proceed through comparison and inclusion, but through continuous slippage and expansion. At its centre, there is an object that is never completely circumscribed and which reaffirms its dominant centrality with each new attempt at definition.

Ercolino’s theorization is distinguished by its amplitude and elegance, with a Decalogue of elements to shape the genre. In his words:

The maximalist novel possesses a very strong morphological and symbolic identity. There are ten elements that define it as a genre of the contemporary novel:

1. Length
2. Encyclopedic mode
3. Dissonant chorality
4. Diegetic exuberance
5. Completeness
6. Narratorial omniscience
7. Paranoid imagination
8. Intersemioticity
9. Ethical commitment
10. Hybrid realism

(Ercolino 2014: xiii-xiv)

These elements act within the “maximalist novels” in a dynamic and dialectical relationship because some of them (such as length, encyclopedic mode, dissonant chorality and diegetic exuberance) embody a “chaos-function”, while others (such as completeness, narratorial omniscience and paranoid imagination) give rise to a “cosmos-function”: “The internal dialectic of the maximalist novel would appear then to work toward the *synthesis* of [these] two opposing functions” (Ercolino 2014: 115). The relationship with the great literary tradition is sustained by a vigilant criticism of the postmodernist debate, as well as by attempting to frame the maximalist phenomenon in a longer-

term perspective, focused on a dialectical relationship with the complementary minimalist tendencies of the contemporary novel. An attempt that, however, seems to be driven by the same urgency that led Mendelson to build an entirely new theory around Pynchon's novel while testifying to that extremism from which not even Ercolino's proposal can be said to be completely exempt. The amplitude of the theoretical construction, in fact, is accompanied by its inevitable rigidity, which may excessively reduce the scope of the analysis while pushing the critical focus towards the maximum level of definition. In the perspective of Joyce studies, Ercolino's decision to limit the 'canon' of this new genre to only seven titles is extremely significant. Specifically, these are: *Gravity's Rainbow* by Thomas Pynchon, *Infinite Jest* by David Foster Wallace, *Underworld* by Don DeLillo, *White Teeth* by Zadie Smith, *The Corrections* by Jonathan Franzen, *2666* by Roberto Bolaño and *2005 dopo Cristo* by Babette Factory, all books published between 1973 and 2005. However, through a systematic analysis of Ercolino's ten defining elements, it will be easy to demonstrate that Joyce too can be considered a "maximalist author".

Regarding length, it is necessary to acknowledge the substantial frailty of this defining element. Ercolino refers in particular to the promotional campaign for *Infinite Jest*, interpreting the insistence on its notable length "within the framework of the 'sex appeal of the inorganic'" (Ercolino 2014: 23). However, it is difficult to extend this element to a general rule without running the risk of relativism. Ercolino refers to the number of pages, thus defining the range of his selection "[f]rom a minimum of 401 pages to a maximum of 1,105 pages" (Ercolino 2014: 19). Both *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* fit comfortably into these limits.

As for the "encyclopedic mode", Ercolino himself confirms that "[t]he encyclopedism of *Ulysses* is a commonly recognized fact" (Ercolino 2014: 28). The third element, "dissonant chorality", is defined as "an inextricable web of chorality and polyphony" (Ercolino 2014: 48), a web that is characteristically exemplified by *Finnegans Wake*, where all histories and all identities finally lead back to a single point or person (e.g., the protagonist H.C.E. or the year 1132 A.D.),

while the linguistic strata are exponentially—and dissonantly—expanded. And the same can be said for *Ulysses*, whose dissonances and polyphonies have been repeatedly studied by Joyce scholars, with insistent references to Bakhtinian theory (see Booker 1995) and to music (see Melnick 1980).

Regarding “diegetic exuberance”, the extremely reduced chronological span of the primary plots in both *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* might suggest a mismatch, but it is precisely through the secondary elements that this exuberance emerges with renewed strength. Following the suggestions of Tindall (1969: 30-31), for example, it is possible to identify dozens of embryotic narratives in just the first page of *Finnegans Wake*. And also the fifth element, “completeness”, finds its perfect achievement in Joyce’s fiction, which tends to develop this rhizomatic expansion into a circular, overarching structure—famously synthesized in the “Diagram of *Finnegans Wake*” by László Moholy-Nagy (1947: 347).

“Narratorial omniscience” is defined as “knowing things before they happen and [...] having free access to the most hidden thoughts and desires of all the characters” (Ercolino 2014: 98). An exemplification of the former element can be found in the temporal structure of *Finnegans Wake*, where the end is directly connected with the beginning and the whole of history can stand together in a single moment. The most famous illustration of the latter element is the use of stream of consciousness in *Ulysses*. However, it is also necessary to note that Joyce goes far beyond the nineteenth-century, realist concept of “narratorial omniscience” because in his world “there are no epic heroes; nor are there omniscient narrators who consistently and reliably provide translucent summaries of the characters’ thoughts to the readers” (Schwarz 1987: 64).

“Paranoid imagination” is another problematic element, for which Ercolino provides a definition that is easily conflatable into the more general concept of complexity: “the direct or indirect interconnection of all the stories, of all the characters, and of all the events that proliferate in maximalist novels” (Ercolino 2014: 111). A phenomenon already described by Franco Moretti (1996: 216-217) for *Ulysses*:

“In ‘Circe’ alone, Hamlet is successively linked to a grotesque seduction of Mrs Breen (467), an imaginary plea in defense of Bloom (952), the death of Dignam (1218), a little speech to keep Zoe at a distance (1965) [...]. There is no doubt, *Ulysses* connects everything with everything”.

The eighth element, “intersemioticity”, is significantly exemplified by the semiotic proliferation of the text of *Finnegans Wake* that also includes geometrical figures, musical excerpts, theatre pieces, and even some of the first television broadcasts (see the episode of Butt and Taff, *FW*: 341-353).

Regarding “ethical commitment”, suffice to mention the study by Marian Eide (2002: 2), which is dedicated to confirming how, “[i]n each of his works, Joyce maps the complex relations within a domestic setting or immediate context onto exterior processes in the social and political realms”. On the complex dynamics of Joycean “hybrid realism”, finally, see an entire volume of *Joyce Studies in Italy* (Ruggieri and Terrinoni 2014), or even an article in this very collection (Federici 2017).

These remarks are not aimed, of course, at denying the validity of Ercolino’s theorization, which remains the most advanced on the subject. Rather, they suggest the necessity of expanding it to a larger portion of literary history, while rediscovering Joyce’s central role in the encyclopedic/maximalist phenomenon.

Among Ercolino’s ten defining elements, it is also necessary to acknowledge the importance of the second one. In re-naming the genre “maximalist”, Ercolino chooses to downgrade encyclopedism from a literary genre to a mode of expression. This choice allows attention to be diverted to a phenomenon perhaps less circumscribable, but at the same time more pervasive in literary history. For Ercolino (2014: 39), the encyclopedic mode is definable “as a particular aesthetic and cognitive attitude, consisting of a more or less heightened and totalizing narrative tension in the synthetic representation of heterogeneous realities and domains of knowledge”. The example of Joyce shows how mastering this tension makes it possible to produce novels that are both encyclopedic and maximalist, but that can also be considered

as world-, system-, or mega-novels. Before the genre definitions there is a mode of expression that includes them all: potentially present in all arts, it should be distinguished as a ‘literary encyclopedism’, whose constitutive elements can be described in narratological, theoretical and stylistic terms—always with Joyce’s works at its core.

Firstly, it has been noted that the encyclopedism of contemporary novels is linked to a fundamental historical fracture. Diderot had already highlighted the intrinsic incompleteness of the work of the encyclopedist, who is unable to encompass the totality of knowledge. Faced with the medieval ideal of an all-embracing knowledge, modern culture put forward a more expanded and multifocal model, at the expense of overall coherence:

The proliferation of knowledge in post-Renaissance Europe meant that information could no longer be reliably gained from one polymath intelligence and, as a consequence, single-authored encyclopedias began to be replaced by multi-authored volumes, with an inevitable loss of overall coherence. So while the encyclopedias of the Middle Ages unfolded according to some coherent overarching pattern, the eighteenth century saw the emergence of discrete entries, a development that made locating specific information easier, at the expense of locating that specialist knowledge within some larger scheme.

(Burn 2007: 55)

In literary terms, the encyclopedic mode carries a similar logic within the structure of the narrative, thus bringing into play this complex dynamic between totality and incompleteness. In revisiting Mendelson’s theorization, Herman and Van Ewijk highlighted the implicit contradiction of the alleged encyclopedism of a novel such as *Gravity’s Rainbow*. In their view, Pynchon’s ultimate goal was by no means that of reaching totality, but, on the contrary, its intimate deconstruction:

Mendelson’s much vaunted “totality” [...] is indeed only one side of the encyclopedic novel as exemplified by *Gravity’s Rainbow*. A new working definition is therefore in order: by processing an

enormous amount of information from a variety of fields, quite a few big novels produce the illusion that they have encyclopedic proportions and perhaps even manage to impose some form of order on the wealth of material. [...] *Gravity's Rainbow* is predicated on an insight into its own limitations as an encyclopedic novel. [...] Pynchon was well aware of the fact that any attempt at encircling the totality of knowledge on even one specific topic would prove to be an unattainable goal.

(Herman and Van Ewijk 2009: 169)

It is interesting to note that, in at least four of the seven titles proposed by Ercolino, the narrative structure is tightly centered around a 'latent hinge': a device (be it an object, a person, or an event) that never reveals itself entirely or that is gradually dispersed into the storyworld, thus imposing a tension that stimulates an opening, while never leading to a complete fracture. In its latent existence, this element gradually affirms itself as the synthetic image of an unattainable totality, placed at the very centre of the novel's fictional universe. In DeLillo's *Underworld*, it is the home-run baseball of the 1953 *pen-nant* won by the Dodgers; in Wallace's *Infinite Jest*, it is James Incandenza's experimental film, capable of killing its spectators; in Bolaño's *2666*, it is the mystery of the 400 murders of young women in the city of Santa Teresa; and in Pynchon's *Gravity's Rainbow*, it is the V2 missile carrying the symbolic "00000" label.

Similar devices can also be found in *Finnegans Wake*, like the "untitled Mamafesta" (*FW*: 104) that connects all the principal protagonists of the book—and that has also been defined as a "concentrat[e] of the *Wake* itself" (Tindall 1996: 12)—but that is never fully revealed in its contents; or like the sexual intercourse between H.C.E. and A.L.P., which, according to Edmund Epstein (2009: 13), happens only in the hiatus between the last and the first page of the book. Once again, Joyce's narrative seems to claim its position at the core of the encyclopedic phenomenon, irrespective of the perspective chosen for analyzing it.

From the point of view of literary theory, an even more striking correspondence can be found. As recently suggested by Van Ewijk (2011), literary encyclopedism shows a strong affinity with the concept of hypertextuality. In fact, several exegetical projects have developed around the work of some of the aforementioned authors in recent years, exploiting the potential of hypertextual technologies. It is no coincidence, moreover, that these projects often take the form of *Wiki* websites, relying on the same protocol adopted by the most famous encyclopedia of the ‘Web 2.0’ (*Wikipedia*), where the reader also has the potential to become the author of the text.

Some of the most highly developed of these projects focus on Pynchon and Wallace,¹ but the first to be created was entitled *Finnegans Wiki*.² Supported by the free contributions of its users, *Finnegans Wiki* is part of an extended galaxy of websites dedicated to Joyce’s last work,³ and offers the opportunity to test not only Van Ewijk’s hypothesis, but more generally the connection between literary encyclopedism and hypertextuality as a phenomenon that goes far deeper than the separate histories of literature and technology. Some scholars have gone as far as to state that “Joyce’s text can be said to *solicit* hypertext” (Armand 2003: xi), but perhaps the connection can be established not only *a posteriori* as it is part of a much more extended process of redefinition of encyclopedic knowledge, ready to lead towards the phenomenon that Pierre Lévi (1997) defined as “collective intelligence”. Hypertext, in its intrinsic interactivity potential, invites us to take control of a complexity that escapes us: an active exercise stimu-

¹ See *PynchonWiki*, <pynchonwiki.com> [last visited 15 May 2017] and *Infinite Jest Wiki*, <infinitejest.wallacewiki.com> [last visited 15 May 2017].

² <<http://www.finnegansweb.com/wiki>> [last visited 28 August 2016].

³ See, for example, *Glosses of Finnegans Wake*, <www.finwake.com> [last visited 15 May 2017] and *Finnegans Wake Extensible Elucidation Treasury*, <www.fweet.org> [last visited 15 May 2017]. Of particular interest is the *First We Feel Then We Fall* project <www.firstwefeelthenwefall.com> [last visited on 15 May 2017], which affects a multimedia/hypertextual adaptation of the text: see Bazarnik and Wróblewski (2016).

lated by the encyclopedias of the new millennium, as well as by Joyce's texts.

Literary encyclopedism, in fact, cannot be considered an isolated, normative framework, totally impermeable to social, cultural and technological mutation. A fundamental node in its development is thus the extreme stage of modernism, during which collapse and paroxysm, acceleration and implosion all intensified exponentially both in the political and the cultural spheres, as well as in science and technology. Joyce's work is one of the highest expressions of this period and is distinguished by its utmost receptivity to the potential of future developments. If the idea that *Finnegans Wake* anticipated hypertext (Volpone 2003) can still be questioned, it is indisputable that, in the face of the much-heralded crisis of written culture, it suggested a solution that is actually becoming the most successful in the era of the internet and of the new encyclopedias. As noted by Fritz Senn (1990: 63), "*Finnegans Wake* induces collective reading, this in the original sense of *col-ligere*, to collect, gather, put together, pool information, data, conjectures, experience. Or, to shift the ground, *Wake* readers become colleagues, *collegae*, those who choose (or read) together". The path that links this experience to that of *Wikipedia*, seems to be simply a natural evolution.

Directly connected to these technological futures, a further perspective on literary encyclopedism is finally offered by the growing field of "digital humanities". Specifically, the area of research known as "stylometry" can provide a reliable tool for testing the original assumption by Mendelson (1976: 1268) that "an encyclopedic author [...] makes use of all the literary styles and conventions known to his countrymen". The origins of stylometry have been traced back to the 1960s, with the pioneering work of Mosteller and Wallace (1964) on the American Federalist Papers, or even to the middle of the nineteenth century, thanks to the original intuitions of Augustus de Morgan (see Juola 2006: 240-242). However, the definitive affirmation of stylometry dates to the beginning of the twenty-first century, when John Burrows (2002) proposed a surprisingly effective method for authorship attribution, known from that moment as "Delta distance". Its

logical implementation was extremely easy: from a group of texts, the occurrences of single words were extracted and a list was built comprising the most frequent words in the whole corpus; for each one of the texts, then, the relative frequencies of these words were calculated, thus generating a vector of numbers. The distance between two texts was therefore the distance between their two corresponding vectors, calculated through an *ad hoc* formula. Burrows tested this method on a corpus of English Restoration poets, obtaining surprisingly accurate results. In most cases, in fact, the ‘closest’ texts were those written by the same authors. Over the last fifteen years many different improvements have been proposed for Delta distance, but the logical process for its calculation has remained substantially the same.

In order to test Mendelson’s assumption as regards Joyce’s texts, a small experiment has been designed,⁴ based on the recent findings by Maciej Eder (2015) that Delta distance reaches high levels of efficiency when working with 8,000-word-long samples.

First, a ‘primary set’ has been composed by randomly selecting two or three novels by 13 different authors⁵ (active in approximately the same period as Joyce), together with the entire texts of *Dubliners* and of the *Portrait*. As evident in Figure 1, Delta is actually able to discern the “fingerprints” of the different authors, which group into well-separated clusters of the “consensus tree”.⁶

⁴ The experiment was implemented using the R package *Stylo*, <<https://sites.google.com/site/computationalstylistics/stylo>> [last visited 15 May 2017].

⁵ The list of 13 authors is made up of: Jane Austen, Anne Brontë, Charlotte Brontë, Florence L. Barclay, Arnold Bennet, Richard D. Blackmore, Mary E. Braddon, Frances H. Burnett, Gilbert Chesterton, Joseph Conrad, Marie Corelli, Charles Dickens and Arthur C. Doyle. As is evident, the selection has been limited to the letters between A and D of the “English Benchmark Corpus” provided by the *Stylo* website: <<https://sites.google.com/site/computationalstylistics/corpora>> [last visited 15 May 2017].

⁶ For a general introduction to the logic behind the “consensus trees”, see Eder (2017).

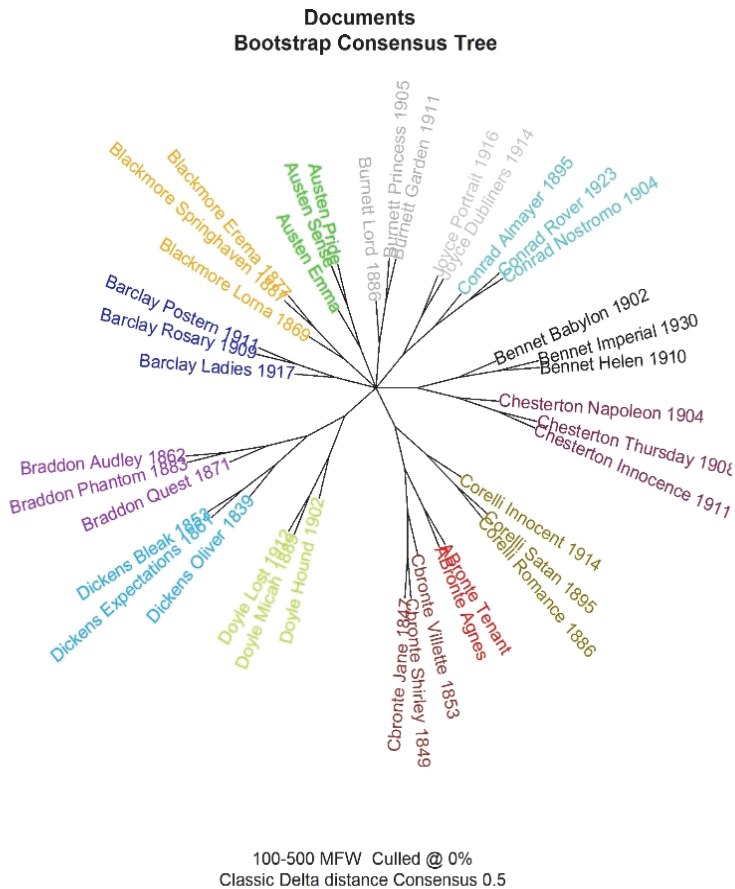


Figure 1. *Bootstrap Consensus Tree of the Primary Set*

When adding to this primary set a series of ‘test sets’ composed of 8,000-word-long excerpts from a traditionally ‘realist’ novel (such as *David Copperfield*), Delta still accomplishes its task because it always places them next to the right cluster (in this case, that of Dickens: see Figures 2 and 3).

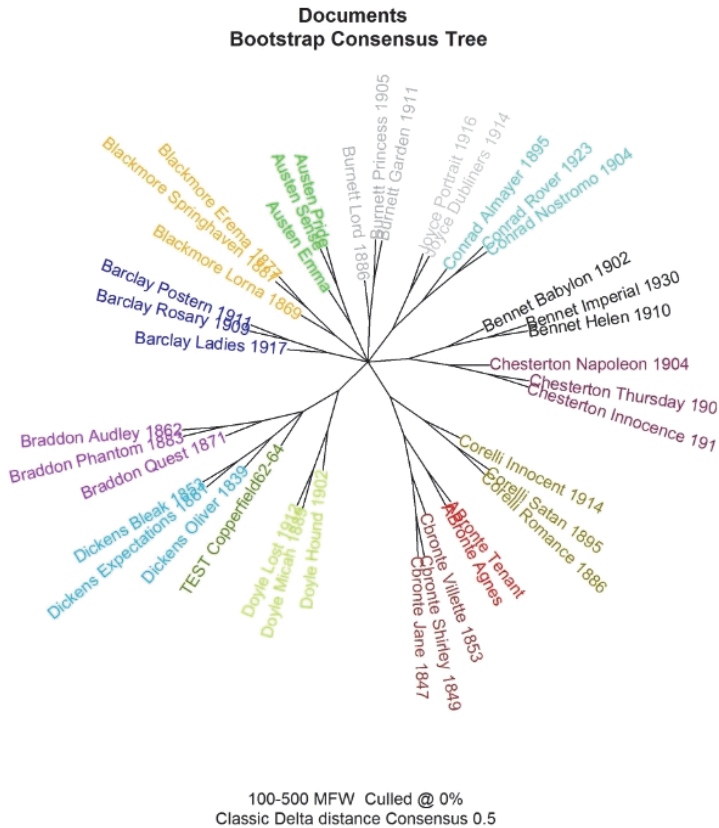


Figure 3. *Test Set: 8,000 Words from David Copperfield (Chapters 62–64)*

With a test set comprising the first 8,000-words of *Ulysses*, Delta is still able to recognize Joyce’s fingerprint, but it commits some evident mistakes when dealing with the most experimental episodes. An excerpt from “Oxen of the Sun” is erroneously attributed to Arthur Conan Doyle (see Figure 4), “Penelope” is ascribed to Frances H. Burnett (see Figure 5), “Ithaca” to Florence L. Barclay, and so on. Evidently, Joyce’s stylistic experimentation succeeded in deceiving the software, thus confirming the supposed “multi-stylism” of literary encyclopedism.

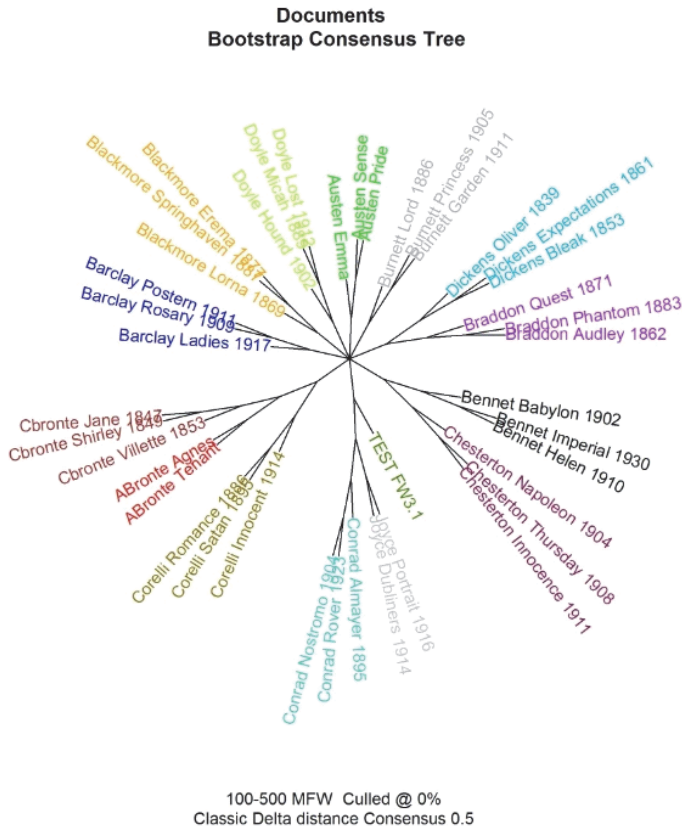


Figure 7. *Test Set: 8,000 Words from Finnegans Wake (Book 3)*

The phenomenon can be explained by the fact that Delta works with the statistical distribution of most frequent words (MFW), which are primarily articles, conjunctions, pronouns, and adverbs. In *Finnegans Wake*, these words provide the English syntactical structure for the text, which is composed, for the rest of the text, of words that are not even present in the selection chosen for the experiment. As already noted by Clive Hart (1963), “[i]t is remarkable that, despite the highly unusual character of the vocabulary of *Finnegans Wake*, the proportion of the 141 [most] common words, taken together, should be iden-

tical with that in *Ulysses*, to within one per cent". The success of Delta in authorship attribution has been generally explained by referring to the subconscious process that drives the choices in this 'lower' part of the vocabulary (see Kestemont 2014) and it is confirmed here, through the analysis of a text that is generally considered the most complex in English literature.

The conclusions that can be drawn from this experiment are not, of course, that *Finnegans Wake* is a less encyclopedic novel than *Ulysses*. However, it is significant that Joyce, while making his language complex to the utmost limits, was driven at the same time towards the linguistic niche of his first works. Further analyses (and further experiments) are advisable on this subject. For the sake of the present study, it is sufficient to note how literary encyclopedism, far from being a purely deviant literary *monstrum*, can offer some precious insights into issues of the greatest relevance in contemporary culture (especially in relation to technological evolution), while Joyce's work still constitutes one of its most central, indispensable, and inexhaustible representatives.

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MERCURIAL INTERPOLATIONS IN *ULYSSES*

This is a preliminary probe into Joyce's interpolations in *Ulysses* as they are part of a complex stratification, characterised, like everything else, by "infinity variety". The focus is on "interpolations", i.e., what is "put in", "inserted", or whatever interrupts the prevalent flow of narrative. Interpolations are often framed, set apart, and bring in disparate heterogeneous elements that, conceivably, could be omitted or bypassed. They are excursive, outside the main run or course of the story. Read aloud, they would entail a change of voice. Not that the distinction between basic text and interpolation would be self-evident; as will be shown, it becomes more and more problematic and confusing, even arbitrary — a common experience in Joyce.

Some of the interpolations are glaringly manifest and typographically distinct (like the headlines in "Aeolus") others differ stylistically, while some are not marked at all. The following article aligns exemplary passages; it could easily be expanded into a larger coverage, or possibly a book-length thesis. Genetically, of course, everything Joyce added after a first draft in his incremental procedure is, technically, inserted or interpolated, in the sense of added, but when it just extends the prevailing story, it does not qualify for the thematic approach adopted here.

Strictly speaking, there are only a few clear, graphic, interpolations in *Ulysses*: the two extra-textual pictures of music, the "Gloria" in "Scylla and Charybdis" (*U* 9.500) and the stanzas of the "Little Harry Hughes" song in "Ithaca" (*U* 17.806, 829); they are not typeset,

letter by letter, but were inserted as illustrations using printing plates. Then there is the notorious oversized black dot at the end of “Ithaca” (*U* 17.2332), which in some editions has been replaced by a typographical one. Bloom’s “Budget”, set in type, but with a columnar layout (*U* 17.1451), is a borderline case.

Some interpolations are so common or habitual that they are no longer perceived, like the references to the speaker within a speech: “— A woful lunatic! **Mulligan said**. Were you in a funk?” (*U* 1.9). This becomes more noticeable when the *inquit* formulae become more flagrant, as in the Library episode: “Lovely! **Buck Mulligan suspired amorously**. I asked him what he thought ...” (*U* 9.731¹). This convention is naturally outside the scope of this probe.

Obvious Candidates

Points of departure are the familiar and recognizable, though not all that well-researched, interpolations: the blatant Aeolian Headlines, the tangential insets (other terms have been used) in “Cyclops”, the “Sirens” “Overture” and the dislocations in “Wandering Rocks”. They all need and deserve separate treatment but will be examined in the following only in terms of their visibility.

The “Headlines” (or “Captions”, or “Sub-Heads”, etc.) in “Aeolus” are the most striking cases as they are set in different type, generally in capital letters, and surrounded by empty space. As it happens, they were inserted relatively late in the composition of *Ulysses*. They are wholly conventional in newspapers and were wholly unconventional in a novel. They vary in kind; the earlier ones are informative but then tend to become more ostentatiously autonomous and at times grotesque, as when they almost take up as much space as the text they anticipate. Occasionally they can be intriguingly cryptic and are clarified only in retrospect by what follows beneath them.

In “Cyclops”, the interpolations are not visibly distinct but they manifestly differ in tone, diction and style. Within the ongoing oral

¹ For the sake of demonstration, interpolations are marked in **bold**.

narrative, they interfere as thematic tangents, and, by nature, they imitate written documents. The very first one interrupts a stridently spoken jocular and partly mimetic report:

Jesus, I had to laugh at the little jewy getting his shirt out. He eat me my sugars. Because he no pay me my moneys?

For nonperishable goods bought of Moses Herzog, of 13 Saint Kevin's parade in the city of Dublin, Wood quay ward, merchant, hereinafter called the vendor, and sold and delivered to Michael E. Geraghty, esquire, of 29 Arbour hill in the city of Dublin, Arran quay ward, gentleman, hereinafter called the purchaser, ... (*U* 12.30)

In this, prominent, first case the register changes to factual, deadpan, monotonous legalese that emphatically avoids idiomatic or metaphorical embroidery and inherent distraction. Subsequently each insert moves from the spoken racy report to a tangential imitation of an idiosyncratic style, suited to the occasion. A suburban site can expand into a heroic legendary landscape, a casual almost meaningless blessing may initiate an ecclesiastical and ceremonial Benediction. A claim that the defunct Patrick Dignam has been seen in the street leads to a formal *séance* in which his ghost is conjured up. As it happens, Cyclopien interpolations are in some respect thematic textual ghosts.

The point made here is that these asides are not outwardly distinct. Joyce could have treated them separately, for example by indentation, italics or other signals, but on the whole, he is reticent in underlining differences, which shows in his almost consistent disregard of quotation marks to provide guidance. To avoid potential confusion, at least one edition of *Ulysses* ("remastered" by Robert Gogan) helpfully uses typographical signposts, like quotation marks, for distinction and more clarity; it separates the main narrative from the interpolations by

additional space in between a tilde (~). The asides are thereby visibly framed.²

In “Wandering Rocks” the interpolations consist of displaced scenes that indicate action going on elsewhere at the same time. In this instance, there is not even a stylistic change, the dislocations have the same deadpan diction as the rest, and in some cases they use identical wording. When in a scene close to the river, “the metal bridge”, is followed by “A card, ‘Unfurnished Apartments’, reappeared on the window sash of number 7 Eccles street” (*U* 10.542), most readers will note the local shift. But some of the less jarring interruptions may easily be missed, as in Father Conmee’s itinerary:

Master Brunny Lynam ran across the road and put Father Conmee’s letter to father provincial into the mouth of the bright red letterbox. Father Conmee smiled and nodded and smiled and walked along Mountjoy square east.

Mr Denis J Maginni, professor of dancing &c, in silk hat, slate frockcoat with silk facings, white kerchief tie, tight lavender trousers, canary gloves and pointed patent boots, walking with grave deportment most respectfully took the curbstone as he passed lady Maxwell at the corner of Dignam’s court.

Was that not Mrs M’Guinness?

Only someone familiar with Dublin, or consulting a street map, would know that Maginni could not possibly be seen by Father Conmee as Dignam’s court is in a different part of the city (even Dublin residents may not know of such an out of the way detail). Again, Robert Gogan comes to our rescue by separating the Denis J Maginni paragraph from its surroundings by space and tilde (“~”, p.186).

² James Joyce, *Ulysses. Remastered by Robert Gogan* © Robert Gogan, 2012, Straheens: Musical Ireland Publications, 254–300.

Readers of *Ulysses* might legitimately be confused or, to put it alternatively, Joyce pays them a dubious compliment by treating them as equals. Distinctions are a matter of discernment or accidental knowledge and so relegated to the eye of the beholder. Which shows their chancy nature and the hazards of the approach taken here.

Joyce does not highlight early major interpolations that are the first changes of perspective in the realistic manner of the opening chapters. They occur in “Hades”, first at the moment when the funeral party steps off the carriage, when the narrative switches — but without any outward sign — from its so far consistent point of view: “Martin Cunningham whispered:/— I was in mortal agony with you talking of suicide before Bloom. [...]” (*U* 6.527). For a few moments, Bloom becomes the object of observation.³

(Parenthetically)⁴

There is a classical Greek term for “interpolation” — “parenthesis”, which means literally something put (*thesis*) in (*en*) sideways (*para*). A “side input”, it became part of a rhetorical arsenal and is explained by Quintilian, the authority on oratory, in his *Ars rhetorica*:

... it is called “*interpositio* or *interclusio* by us, and *parenthesis* or *paremptosis* by the Greeks, and consists of the interruption of the continuous flow of our languages by the insertion of some remark.⁵

Another definition is supplied by a book on prosody that is mentioned in *A Portrait*, “the laws of Latin verse from a ragged book by a Portuguese priest” (*P*:179):

³ It happens again when Menton comments on Bloom, once again out of his hearing (*U*6.690–707).

⁴ A sketchy discussion is in Fritz Senn, “Errant Commas and Stray Parentheses”. Elizabeth M. Bonapfel and Tim Conley (eds.). *Doubtful Points: Joyce and Punctuation. European Joyce Studies 23*, Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2014, 11–32.

⁵ *The Institutio Oratoria of Quintilian*, with an English translation by H.E. Butler. London: William Heinemann Ltd. 1976, vol. II, 459)

Parenthesis is independent sense
Clos'd in a sentence () by this double fence.

With an example: “I believe indeed (**nor is my faith vain**) that he is the Offspring of the Gods”.⁶ The reference is both to the rhetorical device and its typographical mark (“double fences”), in fact interpolations are enclosed within an imaginary or graphic fence.

Parentheses, like most refined punctuation, entered writing relatively late. By now typographical parentheses are (often mini-) interpolations, the smallest unit, within a sentence. Joyce’s use of parentheses would be a study in itself – not attempted here. *FW* is studded with disruptive parentheses as one further obstacle to easy understanding. It appears that in *Ulysses* Joyce used them sparingly in the early, “realistic” passages, and above all rarely in interior monologue. They could have been applied for variations within thought processes, as when Bloom thinks about heat in relation to colour: “Black conducts, reflects (**refracts is it?**) the heat” (*U* 4.80), or in Church: “[the priest] “... stopped at each [communicant], took out a communion, shook a drop or two (**are they in water?**) off it and put it neatly in her mouth” *U* 5.345). But obviously he did not develop the device.

Punctuation is essentially a device of control, suited to writing and editing. So, it occurs in the literary passages, and parodies, or in conscious oratorical performances, appropriate to Aeolus: “... he looked (**though he was not**) a dying man” (*U* 7.818). Parentheses are wholly suitable for “Ithaca”, which is governed by order and categorisation, and so the section foregrounds distinctive labels that signal pedantic structure, as when the past day’s events are supplied with bombastic Biblical tags in a final recapitulation:

⁶ *The Latin Prosody of Emanuel Alvarez*, S.T.P., Dublin: M. H. Gills & Stephen. 1864: 106.

The preparation of breakfast (**burnt offering**): intestinal congestion and premeditative defecation (**holy of holies**): the bath (**rite of John**): the funeral (**rite of Samuel**): the advertisement of Alexander Keyes (**Urim and Thummim**): the unsubstantial lunch (**rite of Melchisedek**): [...] Butt Bridge (**atonement**). (*U* 17.2044–58)

The parentheses introduce tangential, entirely new dimensions, whether applicable or not, serious or jocular, interpolation in an obtrusive sense; they suggest different co-ordinations and so supplement the much better known Homeric ones.

Supervisory order and categories are seen as a dominantly male concern (as against the fluidity of Penelope), and it may or may not be coincidental that the last parenthesis in the book is “the birth on 27 November 1893 of second (and only male) issue, deceased 9 January 1894 ...” (*U* 17.2280); perhaps parentheses are a dominantly male issue.

One can hardly imagine parentheses in Molly’s monologue and yet one might discover virtual ones in her silent exclamations (which are interpolations by definition), surrounded by pauses and characterised by a different tone, of course unpunctuated, but implicitly present: “... and Mrs Opisso in Government street O what a name Id go and drown myself in the first river if I had a name like her O my” (*U*: 18.1466); the aside is bracketed between “O” and “O my”.⁷ The most famous meta-exclamation is her internal sigh “O Jamesy let me up out of this pooh” (*U* 18.1128), which is equally framed between the exclamations “O” and “pooh”.

Parentheses are a device in writing and printing, and a particularly intrusive one occurs in an Aeolian headline, consisting of an interpolation within an interpolation:

⁷ One latent overtone is that the name Opisso frames something between two O’s.

HOUSE OF KEY(E)S

— But wait, Mr Bloom said. He wants it changed. Keyes, you see. He wants two keys at the top. (*U* 7.141)

The spoken voice cannot pronounce the enclosure of a superfluous letter in a phonemic coincidence, the parenthesis serves to fuse a name “Keyes” with the object “keys” at least visibly, and it also illustrates an inherent dichotomy, which is foregrounded in “Aeolus”, that language is either a sequence of vibrating air shaped by vocal organs or else an arrangement of historically determined graphic symbols. “Aeolus” deals with the printing press, newspapers and books, yet it also abounds in dialogue and it is devoted to Rhetorics. One headline consists of just three quotation marks — “? ? ?” (*U* 7.512) — something to be seen but impossible to hear.

Parentheses are not the only device for minor interpolations: dashes, or more commonly commas, are conventional alternatives. Grammatical appositions are not necessarily experienced as interposed. Note how the second sentence in *Ulysses* — “A yellow dressinggown, **ungirdled**, was sustained gently behind him on the mild morning air (*U* 1.3) — is different in tone, pause, focus, emphasis, perception from what “A yellow ungirdled dressinggown ...” would be. Interpolations tend to fine tune orchestration.

In the same vein, every quotation could be subsumed under the general heading. A quotation consists of foreign matter plugged in. Buck Mulligan’s blasphemous intonation of “*Introibo ad altare Dei*” (*U* 1.5) is no interpolation narratively, but part of the action. Textually it is nevertheless an intrusion of Church Latin imported from an imagined external service; it takes us somewhere else and is — secondarily — a tangent or dislocation alongside the main drift of the story, in some cases a gratuitous overtone or a literary ghost. Mulligan’s information about the Martello towers to the Englishman Haines, that “Billy Pitt had them built ... when the French were on the sea” (*U* 1.544), contains a plug-in from an Irish song, “The Shan Van Vocht” (“Oh the French are on the sea”), which may or may not be noticed or

relegated to a note. Such infiltrations are ubiquitous in Joyce, especially in the Stephen Dedalus passages, as in the Library episode. Some of them may deserve extra attention.

Infiltrations

Joyce occasionally does mark latent quotations or infiltrations, but more often he does not. One mark of distinction is the use of italics (in Joyce's practice they are used for foreign expressions and for conscious quotations⁸). They are essential in the final and puzzling paragraph of "Eumaeus":

And humanely his driver waited till he (or she) had ended, patient in his scythed car. [...]

The driver never said a word, good, bad or indifferent, but merely watched the two figures, *as he sat on his lowbacked car*, both black, one full, one lean, walk towards the railway bridge, *to be married by Father Maher*. As they walked they at times stopped and walked again continuing their *tête à tête* (which, of course, he was utterly out of) about sirens enemies of man's reason, mingled with a number of other topics of the same category, usurpers, historical cases of the kind while the man in the sweeper car or you might as well call it in the sleeper car who in any case couldn't possibly hear because they were too far simply sat in his seat near the end of lower Gardiner street *and looked after their lowbacked car*. (U 16.1878–94)

There are strange narrative shifts. For one, the perspective moves away from what it has been all along, mainly, but not exclusively, Bloom's point of view. Now Bloom and Stephen are observed from the driver's seat on a "lowbacked car". It also looks as though a narrator were taking over, who comments on the obvious fact that the driver cannot hear what is being said, and the spectral narrator is also en-

⁸ Gogan obligingly uses them, when recognized, for clarification.

gaging in playful associations. So far, so odd, but what about Bloom and Stephen being “married by Father Maher”, a clergyman of unknown derivation? This has opened the door to strange speculations.

Once we trust the italicised phrases, they point to a quotation, a song by Samuel Lover, “The Low-backed Car”. It seems the hypothetical narrator notices a car with a low back and is associatively side-tracked into the song of which he remembers snatches and weaves them into the tale:

When first I saw sweet Peggy,
'Twas on a market day;
A low-back'd car she drove, and **sat**
...
As she sat in the low-back'd car,
The man at the turnpike bar
Never ask'd for the toll,
But just rubb'd his owld poll
And looked after the low-backed car.

While we drove **in the low-back'd car**
To be married by Father Maher;
Oh, my heart would beat high
At her glance and her sigh,
Though it beat **in a low-back'd car.**⁹

Once the song is called up, it explains the otherwise incomprehensible intrusions, underlined in bold:

The driver never said a word, good, bad or indifferent, but merely watched the two figures, ***as he sat on his lowbacked car***, both black, one full, one lean, walk towards the railway bridge, ***to be married by Father Maher***. [...] while the man in the sweeper [...]

⁹ Samuel Lover, “The Low-Backed Car”. *The Lyrics of Ireland*, London: Houlston and Wright, 1867, pp.137–8.

simply sat in his seat near the end of lower Gardiner street *and looked after their lowbacked car*.¹⁰

With his italics, Joyce at least provides a hint of an external source, though it remains questionable whether readers unequipped with annotations will follow the multiple distortions, let alone how these could ever be recreated in translation.

No Light from a Lamp

Benevolent guidance of his readers is not a Joycean trademark. In the same “Eumaeus” chapter, readers might be potentially confused. Bloom is thinking about returning husbands who might well not find their wives patiently waiting at home like Penelope:

Suppose she was gone when he? I looked for the lamp which she told me came into his mind but merely as a passing fancy of his because he then recollected the morning littered bed etcetera and the book about Ruby with met him pike hoses ... (“Eumaeus”, *U* 16.1470)

The crux is “the lamp which she told me”. Why would Bloom have looked for a lamp which presumably Molly told him something about?¹¹ These might be the guesses or questions of an innocent reader. Elucidation depends on the recognition of a memory fragment from a poem — but not italicized this time — by Thomas Moore. “The Song of O’Ruark” deals with another return when the wife has in fact gone:

THE VALLEY lay smiling before me,
Where lately I left her behind;

¹⁰ Again, Robert Gogan puts the song’s fragments between quotation marks (*Ulysses Remastered*, 510-1).

¹¹ Let us not forget that later on, in “Ithaca”, the reflection of Molly’s lamp in a window upstairs commands pointed attention (17.1170).

Yet I trembled, and something hung o'er me,
That saddened the joy of my mind.

I looked for the lamp which, she told me,
Should shine when her pilgrim returned;
But, though darkness began to infold me,
No lamp from the battlements burned!¹²

It now turns out that “the lamp which she told me” is an interpolation within the quotation; so that “she” is not Molly but the faithless wife who deserted O’Ruark, who is not named but has been insinuated. Confusion is augmented by the omission of a comma that in the original clarifies the construction: “I looked for the lamp which, **she told me,** /Should shine ...”.

Tooralooming

A salient motif or refrain may indicate the presence of an interpolation, as happens towards the end of “Circe” when Corny Kelleher, the funeral undertaker and possible police spy, turns up opportunely and rescues Stephen from being arrested. When he was introduced, Bloom immediately associated a lilt with him: “Corny Kelleher ... Police tout. ... Singing with his eyes shut. ... With my tooraloom, tooraloom, tooraloom, tooraloom” (*U* 5.12). That refrain reappears when Kelleher is either mumbling it again or is just associated with it; it infiltrates a strange stage direction:

*... With thumb and palm Corny Kelleher reassures that the two bobbies will allow the sleep to continue for what else is to be done. [...] The car jingles **tooraloom** round the corner of the **tooraloom** lane. Corny Kelleher again **reassuralooms** with his hand. Bloom*

¹² Thomas Moore, “The Song of O’Ruark, Prince of Breffni”, from *Irish Melodies, Poetical Works*, London: Routledge, 1885, p. 150. The fragmentary quotation takes up the theme that Mr Deasy in “Nestor” expatiated on: “A faithless wife first brought the strangers to our shore here, MacMurrough’s wife and her leman, O’Rourke, prince of Breffni” (*U* 2.392).

with his hand *assuralooms* Corny Kelleher that he is *reassu-
raloomtay*. The tinkling hoofs and jingling harness grow fainter
with their *tooralooloo looloo lay*. (15.4913)

A melody is superimposed or, put differently, the looming echo is woven into the text as though on a (toora)loom, conspicuous enough to be recognized. The technique is similar to the intrusion of the “Low-backed Car” song in “Eumaeus”. *Finnegans Wake*, which sports similar effects, is signally without overt indications.

Single Word (Not Known to All Men)

The first (unmarked) interpolation occurs on the book’s opening page.

He [Buck Mulligan] peered sideways up and gave a long slow whistle of call, then paused awhile in rapt attention, his even white teeth glistening here and there with gold points. **Chrysostomos**. Two strong shrill whistles answered through the calm. (*U* 1.24)

The oddity in a continuous tale is an abrupt departure from the use of sentences. “Chrysostomos” stops the action: a single word, and a foreign one to boot¹³. It transforms the visual impression of an open — and for once, silent — mouth showing gold teeth and translates this into a Greek compound, “golden” (*chrysos*) “mouth” (*stoma*). Such compounds, as it happens, occur in Homer. In antiquity, great orators were metaphorically called Chrysostomos (Mulligan is certainly adept at speaking). The most plausible account of the one word non-sentence is that it suggests Stephen’s associations, in other words, the first instance of an interior monologue technique which will be inserted some pages later and will encroach on the text before long, and even usurp it in several episodes. As such it is a pristine interpolation, indicating, among other things, that the book is shaped under its own autonomous rules and will contain many strange and unexpected

¹³ *Within* the interior monologue, a single word is very common and appropriate.

turns. (Odysseus is the man “of many turns”, “*polytropos*” in the first line of the *Odyssey*.)

Sirens, Enemies of Man’s Reasons (*U* 16.1890)

The “Sirens” episode, an intricate multi-layered composition, may well contain the greatest variety of interpolations. First of all, there is the initial separate unit, from “Bronze ...” (already a varied echo of *U* 10.962, 1197) to “Begin” (*U* 11.1–63), before yet another variant “Bronze by gold”. This turns out to be an arrangement of text fragments, which has been termed, musically, “Overture”, and which anticipates motifs that will be developed in the chapter. It is a unique and autonomous interpolation, preceding and therefore outside the continuous tale; it could be skipped with little loss, or else treated as a separate unit, as musicians do.

In some ways, “Sirens” continues the technique of translocation that was introduced in “Wandering Rocks”. The scene within the Ormond hotel bar can move to Bloom (walking on the other side of the river) in abrupt short paragraphs: “A man. / Bloowho went by Moulang’s pipes”, “Bloom”, “But Bloom”, etc. (*U* 11.85, 102, 133); these are spatial interpolations continued from the previous episode.

Then “Sirens” is the first episode that is patently self-reflective, pointing to its nature as an artificial composition, aware of itself. This probably becomes manifest for most readers with even a minimum of attention:

Pat served, uncovered dishes. Leopold cut liverslices. **As said before he ate with relish the inner organs, nutty gizzards, fried cod’s roes** while Richie Goulding, Collis, Ward, ate steaks and kidney ...” (*U* 11.519)

We are within a verbal artefact in which we were told earlier on that “Mr Leopold Bloom **ate with relish the inner organs** of beasts and fowls. He liked thick giblet soup, **nutty gizzards**, a stuffed roast heart, liverslices fried with crustcrumbs, **fried hencods’ roes**” (*U* 4.1). The

scope has widened to a self-conscious meta-level. “As said before” is a major interpolation, to be followed by analogous instances.

From now on, the book will flaunt memories of itself. It continues the transversal links in “Wandering Rocks” to indicate simultaneous events, but goes beyond them, irrespective of time. In the previous chapter, the blind stripling tapping his way along is buffeted by an errant pedestrian, and he vents his anger:

—God's **curse** on you, he said sourly, whoever you are! You're blinder nor I am, you **bitch's bastard!** (*U* 10.1115)

When a barmaid sympathetically comments on the same blind man, a piano tuner: “— So sad to look at his face, Miss Douce condoled”, an echo is activated: “God's **curse on bitch's bastard**” (*U* 11.284). This is not attributed to anyone in the novel itself, but is a purely textual memory. First it is linked to the blind tuner, but later on, the word “curse” serves as a trigger, as when it is linked to a verse from the song of the “Croppy Boy”: “Since Easter time he had **cursed** three times. **You bitch's bastard**” (*U* 11.1040). The various verbal items occur rearranged in another internal reminiscence: “With hoarse rude fury the yeoman **cursed**, swelling in apoplectic **bitch's bastard**” (*U* 11.1098). A minor free-wheeling motif has been created.

Above the mental range of its characters, textual transfers are taking place. They can intrude into Bloom's thoughts:

Instruments. A blade of grass, shell of her hands, then blow. Even comb and tissuepaper you can knock a tune out of. Molly in her shift in Lombard street west, hair down. I suppose each kind of trade made its own, don't you see? Hunter with a horn. **Haw. Have you the? Cloche. Sonnez la.** Shepherd his pipe. Pwee little wee. Policeman a whistle ... (*U* 11.12370)

Bloom cannot possibly remember “**Haw. Have you the? Cloche. Sonnez la**”, for he was not present when Lenehan asked the quickly

leaving Boylan: “— **Got the horn** or what?” (*U* 11.432), which is embroidered later on: “**Horn. Have you the? Horn. Have you the? Haw haw horn**” (*U* 11.526). Nor did he witness the erotic performance performed for the benefit of Boylan that Lenehan asked for: “— Now, now, urged Lenehan *Sonnez la cloche!* O do! There’s no one” (*U* 11.404). It was Bloom’s thought “Horn” that called up the textual associations beyond his own range.

Foreign matter also intrudes into Bloom’s ruminations about someone exposed to the noise of an organ:

Organ in Gardiner street. Old Glynn fifty quid a year. Queer up there in the cockloft, alone, with stops and locks and keys. Seated all day at the organ. Maunder on for hours, talking to himself or the other fellow blowing the bellows. Growl angry, then shriek cursing (want to have wadding or something in his no don’t she cried), then all of a soft sudden wee little wee little pipy wind. (*U* 11.1196)

The oddity occurs in the parenthesis, a rare occurrence within interior monologue: (“want to have wadding or something in his ...”), where a noun is expected, but an abrupt syntactical change occurs: “... **no don’t she cried**”. It turns out to be the echo of an earlier passage when the barmaids seem to touch on a delicate subject:

— But wait till I tell you, miss Douce entreated.
Sweet tea miss Kennedy having poured with milk plugged both two ears with little fingers.
— **No don’t, she cried.**
— I won’t listen, she cried. (*U* 11.128)

Through refracted bypaths, the object “ears” is enlisted to complete, not surprisingly, Bloom’s “want to have waddings or something in his ...”. Stopping one’s ears of course recalls the Homeric motif of the Sirens as well as the overall theme of hearing

The most prominent meta-transfer is a paragraph that interrupts Bloom’s comments on the letter to Martha Clifford which he has just

written, a paragraph that has no anchorage within the “Sirens” episode itself:

Quotations every time in the year. To be or not to be. Wisdom while you wait.

In Gerard’s rosery of Fetter lane he walks, greyedauburn. One life is all. One body. Do. But do.

Done anyhow. (*U* 11.905)

Extraneous motifs are introduced, and the identity of “he” is uncertain. Again a textual echo provides a link to Stephen’s musings in the Library:

Do and do. Thing done. In a **rosery of Fetter lane of Gerard**, herbalist, **he walks, greyedauburn**. An azured harebell like her veins. Lids of Juno’s eyes, violets. He walks. **One life is all. One body. Do. But do.** (“Scylla and Charybdis”, *U* 9.651)

The Shakespeare trigger is probably “To be or not to be” in Bloom’s mind, but he could not possibly be aware of what Stephen thought in the Library. It is again a remote textual memory (that readers would be unlikely to share), or a thematic one which may reinforce similarities between Stephen’s view on Shakespeare and the “French triangle” (*U* 9.1065) of Bloom’s situation. At any rate, the Fetter lane insertion is the most blatant instance of authorial interference, as is the transition from “Do. But do” to Bloom’s “Done anyhow” and the return to the “Sirens” setting.

Some of the meta-interpolations in the episode occur with parentheses. In some instances they amount to authorial comments or nudges.

Upholding the lid he (**who?**) gazed in the coffin (**coffin?**) at the oblique triple (**piano!**) wires. He pressed (**the same who pressed indulgently her hand**), soft pedalling, a triple of keys to see the

thicknesses of felt advancing, to hear the muffled hammerfall in action (*U* 11.460)

Since the action moves from place to place within and outside the Ormond Hotel, it is not clear who “he” is in a new paragraph. The question is asked in a parenthesis “(who?)”, and the odd out-of-place word is also noted: “(coffin?)” but immediately explained in the next comment “(piano!)” — a lexical note that “coffin” also means the bulk of a piano. In the sequence it becomes obvious that Simon Dedalus is exploring the inside of the instrument.

A lexical note — with perhaps a self-reflexive glance at the homophonous nature of the episode — clarifies a potential misunderstanding:

Scaring eavesdropping **boots** croppy bootsboy Bloom in the Ormond hallway heard growls and roars of bravo, fat backslapping, their **boots** all treading, **boots not the boots the boy.** (*U* 11.1142)

The internal comment clarifies that the first mention of “boots” refers to the bootsboy, the second to the footwear; one could imagine the insertion being put between square brackets for editorial interference. It simply (simply?) indicates that the English word “boots” also serves for the “bootsboy” who cleans the boots in a hotel, the lowest in rank, as the one who turns up prominently in the earlier part of the episode. One irony is that the note only makes sense in English and would be unnecessary in any other language.

Incantation

The 14th episode, “Oxen of the Sun”, begins with a heterogeneous threefold “Deshil Holles Eamus”, consisting of three times three odd words, followed by two more triadic paragraphs (*U* 14/1–6). “Deshil Holles Eamus” is cryptic at first blush and would probably remain so at further blushes and so it demands an annotation: A Gaelic word “deshil” for sunward or south, an Anglo-Saxon name indicating Hol-

les Street, and a Latin imperative, *Eamus* = “let us go”, combine to hint that we are now proceeding to the Holles Street Maternity Hospital. The emerging accumulated threes, suggesting the nine months of pregnancy, the invocation of a Latin fertility poem (*Carmen arvale*¹⁴), anticipate the theme of the chapter; furthermore a link is provided with the ninefold “Cuckoo” at the end previous episode (*U* 13.1289–1306).

An erratic block, all in all, something wholly unexpected though not visibly prominent, can be subsumed under the heading interpolation, and it is in fact treated as such where editorial orientation is provided, in the *Reader’s Edition* by Danis Rose (365)¹⁵ and Gogan’s *Remastered Ulysses* (332), where the opening is surrounded by empty space and thereby separated from the main text. Indeed, it is simply wedged, arbitrary, into the narrative; it is not in anyone’s thoughts and it amounts to a separate unit, remotely analogous perhaps to the Overture of “Sirens”. It could also be likened to epigraphs or mottos as found in traditional novels.

Whether or not such features should be subsumed under the term Interpolation was certainly no concern of the author. But it becomes a concern as soon as one undertakes the task of distinguishing types of inserts from the main narrative drift. Unsurprisingly, it turns out that no clear line can be drawn. As far as we can tell, consistency or compliance, or even self-imposed rules, were hardly ever Joyce’s intention, especially in his increasingly impulsive procedure.

¹⁴ The *Carmen arvale*, a fertility rite based on triadic words and phrases, is one of the oldest extant texts of Latin literature. See Wikipedia.

¹⁵ Danis Rose, *James Joyce Ulysses, Reader’s Edition*, London: Macmillan, 1997

KATHERINE E. SMITH

A SPINSTER BY CHOICE, CIRCUMSTANCE, OR CALAMITY? POTENTIAL REASONS FOR PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL SPINSTERHOOD IN JAMES JOYCE'S *DUBLINERS*

When James Joyce wrote *Dubliners* in 1914, he certainly could not have imagined that in the next century, there would be books on every subject that remotely pertained to the female characters that he created¹. Given the cultural developments that have been made with regard to female identity as a part of the Irish consciousness, there is a need to explore how the image of the Irish female has changed—both in the literary context and in the broader national context of Ireland itself. As the social and cultural boundaries change, rules that were held in place by moral codes start to break, and, as they do, information becomes available that helps scholars analyze literature as it relates to the new historical material. Marriage and spinsterhood in the 20th century was largely determined by chance in terms of time, choice of mate, and social codes. While the stories in *Dubliners* are classified as fictional, they portray snapshots of lives stunted, shattered, and altered by true historical events—whether it was the Great Famine of the mid-19th century or the over-zealous use of Magdalen Asylums in the 20th century. In the 21st century, however, the world has begun to realize that

¹ All references to *Dubliners* come from Joyce, James and Margot Norris. *Dubliners: Authoritative Text, Contexts, Criticism*. 1st ed. ed., New York, W.W. Norton, 2006. Print. Any direct quotations from *Dubliners* will be marked with D and the corresponding page number.

many of these events, and their effects on the women of Ireland, were tucked away in a corner of national history that no one sought to unveil until recently².

For the most part, many of the female characters in *Dubliners*, and especially the women in “Eveline,” “The Dead,” and “Clay” are women who are on the fringes of society. Both Eveline and Maria are unmarried women and of the lower socioeconomic side of life, but their marital status tells a story that Joyce starts, but never finishes. Gretta, in “The Dead,” is decidedly more refined as the wife of Gabriel Conroy, but even her story has untapped cultural significance. Spinsterhood, especially in literature, is an interesting concept. Whether spinsterhood arrives at a character’s metaphorical doorstep by chance, calculated design, or calamity, the women in Joyce’s stories have more to say about their lives and marital choices than they are saying. By looking at the cultural history and heritage of Ireland in the 20th century as it pertained to the gendering of women and to the morally acceptable codes of sexual behaviour, one is able to see that there is a cultural backstory behind each female character which Joyce alludes to but never explicitly tells.

For Ireland, the confines of moral and social law created a barrier against the unspeakable—which included relationships outside of wedlock, as well as sexual, physical and emotional abuse. It was for the sake of keeping all of these acts taboo that cultural travesties like the Magdalen Laundries were allowed to exist, functioning as workhouses for women who were, or might become, sexual liabilities. An unmarried woman could be considered a sexual liability if she were deemed “too pretty” and might be enticed into performing an act of

² During the summer of 2014, a mass grave containing the remains of 800 children, likely offspring of Magdalen Laundresses, was found (Roberts 2014: para. 10). This particular mass grave was in a “sewage tank” (Justice for Magdalenes, 2015: 45). The first Irish Magdalen Asylum was opened in 1767—meaning that the cultural cruelty occurring in the Asylums began centuries before this particular grave was instituted (Roberts 2014: para.10, Finnegan 2004: 8).

sexual immorality³ (Smith 2007: 136). Furthermore, a woman could be committed to a Magdalen Asylum if she had an intellectual disability and may not have had the mental capacity to determine right from wrong⁴ (*Sex in a Cold Climate* 1998: Part 1; Smith 2007: 136). While the topic of matrimony is vast, and this essay cannot serve as a vast cultural revelation on the women of *Dubliners*, it opens a window on the treatment of actual married and unmarried women in Ireland in the 20th century – letting in some much needed light.

In Joyce's time, women remained unmarried for a variety of reasons. While some women were forced into a life of singleness out of necessity or shame, some women consciously chose to remain unmarried out of a sense of patriotic or familial duty. The Great Famine that occurred in Ireland during the middle of the 19th century had a widespread effect on marital decisions and population growth in Ireland (Lowe-Evans 1989: 1-2). Prior to the beginning of the Great Famine, young men and women married at a young age (Kent n.d.: 526-527). According to J.P. Kent, postponing or abstaining from marriage altogether was a relatively rare occurrence before the years encompassing the Great Famine (527). While the Great Famine, a period of starvation and national instability, lasted from 1845-1851, and was over by the time Joyce published *Dubliners*, the Irish population was still reeling from the six-year crisis (Lowe-Evans 1989: 2). Although the Famine left an estimated one million people dead from starvation, its effect on the living was perhaps greater. Census data recorded in J.P. Kent's article notes that in the year 1851, the last year of the Famine, "11% of Irish adults were never married at 45-54 years of age

³ In 2012, the United Nations sanctioned an investigation into asylums as part of the Committee on Torture. The report returned that admission into the asylums had been originally recorded as "private and voluntary," meaning that no action could be taken against the asylums retroactively (Vatileaks 2015: 22, 6:55).

⁴ Jackson and McGinley make reference to the lyric "all is not sweet, all is not sound," when commenting on the character of Maria in "Clay" (1993: 90). Given Maria's structured life within the laundry and her peculiar social behaviour, and her participation in a child's party game, it is possible that the reference alludes to intellectual disability.

[and] by 1911, this figure had risen to 27% for men and 24% for women⁵” (526). Due to the fact that food was scarce during the Famine, many men and women avoided marriage in an effort to do their part to control the population (Lowe-Evans 1989: 2-3).

The logic for postponing marriage was simple; in a predominantly Catholic country, where birth control was a sin, a marriage was likely to produce children (*Sex in a Cold Climate* 1998: Part 1; Lowe-Evans 1989: 9). Therefore, in order to prevent creating more hungry mouths, singlehood, and by extension abstinence, was a “civic duty” (Lowe-Evans 1989: 3, Kent n.d.: 525). As Mary Lowe-Evans states in the introduction to *Crimes Against Fecundity*, “Marriage patterns and fertility rates altered so drastically in the years following the Famine that thrifty middle-age bachelors and [...] exhausted young mothers, existing side by side, had become stock characters on the Irish scene by the turn of the century” (2). However, while the stereotypical images of the mother and the bachelor that Lowe-Evans presents function as opposites to show both the growth and stunted alteration of the Irish population, the Famine created a cultural mindset of singleness through the fear of starvation and the anxiety of creating a family one had no means to care for (Lowe-Evans 1989: 2-3). In “Clay,” Maria mirrors the idea of spinsterhood as a civic duty, remembering herself as a “young girl... with... a diminutive body which she had so often adorned” (D 85). Maria’s memories, combined with the commentary that “she didn’t want any ring or man either,” support the idea that her unmarried status is not a consequence, but a conscious *decision*⁶ (D 84). As Robert E. Kennedy observes, “Obviously, a great change occurred between 1841 and 1851 in the proportion of Irish persons will-

⁵ In 1936, it was recorded that 74% of Irish men and 55% of the country’s women between the ages of 25 and 34 had not married (Strassman and Clarke 1998: 34). Furthermore, Ireland, today, maintains one of the highest percentages of unmarried individuals (Strassmann and Clarke 1998: 33-34).

⁶ The reliability of Maria’s memory has been called into question several times, with critics arguing that Maria is often coddled, forgetful, and strangely, does not narrate in first person (Norris 1987: 208).

ing to postpone marriage [or abstain from it forever], a change associated with events surrounding the 1845-58 famine” (in Lowe-Evans 1989: 9). Though food was replenished and crops were again planted, the Great Famine forced many into non-traditional circumstances—a fate not forgotten by Joyce.

The fact that the Famine created early spinsters out of the young is critical to understanding the matrimonially ambiguous women that Joyce brings to life. Joyce never directly states why female characters like Eveline, Gretta, and Maria do or do not marry, but the dwindling population and the surge in emigration to America in the six years of the Great Famine creates a logical reason for women to avoid or, at least, alter matrimonial plans⁷. Eveline Hill, for example, prompted by the “pitiful vision of her mother’s life,” comes within mere footsteps of emigration (D 28). However, Eveline is caught between life and death; the promise that Eveline makes her now-deceased mother to “keep the home together as long as she could” stands in direct contrast with what that emigration and marriage represent (D 30). The story ends with an emotionally stunted and indecisive Eveline helplessly “gripp[ing]... the iron [railing] in frenzy” (D 31). Illustrated by Eveline, the Joycean woman finds her roots in reality. As Florence Walzl notes in her article, “*Dubliners*: Women in Irish Society,” “*Dubliners* mirrors Irish social conditions with accuracy and realism” so much so that Joyce described *Dubliners* as “a ‘looking glass’ in which the Irish people could see themselves and their paralysis” (1982: 31-32). Even from the early days of his literary career, Joyce was aware of the toll that the Great Famine had taken on the people of Ireland in a political, economic, and personal way, and reflects that understanding in his own writing (Lowe-Evans 1989: 7-8). *Dubliners* reflects the reality of the time period, even though that truth is billed as fiction (Walzl 1982: 32). In *Dubliners*, much like in 20th century Irish society, “Children are stunted in their development,

⁷ Of the two million people who left Ireland, many were children who may not have survived the anticipated journey to America aboard what were known as “Coffin Ships”—cramped vessels known for spreadable disease and disaster (Moyer 2014: para 7-9).

youths are frustrated socially and economically, and adults are trapped in sterile and unproductive lives” (Walzl 1982: 32). One characteristic, from young adulthood to old age, however, is instrumental in the tribulations of the folk of Dublin—marriage.

The attention to the personal lives of the characters in *Dubliners* offers an interesting angle when viewed in terms of marriage within Irish society in the 20th century. At first glance, the stories may seem to have very little connection, aside from the fact that they all take place in the same city. If examined further, however, the “Two demographic characteristics that recur in Joyce’s works are considered typical of Ireland—postponed marriages and permanent celibacy—first became evident after the Great Famine” (Lowe-Evans 1989: 8). While many scholars have noted the perpetual singleness of many of the male characters in *Dubliners*, like the character of Bob Doran in “The Boarding House,” the female characters are subjected to a perhaps more isolating experience by abandoning matrimony⁸. Though many Irish men and women did put aside marriage in order to better their odds of surviving the national crisis that was the Great Famine, other Irish citizens decided to forgo marriage, and consequently procreation, out of responsibility to land and family. Rates of delayed marriage or permanent celibacy for both sexes were higher after the Famine and these practices were common to both wealthy and more rural areas of Ireland (Kent n.d.: 529). The farming communities, according to Kent, had higher rates of celibacy, as their land holdings and economic success increased (532). While it remains unclear whether the correlation of land girth and agricultural success led to a *causation* of male celibacy, the marital patterns within the rural areas of Ireland cannot be ignored, as many characters in Joyce’s *Dubliners* seem to migrate from rural areas in Ireland to the cosmopolitan capital, Dublin (Kent n.d.: 530-532). Male celibacy was common after the years of the Great Famine, and marital patterns among those who did have children in

⁸ Middle aged and unmarried, Mary Jane Morkan in “The Dead” is supported, begrudgingly, by her male cousin, Gabriel.

the rural community led to a wider discussion of chosen and forced female spinsterhood.

Being a woman in Ireland at the turn of the century was difficult—being the daughter of an Irish farmer at the same time may have been even harder. According to information in Strassmann and Clarke’s article “Ecological Constraints on Marriage in Rural Ireland,” it was a common practice for a father to leave all of his land to one child, regardless of the number, or gender, of his children. The leaving of one’s property to a sole heir is known as creating a “stem-family.” In the division of assets, the inheriting offspring is the only child that obtains the land *and* the right to marry. The non-inheriting children of the farmer, in the stem family method, had two options: either to leave the family home for the possibility of marriage, or continue to live and work on the family farm while remaining single and, presumably, celibate. One of the more common options for adult children, especially females, was to stay on the family property, help with the raising of other siblings or nieces and nephews – and only marry if a dowry could be provided. More commonly, the female sibling continued to live with the inheriting male sibling and his family, therefore becoming the male sibling’s economic responsibility (Strassman and Clarke 1998: 38-41). An example of a possible stem-family in Joyce’s *Dubliners* exists within the Morkan-Conroy family. Of the lineage of Patrick Morkan, only one daughter, Ellen, goes on to have a family of her own, leaving unmarried Julia and Kate seemingly dependent upon their brother, Pat. After the death of their brother, Julia and Kate move to Dublin along with Pat’s unmarried daughter, Mary Jane, from Stonyebatter⁹ (Jackson and McGinley 1993: 163). In Dublin, the Morkan women become economically dependent upon Gabriel Conroy, the only living, and adult, male relative of which the reader is aware. Even Maria from Joyce’s “Clay” seems to have lived in a stem-family situation, though she may not have had any direct relation to the Donnelly

⁹ While not particularly a rural area today, the word “batter” was a descriptor for an “ancient road” in earlier times (Haliday and Prendergast 1881: 222 f1).

family. As it was not uncommon for unmarried women to attach themselves to families as a nanny, Maria's memory that a young Joe used to say, "Mama is Mama, but Maria is my proper mother," makes sense (D 83). Furthermore, the fact that Maria now has a position at a laundry is indicative of that former role. According to Marian Eide, laundries were often places where "women might reside and work between engagements as nannies and housemaids" (63). Knowing that Maria still has a relationship with the Donnelly's, and it is likely that they have arranged her residence at the laundry through their own social connections, it seems that the stem-family arrangement was successful, both in literature and historically (Jackson and McGinley 1993: 89).

In the first half of this essay, spinsterhood has been discussed as a product of both the economic and agricultural environments of Ireland within the 20th century. However, a more sinister reason for the vast quantities of unmarried women is to be found with the Catholic Church and a strict society. The remnants of the Victorian era dictated cultural mores where the expression of sexuality, especially by a female, was forbidden. Instead of embracing sexuality in a nonchalant way, as had been the norm in earlier centuries, "Silence became the rule [regarding anything of a sexual nature]. The legitimate and procreative couple, laid down the law" (Foucault 1977: 3). Foucault's reference to the "legitimate couple" as the only rightful signifier of any intimate behavior plays into the idea adopted very quickly by Irish society during, and even prior to, the 20th century—that of reforming those who had embraced sexuality illegitimately (Foucault 1977: 3). Even though societal containment of sexuality has created a divide between those who adhere to the moral expectations of the community and those who do not, the accepted role for a woman was defined by her marital status. As Smith highlights, "identity for Irish women [was constructed] solely in domestic terms—women were mothers, women were wives" (qtd. 3). The contrast between Molly Ivors, the unmarried woman who socially unnerves Gabriel Conroy, and his wife, Gretta, in "The Dead," illustrates this domestic divide. By constricting sexuality to the home and only acknowledging women who stayed within that

realm, Irish society had created a system by which those who did not conform to those strict standards could be identified and reformed. By the 20th century, Ireland had fully implemented institutions of reform known as Magdalen Asylums, or Magdalen laundries¹⁰ into the working of Irish society (Finnegan 2004: 1-4). The original purpose of Magdalen Asylums was to rehabilitate what Frances Finnegan calls “first fall” prostitutes (8). In later years, the Asylums accepted unwed mothers, women who were mentally ill, and girls who *might* mature into sexually irresponsible women if left unchecked¹¹ (Finnegan 2004: 8). Indeed, throughout the 20th century, Magdalen Asylums became less about charity and more about punishment for breaching sexual norms.

In any society, nonconformance to the ideals of the majority has repercussions, but for the unmarried Irish women who bore illegitimate children, the punishment was severe. Even though Magdalen Asylums started out as a place of reform and refuge for prostitutes, the admission criteria soon included women who had become pregnant via consensual sex, coercion, incest, and rape (Smith 2007: 13-14). Due to the inability to hide the obvious signs of a growing fetus, the woman took the brunt of the punishment (Smith 2007: 40-41). Regardless of the fact that a man had an equal part in creating the child, the father suffered no repercussion because nothing could definitively tie him to the child. Therefore, when a woman made an accusation of a sexual nature against a man, the most convenient thing to do, especially if the accused male was family, was to hide the female in a Magdalen Asylum. As James Smith explains, “The Irish... male [was] not held accountable in the same manner as [a female]... he avoid[ed] institutionalization and live[d] his life unrestrained” (41). As unfair as it may be, the ramifications of an unintended pregnancy landed less on the father and more on the expectant mother’s family. It is under-

¹⁰ The Magdalen Laundries were named after Mary Magdalene, the prostitute in the Bible who repented of her sexually immoral ways; she was given the task of revealing Jesus’ resurrection to the Apostles.

¹¹ The term “first fall prostitute” refers to the fact that the woman is not a repeat offender in terms of prostitution.

standable, then, that an illegitimate pregnancy would be kept quiet. While none of Joycean women have openly done penance in a Magdalen Asylum, Jolanta Wawrzycka has argued that Gretta Conroy's relationship with Michael Furey may have been physical, as well as emotional (70). When Gabriel asks if she loved Furey, Gretta only responds that she "was great with him at that time," which could allude to the physicality of a pregnancy that is beginning to show (D 191). Combined with the fact that Gretta's last memory of Furey takes place on the night before she is to depart for a convent, a curious reader may wonder if this convent could have been a euphemism for a Magdalen Asylum that Gretta was sent to by an ashamed family.

Being a family of good standing in 20th century Ireland was of great importance—especially to the patriarch of a well-established family. However, a chain is only as strong as its weakest link as the saying goes, and a family's reputation could be ruined by the indiscretion of a single person. As Christina Mulcahey, a former Magdalen, stated in an interview given in the documentary *Sex in a Cold Climate*, after giving birth to her child she returned to her family home only to be told by her father: "you're not coming into this house" (Part 1). Having been rejected by their families, many fallen women had no choice but to either allow themselves to be institutionalized. Being in a Magdalen Asylum however, meant no timeline for freedom. Mary O'Connor Merritt, who spent fourteen years in an asylum, noted that "she wouldn't have gotten fourteen years for murder," but she was forced to serve that time for being considered a sexual risk to society (Vatileaks 2015: 13:34). O'Connor's sentiments of unjust imprisonment in the asylums are echoed by women like Mary Norris, another former penitent of the asylums. Norris revealed in an interview with *60 Minutes* that she "would have rather been down to the women's jail" (Symun 2015: 2:30). "At least," Norris said, "I'd have gotten a sentence and known when I was leaving" (ibid.). Apart from women like Merritt and Norris though, there were women, as has been recorded by Frances Finnegan in her book *Do Penance or Perish*, who, having been rejected by their families, saw the asylum as a sort of a refuge and became "dependent" upon the monotonous lifestyle that the

Magdalen Asylums offered¹² (4). For those who did manage to leave the asylum, either by escape or by the assistance of a sympathetic relative, the trauma induced by living in a Magdalen Asylum had lifelong effects¹³. While penitents were purposefully limited to singlehood while in the Magdalen Asylums, surviving the asylum did not mean that marriage suddenly became a possibility (*Sex in a Cold Climate*, 1998: Part 3). For many, being deprived of individuality, camaraderie, and simple human contact took a heavy toll that later affected their ability to form a sense of self and a sense of family outside of the asylum. “They shaved my head and I had to wear a uniform,” remembered Elizabeth Coppin who spoke to BEC World (Justice for Magdalens 2014: 10:03-10:43). “Straightaway, [in the Magdalen Asylum] your identity is taken because my name’s taken, my hair cut and I’m not wearing my own clothes. I have to answer to the name Enda—which is a man’s name,”¹⁴ Coppin noted (Justice for Magdalens 2014: 10:03-10:34). Even if no one knew about their past, many former Magdalen penitents were unable to shake off the sense of sin that had been associated with their identity for so long (*Sex in a Cold Climate* 1998: Part 3). Failed marriages and intentionally staying single seems to be common among women who once lived behind the Magdalen walls; “You can’t fall into that marriage... it [the damage done by the asylums] haunts ya,” noted Magdalen orphan, Bridgid Young¹⁵ (*Sex in*

¹² The Magdalen worked in the laundry six days a week, nine hours a day. Being tasked with cleansing soiled linen was a metaphor for personal atonement. (Smith 2007: 37-38, *Sex in a Cold Climate*).

¹³ A woman could be released from a Magdalen Asylum and into the care of a male family member. In many cases, though, the patriarchal members of the family were the ones who had placed the female in the institution in the first place (*Sex in a Cold Climate* 1998: Part 3).

¹⁴ It was not uncommon for penitents to have their names changed against their will. The logic behind imposing a masculine name was likely intended to remove their femininity (Rafferty 2011: para. 8).

¹⁵ In most Magdalen Asylums, there was an orphanage attached to the laundries where the babies of the laundresses were kept prior to adoption. Physical and sexual abuse of the orphans by both the clergy and the nuns was not uncommon (*Sex in a Cold Climate* 1998: Part 3).

a Cold Climate 1998: Part 3). While leaving a Magdalen Asylum seldom meant real “escape,” the women described above had an idea of why they had been incarcerated: they had been sexually promiscuous and usually produced a child. For many of the Magdalen penitents, however, their only crime wasn’t a crime at all—it was only the fact that they had the *potential* to become a sexual liability.

The fear of wanton sexuality spawned the need to control the image of the Irish woman—for it was far better that she ended up a spinster than a loose woman. While, according to Strassmann and Clarke, “less than 4% of all Irish births occurred outside [of] marriage [for] each decade from 1871-1966,” there was a need to somehow police the women of Ireland to ensure that the sanctity of the family was kept intact—even if that sanctity was paper thin (34). The social anxiety that surrounded females as regard to the expression of sexuality created an overly sensitive public that saw the Magdalen Asylums as a preventative measure instead of the restorative structure that it had originally been meant to be. In order to create a façade of social harmony, girls who were considered to be at risk based on any display of inappropriate sexual behavior were sent to the asylums along with the women who were pregnant. Even if she was not pregnant, Gretta Conroy, who remembers that Furey was “very fond” of her, could have been a preventative penitent in the asylums (D 192). Indeed, Phyllis Valentine, an Irish woman who spent eight years in a Magdalen asylum in the mid-20th century, reported that while Irish girls were “taught to be pretty,” being attractive, especially as a girl blossoming into womanhood, had a great disadvantage (*Sex in a Cold Climate* 1998: Part 2). Though Valentine had not engaged in any unsavory behavior, she was told by a nun that she was “pretty as a picture” and that she had been sent to the institution because her guardians were “afraid [she’d] fall away” (*Sex in a Cold Climate* 1998: Part 2).

The hyper-sensitive society that Irish females, like Phyllis Valentine, lived in was conditioned by seeing sexuality as a deviant trait that needed to be removed from the person, and the community as a whole. Therefore, as has been noted above, the sequestering of these women to prevent them from sexual expression created something of

an unforeseen epidemic in terms of marriage and the production of children. For those women who were eventually liberated from the Magdalen Asylums, sex even inside the bounds of wedlock was a challenge due to the mental and physical abuse that they had endured – which created more spinsters, divorced women and emotionally stunted women. Martha Cooney, a former Magdalen penitent also interviewed in the documentary *Sex in a Cold Climate*, noted that her subservient experience in the asylum influenced her decision not to marry as she, “never wanted anyone to have power over me” (Part 3).

While 21st century Irish society is sympathetically aware of the fact that the Magdalens themselves were not to blame for their incarceration, there is very little that the Irish government can do to seek retribution for these women (Justice for Magdalens 2014: 22:15). Indeed, according to Irish politician, Joan Burton, who is herself a daughter of a Magdalen penitent, the United Nations investigation into the inner workings of the Magdalen Laundries served more as “recognition for what women had experienced and what women had gone through” than any sort of legal or national action taken on their behalf (Justice for Magdalens 2014: 19:47). While the presence of, and ensuing emotional damage created by, the Magdalen Asylums cannot bear the entire brunt for the depictions of spinsterhood in James Joyce’s *Dubliners*, the fact remains that from 1904 to 1914, when *Dubliners* was written and published, the Magdalen Asylums were in full operation which, when considered in conjunction with the amount of spinsters in the stories, creates a correlation that deserves investigation.

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‘THE INCOMPATIBILITY OF AQUACITY WITH
THE ERRATIC ORIGINALITY OF GENIUS’ (*U* 17.
247). CONSIDERATIONS ON STEPHEN DEDALUS’
FLUID DEVELOPMENT

“I have just got a letter asking me why I don’t give Bloom a rest. The writer of it wants more Stephen. But Stephen no longer interests me to the same extent. He has a shape that can’t be changed.”

(Budgen 1972: 107)

While Stephen Dedalus in *Ulysses* may indeed appear as a somehow static character as Joyce famously comments in the above-mentioned conversation with Frank Budgen, his “shape” undoubtedly undergoes significant changes from when he is first introduced to the readers at the beginning of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*¹. His development does not follow a predictably linear path, however; on the contrary, it is quite fluid as emerges from a close analysis of *Portrait*, and is characterised by a centripetal movement as the opening of *Ulysses* reveals. It is my intention in the present article to bring out the characteristics of Stephen’s development and to ascribe the character, as well as the works in which he appears, to a sub-genre of the modernist novel of formation, which I define as *fluid anti-developmental narratives*. In order to position Stephen within this narrative category, I will first indicate what I identify as the main characteristics of fluid

¹ Hereafter *Portrait*.

anti-developmental narratives². This necessarily brief introduction will be supported by a comparison and close reading of chosen passages from *Portrait* and the consideration of few, but significant, elements particularly in the “Telemachus” and “Proteus” episodes of *Ulysses*, which account both for the continuity between the two works and for the ‘discontinuity’ of Stephen’s development.

My definition of fluid anti-developmental narratives refers to those modernist novels of formation in which the impossibility for the young protagonists to develop into mature adults is both symbolised and determined by their adverse relationship with the element of water³, which therefore has an important diegetic function in such narrations. The hostility towards the aquatic dimension shared by the protagonists of fluid anti-developmental narratives is very much in line with the overall dystopic representation of water that is characteristic of the modernist aesthetic. The dangerousness of water and the riskiness of journeys at sea, recurring motifs in modernist literature and poetry, are also among the leading subtexts of fluid anti-developmental narratives. Directly connected to these is the overall ambiguous representation of mariners. In this sense, it is almost needless to point out that in *Ulysses*, clearly inspired by one of the founding sea epics of the Western literary canon, the sailor is a surprisingly marginal figure (with the exception of the begging one-legged sailor, who occasionally appears throughout the novel, particularly in “Wandering Rocks”, and the dubious figure of the old seafarer D. G. Murphy, whom Stephen and

² The category of fluid anti-developmental narratives is the object of my current research project, which extends to comparative study of literary and cinematic texts, combining an analysis of the narrative function of water with an analysis of a ‘fluid’ linguistic style.

³ Although the figure of Stephen Dedalus constitutes one of the main *foci* of my investigation, my research is not restricted to the works of Joyce. Another name that cannot be omitted, for instance, is that of Virginia Woolf. Even though Woolf’s characters often belong to social and cultural backgrounds that differ from those of Joyce’s, in novels such as *The Voyage Out* (1915) and *To the Lighthouse* (1927) the relationship between the protagonists’ “arrested development” (cf. Esty 2012) and the aquatic dimension is outlined in analogous ways and by means of similar stylistic devices.

Bloom meet in “Eumaeus”). Another characteristic feature of fluid anti-developmental narratives is that the journey at sea, which in the traditional novel of formation often represents a successful achievement of adulthood⁴, loses this rite-of-passage function altogether. It is therefore indicative that, as John Brannigan observes in his volume *Archipelagic Modernism*, “whenever any of Joyce’s principal characters approach the Irish Sea, or consider its shores and crossings, they turn back” (2015: 69).

The presence of waterways, rivers, sea and seashores is of undeniable symbolic and narrative importance in Joyce’s work, and this aspect has been investigated extensively⁵. Yet, what I aim to highlight is that for *young* Joycean characters water, and particularly the maritime environment with its constitutive elements, often represent a danger and/or an obstacle that they cannot or are not willing to overcome. Eveline and Gerty McDowell are two evident examples, yet special attention should also be paid to the short story “An Encounter”, and to a significant turn that occurs by the middle of the narration. After having crossed the river Liffey (allegedly, a rite-of-passage moment) the two young protagonists find themselves in the dangerous space where they eventually meet the “queer old josser” (*D* 18) and in a dimension whose signs they are unable to decipher. The story therefore constitutes possibly the first example in Joyce’s work of the maritime environment clearly represented in a dystopic way with respect to young characters. Of the latter, however, Stephen Dedalus is surely prototypical: as he confesses to his friend Cranly in *Portrait*, the sea

⁴ As Margaret Cohen in her essay “The Chronotopes of the Sea” points out, “[t]he narratives set on shipboard” are centred on “a character’s passage in personality, a *rite de passage*, quite often from youth [...] to maturity through the acquisition of cunning and know-how” (Cohen 2006: 664).

⁵ Noteworthy among the early investigations on this topic, are essays by Sydney Feshbach (1985), Joseph Kestner (1994), and Robert Adams Day (1996), as well as Katharina Hagen’s monograph (1996). Equally important contributions include articles by Roberta Gefer Wondrich (2006), Sam Slote (2007), and Nels Pearson (2011), as well as, more recently, Greg Winston’s essay (2014) and a chapter in John Brannigan’s study (2015). (Cf. ‘Works Cited’ for a complete list of these contributions).

counts among the things he fears the most, together with “dogs, horses, firearms, [...], thunderstorms, machinery, the country roads at night” (*P* 243), and we also know that “his flesh dread[s] the cold in-frahuman odour of the sea” (*P* 167). This peculiar attitude towards water is further confirmed in *Ulysses*, where Stephen is mockingly referred to by Buck Mulligan as the “unclean bard [who] makes a point of washing once a month” (*U* 1.475) and where he is also described as a “hydrophobe” (*U* 17.237).

It is my contention that throughout Joyce’s production, the maritime dimension has a decisive role in determining the impossibility of a linear (and predictable) development for young protagonists. Moreover, in particular as far as Stephen is concerned, his peculiar relationship with water is further reflected in Joyce’s style and how it varies throughout *Portrait* and, at least, in the first three chapters of *Ulysses*. Crucially, many of the central episodes in Stephen’s growth revolve around his perception of language and his relation to it; many of these episodes are in turn also connected to the marine environment and its constitutive elements.

In order to describe Stephen Dedalus as a representative character of fluid anti-developmental narratives, it is first of all useful to consider *Portrait* “in terms of its peculiar failure to conform to the strict generic demands of the Bildungsroman form,” as Gregory Castle does in his study *Reading the Modernist Bildungsroman* (2006: 1). As already pointed out, unlike the protagonists of the traditional novel of formation⁶, the main characters of the modernist Bildungsroman do not follow the path that leads them to a condition socially definable as mature adulthood. Indeed, in the case of Stephen, it cannot be said with clarity whether his formation is accomplished by the end of *Portrait* or whether he will eventually become a poet as he aspires to be. With subtle irony, Joyce has the rebel artist note in his diary, on the

⁶ Notably the English Bildungsroman, in which, as Franco Moretti maintains, the “narrative transformations have meaning in so far as they lead to a particular marked ending [...] that establishes a classification different from the initial one but nonetheless perfectly clear and stable” (1987: 7)

eve of his voluntary exile from Ireland, “Mother is putting my new secondhand clothes in order” (*P* 252); in the triviality both of its content and of its tone, this sentence stands in sharp contrast to the resolution that Stephen so unambiguously presents to Cranly: “I will not serve that in which I no longer believe, be it my home, my fatherland or my church” (*P* 246-247).

The “incompatibility” of Stephen with “aquacity” (*U* 17.247), decisive in defining him as a quintessentially fluid anti-developmental character, can be better understood if considered against the backdrop of the modernist developments of the Bildungsroman. These, as both Gregory Castle and Jed Esty demonstrate, are heavily influenced by the rapid imperial expansion that took place in the course of the 19th century (cf. Castle 2006; Esty 2012). In anti-developmental novels, the tension between youth and adulthood symbolically translates the conflict between the open-ended temporality of global capitalism and the physically and politically delimited temporality of the nation (Esty 2012: 4). If in the traditional Bildungsroman there is a certain correspondence between the formation of the individual and that of the nation, in its modernist version this linearity is replaced by a spatial and temporal boundlessness, which also has significant effects on the narration. In particular, the narrative boundlessness that characterises the work of Joyce becomes all the more meaningful if, as Castle proposes, we compare the Irish modernist novel of formation with its English counterpart; “in ‘semi-colonial’ Ireland,” Castle notes, “modernization had been at best an uneven process, in large part because colonial rule tended to retard development in some sectors of society and to encourage it in others” (2006: 57). This can easily be inferred by considering the maritime references related to Haines in *Ulysses*, where there is a “general tendency [...] to yoke the diverse elements of Britishness together with the imperial and monarchical state” (Brannigan 2015: 86). A pertinent example in this sense is the passage of the “mailboat clearing the harbourmouth of Kingstown” (*U* 1.83–84), which Stephen observes from the top of the Martello Tower in the opening scene of the novel. On the one hand, through the words of Mulligan, the passage of the boat is linked to the memory of the death of Stephen’s

mother, the reason why he returned to Dublin from his Parisian ‘exile’, and therefore also one of the main causes of his state of paralysis⁷. On the other hand, some pages later, the “smokeplume” of the same mailboat is also seen by Haines, “[t]he seas’ ruler” (*U* 1.574); this epithet clearly alludes to the supremacy of the British Empire, thereby connecting the sea “with political power, and with the material and symbolic forms of imperial domination” (Brannigan 2015: 86), which, in turn, is among the main causes of Ireland’s paralysis.

While *Ulysses* is undoubtedly crucial to understanding Stephen’s attitude towards water, my analysis starts, chronologically, with *Portrait*. I intend to emphasise the complex symbolic, thematic and stylistic network that, through *Portrait* and *Ulysses*, links the fluidity of Stephen’s identity with the intrinsic fluidity of water and the (equally intrinsic) fluidity of language. On first reading, the style of *Portrait* seems indeed to undergo a substantial transformation between the first and the last chapter, describing an evolution that, supposedly, is in line with Stephen’s psychological, intellectual and artistic growth. Nevertheless, a more attentive approach reveals how the style follows a non-linear variation, characterised by sudden changes in tone and repetitions that contribute to underline the fluid character of Stephen’s *actual* development into a ‘young man’. As Naremore pertinently points out, in *Portrait*, just as “nearly in the whole body of Joyce’s work”, the style is “designed to suggest the ambiance of character” (1967: 332); in fact, it “not only takes us into Stephen’s rather florid imagination,” but also “gives us a clue to the attitude Joyce has towards his hero” (ibid.: 335). In particular, the narrative rhythm of *Portrait* is characterised by what I propose to define as a ‘tidal evolution’, thereby also translating into marine terms Hugh Kenner’s observation that each chapter in the novel “works toward an equilibrium which is dashed when in the next chapter Stephen’s world becomes larger and the frame of reference more complex” (1955: 121). Such

⁷ Interestingly, Edmundson (2009) highlights a correlation between Stephen’s feeling of guilt for his mother’s death and the recurring references to drowning linked to it.

contrasts also occur within the single chapters, thus establishing a “sequence of rises and falls for Stephen’s development” (Riquelme 2004: 116) throughout the narrative. The tidal pattern, however, is particularly meaningful in the fourth and fifth chapters of *Portrait*, and it becomes decisive in the passage from *Portrait* to *Ulysses*, which, ultimately, is the key to understanding Stephen’s arrested development.

Among the episodes that mark the formation of the aspiring artist, the scene set on Dollymount Strand in the fourth chapter of *Portrait* is, of course, one of the most important. Here Stephen resolves to “create proudly out of the freedom and power of his soul” (*P* 170), and meets (or has a vision of) the bird-girl, who embodies his idea of art and beauty. After having considered several possible sources for his inspiration – from an idealised image of Mercedes, to the ambivalent fascination for Emma, through a (presumptive) religious vocation – Stephen seems to identify in the girl on Dollymount Strand a definitive image. As a matter of fact, it is plausible to think that the creature Stephen sees on the shore is in fact a projection of his own self. Indeed, the girl appears to his eyes “like one whom magic had changed into the likeness of a strange and beautiful seabird” (*P* 171); she is described as a hybrid winged creature, thereby also symbolically translating Stephen’s particular condition. The fact that she has the features of a bird, suggests that the girl is able to take flight and, as we know, Stephen will declare himself ready to “fly by [the] nets” of “nationality, language, religion” (*P* 202). Furthermore, in her half-human and half-animal form, she reflects Stephen’s hybridity, as he has become neither a ‘young man’ nor an artist yet. On the one hand, the scene on Dollymount Strand describes the undoubtedly decisive moment in which Stephen acknowledges his artistic talent and ambition, translating them into the image of the girl. On the other hand, though, throughout the book, there are several moments in which Stephen equally seems to recognise the path he has to take. Significantly, also from a stylistic point of view, these passages are often characterised by very similar traits; in fact, the scene in the fourth chapter is anticipated in several instances in the early chapters of the novel. The style employed for the description of these moments of revelation is thereby

in some ways codified, possibly also indicating that these events have all been of equal importance to Stephen. While the recurrence of words and phrases in different passages throughout the novel certainly contributes to highlight the fact that the episodes they describe are meaningful to him, this also further suggests that his growth and formation are indeed characterised by an uneven process.

It is worth considering the passages that describe the appearance of the bird-girl in greater detail. On Dollymount Strand, Stephen is alone, “unheeded, happy and near to the wild heart of life. He [is] alone and young and wilful and wildhearted” (*P* 171). The brief, yet intense interaction between him and the girl is thus presented:

She was alone and still, gazing out to sea; and when she felt his presence and the worship of his eyes her eyes turned to him in quiet sufferance of his gaze, without shame or wantonness. Long, long she suffered his gaze and then quietly withdrew her eyes from his and bent them towards the stream, gently stirring the water with her foot hither and thither. The first faint noise of gently moving water broke the silence, low and faint and whispering, faint as the bells of sleep; hither and thither, hither and thither; and a faint flame trembled on her cheek.

—Heavenly God! cried Stephen’s soul, in an outburst of profane joy. (*ibid.*)

What certainly stands out in the description of this scene is the loneliness of the two figures, as well as the silence that surrounds them, two details to which I will briefly return later. Moreover, in this paragraph, as often happens in *Portrait* in moments of particular intensity, the syntax is considerably simplified and marked by the repetition (cf. also O’Connor 1957: 303) of sentences, phrases, and single words (e.g. “hither and thither,” “eyes,” “gaze,” “faint”). All these features become even more evident and meaningful in the famous passage that follows:

He turned away from her suddenly and set off across the strand. His cheeks were aflame; his body was aglow; his limbs were trembling. On and on and on and on he strode, far out over the sands, singing wildly to the sea, crying to greet the advent of the life that had cried to him.

Her image had passed into his soul for ever and no word had broken the holy silence of his ecstasy. Her eyes had called him and his soul had leaped at the call. To live, to err, to fall, to triumph, to recreate life out of life! A wild angel had appeared to him, the angel of mortal youth and beauty, an envoy from the fair courts of life, to throw open before him in an instant of ecstasy the gates of all the ways of error and glory. On and on and on and on! (*P* 172)

This ecstatic moment at the end of the fourth chapter is closely connected with Stephen's final decision to leave Ireland, clearly expressed in the fifth chapter. It is therefore useful to consider at least two of the diary entries that conclude the novel. The first is particularly important because of its clear maritime reference (and, possibly, setting) coinciding with the moment in which Stephen seems ready to undertake his journey:

16 April: Away! Away!

The spell of arms and voices: the white arms of roads, their promise of close embraces and the black arms of tall ships that stand against the moon, their tale of distant nations. They are held out to say: We are alone. Come. And the voices say with them: We are your kinsmen. And the air is thick with their company as they call to me, their kinsman, making ready to go, shaking the wings of their exultant and terrible youth. (*P* 252)

The fact that Stephen is able to see ship masts ("the black arms of tall ships") suggests that he is close to the coast or, in any case, facing the sea, thereby evoking the setting of the scene in the fourth chapter. The second of the diary entries I would like to refer to, which is also the second-last in the whole book, is Stephen's solemn declaration:

26 April: [...]

Welcome, O life! I go to encounter for the millionth time the reality of experience and to forge in the smithy of my soul the uncreated conscience of my race. (*P* 252-253)

This can definitely be seen as a climactic moment, both in Stephen's and in the narrative development, which apparently reaches a peak in these closing lines. Nevertheless, a passage that appears early in the fourth chapter corresponds to it almost literally. When Stephen is asked by the director of Belvedere College whether he would consider becoming a priest, "[i]n vague sacrificial or sacramental acts alone his will seemed drawn *to go forth to encounter reality*" (*P* 159; *emphasis added*). At this moment, Stephen arguably thinks of the religious vocation as one of the possible answers to his striving. Nevertheless, it seems that what attracts him to priesthood is merely the privilege that such a position would give him; indeed, as the director assures him, "[n]o king or emperor on this earth has the power of the priest of God" (*P* 158). Still, in reaction to this idea "[a] flame began to flutter [...] on Stephen's cheek" (*ibid.*); incidentally, the same image is used to describe the reactions of Stephen and of the girl on Dollymount Strand: "a faint flame trembled on her cheek" (*P* 171), and "[h]is cheeks were aflame" (*P* 172).

Interestingly, some elements of these pivotal scenes from chapters four and five are also to be found in another significant passage from the second chapter. Here a young Stephen, who seeks in the streets of Dublin the idealised image of 'his' Mercedes, "want[s] to meet in the real world the unsubstantial image that his soul so constantly beheld" (*P* 65). The subtle reference to his ultimate decision to "encounter for the millionth time the reality of experience" (*P* 253) is clear. Furthermore, it is very revealing to observe how Stephen imagines this meeting:

a premonition which led him on told him that this image would, without any overt act of his, encounter him. [...] They would be alone, surrounded by darkness and silence: and in that moment of

supreme tenderness he would be transfigured. He would fade into something impalpable under her eyes and then in a moment, he would be transfigured. Weakness and timidity and inexperience would fall from him in that magic moment. (*P* 65)

As will eventually be the case on Dollymount Strand, Stephen here foresees that this special encounter will take place in a condition of loneliness, “surrounded by darkness and silence,” and that, almost without his having too much agency in it, the “image” he seeks will be revealed to him. Moreover, “the moment of supreme tenderness” in which, as Stephen imagines, “he would be transfigured” (*ibid.*), comes true in chapter four when the image of the bird-girl “passe[s] into his soul forever” (*P* 172). Lastly, it should be noted once more how, just as in the passages considered above, the prose here becomes simpler and generally repetitive; the recurrence of the phrase “in that moment”, for example, certainly stands out, thereby also preparing the reader for the very instant, in the fourth chapter, in which the meeting will eventually turn out to be decisive for Stephen.

Another pivotal episode in the novel is Stephen’s first encounter with Emma, who, as mentioned above, becomes the object of his ambivalent devotion, thereby also replacing the “unsubstantial image” of Mercedes. The famous scene on the tram is important in many respects: first of all, Stephen’s excitement is translated by an ‘aquatic’ simile: “[h]is heart danced upon her movements like a cork upon a tide⁸” (*P* 69). More importantly, however, in the next few lines there is another reference to the first of the above-mentioned diary entries from chapter five:

He heard what her eyes said to him from beneath their cowl and knew that in some dim past, whether in life or reverie, he had heard

⁸ A simile that also recalls another passage, which occurs just a couple of pages earlier, and which, incidentally, is set in the port of Dublin: “[Stephen] passed unchallenged among the docks and along the quays wondering at the multitude of corks that lay bobbing on the surface of the water in a thick yellow scum[.]” (*P* 66)

their tale before. [...] Yet a voice within him spoke above the noise of his dancing heart, asking him would he take her gift to which he had only to stretch out his hand. (ibid.)

Significantly, what Stephen reads in Emma's eyes is defined as a "tale," a word that returns right at the end of the novel in the "tale of distant nations" (*P* 252) offered to Stephen by the "tall ships" (ibid.), to whose appeal he seems to respond. Their "black arms" are "held out" (ibid.) to welcome him; if he wanted to take their "gift" (*P* 69) he would only have to "stretch out his hand" (ibid.), as the voice within him suggests at the end of the passage quoted from chapter two. Interestingly, this passage is also echoed in the scene already commented on in which Stephen meets the director of Belvedere: "He listened in reverent silence now to the priest's appeal and through the words he heard even more distinctly a voice bidding him approach, offering him secret knowledge and secret power" (*P* 159). This further confirms that the narrative peak apparently reached at the end of the novel is just one of the climactic points that, as Kenner infers (1955: 121), will be inexorably followed by an anti-climactic fall.

The opening of *Ulysses* is undoubtedly among the most important of these anti-climactic falls as it clearly reveals the centripetal movement that characterises Stephen's development. Indeed, notwithstanding his determination to leave his country, at the beginning of *Ulysses* we find him "displeased and sleepy" (*U* 1.13) on top of the Martello Tower overlooking Sandycove Strand, and therefore back in Dublin after (what we will learn to have been) a short stay in Paris. What should definitely be highlighted in *Ulysses*, and especially in the "Telemachiad" episodes, is the recurrence of images of death and immobility, often used in relation to Stephen, which contribute to bring out both his unsuccessful attempt at exile and his equally unsuccessful career as a poet, and which are, in turn, also often linked to the maritime environment.

To understand Stephen's development (and failures), in addition to the aforementioned example from "Telemachus" relating to the pas-

sage of the mailboat, the “Proteus” episode is undoubtedly of central importance. Being set entirely on the seashore, it also serves as a fitting counterpart to the vision of the bird-girl in the fourth chapter of *Portrait*. Indeed, while walking and musing on Sandymount Strand, Stephen again experiences a sort of vision that inspires him to write some verses, even though, ironically, he is at first unable to find a piece of paper to write on (*U* 3.404-407). Not a new situation for the would-be poet, who, already in *Portrait*, when he is about to compose his villanelle, resolves to jot it down on a packet of cigarettes (*P* 218) as he cannot find “paper and pencil [...] on the table” (*ibid.*). Moreover, on both occasions, Stephen thinks about the inefficacy of his verses and/or the impossibility for them to be understood by a potential reader. In *Portrait*, he considers sending his villanelle to Emma, who inspired it: “If he sent her the verses? They would be read out at breakfast amid the tapping of eggshells. Folly indeed!” (*P* 222). Similarly, in “Proteus,” he wonders, “Who ever anywhere will read these written words?” (*U* 3. 404-405). Still, it is worth looking at the verses Stephen composes because, even though they only appear later on, in the “Aeolus” episode when Stephen thinks about them (*U* 7.522 – 525), in “Proteus” we can follow part of his creative process. To begin with, the vision Stephen has on Sandycove involves a vampire, the protagonist of his poem; this is significant because, just like the bird-girl in *Portrait*, the vampire is another hybrid creature. Moreover, when Stephen thinks about the wings of the vampire, he pictures them as “bat sails bloodying the sea” (*U* 3.397 – 398; *emphasis* added), a metaphor probably suggested to Stephen by the marine setting he finds himself in, but which also precedes the approach of the three-master at the end of the chapter (*U* 3.503 – 505)⁹. Its appearance is also anticipated, towards the middle of the episode, by the sight of the “gunwale of a boat, sunk in sand” (*U* 3.287), lying beside the “carcass of a dog” (*U* 3.286), both of which are clearly evocative of death and

⁹ Incidentally, the depiction of sails as wings also recurs in the aforementioned diary entry from the fifth chapter of *Portrait*, where the “tall ships” are “shaking the wings of their exultant and terrible youth” (*P* 252).

immobility. Undoubtedly, the ambiguous presence of the threemaster further emphasises Stephen's almost complete isolation, which is particularly highlighted in "Proteus". In this episode, in counterpoint to the sounds and smells of the sea and the shore, Stephen's artistic talent is repeatedly put in doubt, thereby further confirming the strong symbolic connection between his development and the maritime dimension, here significantly epitomised in the liminal space of the shoreline.

Stephen's condition of unresolved liminality is indeed accentuated at the end of *Ulysses*. Yet, it has been claimed, notably by Epstein and by Edmundson, that by the end of "Circe" Stephen finally gets rid of the burdens of the past and "throws open the door of creation to himself" (Epstein 1971: 157), "renew[ing] his artistic potential" (Edmundson 2009: 245). In particular, as the scholars maintain, in "Circe" he both resolves the conflict with the (symbolic) father figures (cf. Epstein), and "free[s] himself from [...] his mother's influence over him" (Edmundson 2009: 245). A point that nevertheless seems to be contradicted in "Ithaca", where, in Stephen's last appearance in the novel, the bells of St. George's church remind him of the prayers recited at his mother's deathbed (*U* 17.1230-1231). Even after "Circe," then, the failure of Stephen to become an artist and his constant in-between condition are repeatedly confirmed. Moreover, the recurrence of maritime motifs towards the end of the novel, especially in "Eumaeus," recalls the atmosphere of the "Telemachiad." The men gathered in the cabman's shelter converse about "accidents at sea, ships lost in a fog, collisions with icebergs" (*U* 16.900-201), and the decline of Irish shipping. More importantly though, here Stephen also interacts with D. G. Murphy, the degraded figure of a mariner, who arrives in Dublin on board the threemaster that appears at the end of "Proteus" (*U* 16.450-451). This concurrence of seemingly minor details further confirms what I have aimed at demonstrating: the non-linearity, or indeed fluidity, of Stephen's evolution is denoted, both in *Portrait* and in *Ulysses*, by the recurring reference to a peculiar aquatic and maritime imagery through a carefully and "complexly layered" (Riquelme 2004: 117) language used to describe the crucial moments of Stephen's growth.

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TOBIAS SMOLLETT, JOYCE'S GRANDFATHER:
CIRCULATION AND RECIRCULATION, SATIETY,
ERUCTATION, REGURGITATION, "CURSING AND
RECURSING" IN VICONIAN CYCLES

Deeply felt throughout Joyce's works, Smollett's presence, "at first sight [thought of as] alien to (if not actually opposite to) the heritage of Swift, Fielding and Sterne"¹, that is, ultimately, also to Joyce, was first singled out, although in the negative, by J.W. Beach (in 1932) in relation to *Ulysses* and the interior monologue. This was subsequently stressed by V.S. Pritchett (in 1946)² in relation to the language of *Finnegans Wake*, a trait later successfully explored by Giorgio Melchiori in *The Tightrope Walkers* (1956).

As Melchiori forcefully asserted, Smollett's art had ultimately to be seen as an art aiming at "telling a story on different levels implying in it two separate trains of thought" (1956: 46), being in that an *ante litteram* Joycean – Joyce, too, wanting to write at the same time from different perspectives, and "on different levels", Joyce who used different instruments and techniques to dismantle and refashion language, featuring himself as a "multiinstrumentalist", making the most of various artistic traditions, combining different stylistic and linguistic strategies.

¹ J.W. Beach, *The Twentieth Century Novel: Studies in Technique*, quoted in Melchiori 1956: 46.

² V.S. Pritchett, "The Shocking Surgeon" in *The Living Novel*, quoted in Melchiori 1956: 46.

Smollett's language has been considered by Pritchett as a language "hardly explorable where each word carries two or more contradictory meanings" (Melchiori 1956: 46), getting in that way very close to Joyce's "slanguage" (*FW* 421.17)³, or "vivre" (*FW* 110.12), an ancient, lively and powerful language in which words are animated and gestural, a language featuring concrete actions, a language of the senses and of emotions expressed in Joyce in various modalities: "audible-visible-gnosible-edible" (*FW* 88.06), mixing up body and mind, combining standard English and regionalisms, dialects and idiolects, slang and cant, together with different scientific specialised languages (legal and medical, historical and philosophical), in an essayistic, encyclopaedic style that could correspond to that of Smollett's scientific essays, reviews, translations and case studies as, for example, (and of great import for *Humphry Clinker*), the *Essay on the External Use of Waters* (1752).

An adequate representation of the complexity of the very similar cultural and political situations in both epochs, in an empire englobing many different "nations", with their specific cultures and languages, could only be rendered by a highly inventive and multi-faceted art, resorting to multilinguistic and polisignificant expressive means.

Writing across boundaries (internal or external, official or non-official, chartered or unchartered, regarding nation, class, religion, gender), Smollett and Joyce used linguistic tools capable of analysing these complexities by continually adopting different perspectives, moving across and trespassing boundaries, constantly looking at things from both sides – in Joyce's case, acting as an engineer "boring through a mountain from two sides. If my calculations are correct we shall meet in the middle"⁴ – meant for them both having chosen to live and write as voluntary exiles.

Acting as exiles and as "adventurers", "forebanned and betweenly" (*FW* 347.30), constantly moving across linguistic and cultural boundaries, which meant infringing – "enfranchised her to liberties

³ See on this point Vaglio Marengo 2016.

⁴ Also, in a slightly different form, quoted from an interview with Auguste Suter in Ellmann 1959: 556.

of fringes” (*FW* 548.19) – and subverting laws, in the name of the liberty of art, these artists worked altering or “othering” orders – “order is othered” (*FW* 613.14) – finding new linguistic and stylistic moulds, rhythms and lilts into which to cast their languages, paying attention to intersections, most of the time ending up in a hybrid and yet fully expressive and lively “lingua franca” in which many things resonate at a time and intertwine – as in a “dockanddoilish” (*FW* 466.23), for example, or in the Welsh-Scottish language in which a Welsh family of “originals” reveals itself in letters in *Humphry Clinker*.

In this situation, translation and adaptation, production of calques (in gestural and mimetical languages) are a constant activity, by that contaminating and blurring word boundaries, Joycianly “conglomerating” “words” and “worlds”, in a “dangerous” and yet vital way of writing, in “almosting”⁵ renditions of metamorphic realities and ultimately smuggling words, in an actual battle for survival carried on across borders – “betweenly” (*FW* 347.30) – a Darwinian, ferocious “struggle for life”:

so warred he, from first to last, forebanned and betweenly, a smuggler for lifer (*FW* 347.30)

all the sorts of smukklers (*FW* 327.01)

This is indeed what Joyce, establishing the primacy of the work on language and on the ways by which this is achieved, calls “dangerous writing”:

The important thing is not what we write but how we write, and in my opinion the modern writer must be an adventurer above all, willing to take every risk and be prepared to founder in his effort if need be. In other words, we must write dangerously.

(Power 1974: 95)

⁵ “Almosting it” (*U* 3.366-367) a term adopted in relation to the discussion on translation, as “metatextual dynamism” or “interdynamism” (Fritz Senn’s coinage).

The modern writer must, therefore, “write dangerously”, being “an adventurer above all, to take every risk and be prepared to founder in his effort”, that is to say, to become an explorer who has lost all *points de repère* – as in Joyce, facing the uncharted, the “immarginable” (*FW* 4.19) and yet sitting down in the desert and trying to draw a map out of it⁶, or travelling in order to discover the sources of the Nile or, as in Smollett, travelling in order to redraw maps in the hope of finding out, for example, whether Cap Breton is an island or a peninsula (a constant cartographic problem which keeps reappearing) – both authors, therefore, training themselves as proper “tightrope walkers”, acrobatically performing in the void, finally ending up in a pickle, in failure or in death.

Both in Smollett and in Joyce the terms “pilgrim” and “pickle” seem to be closely connected, possibly because of their origin in a common phrase (“to be in a pretty pickle”, meaning “to be in a sorry plight”), but also because of a strong connection with a well-known common source: Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*, in which the phrase “to be in a pickle”⁷ (“How came’st thou in this pickle?”, *The Tempest*, V.i), represents the (moral) assessment of the entire action of the play and, more generally, of the human condition itself, which could, if interpreted in metafictional terms, point to a difficulty both in writing and in reading: “how can I, author / how can you, reader”, get out of this labyrinth (this pickle) set up by the artwork itself? Moreover, in a not definite cultural, historical and political situation, in which in Scotland, according to Smollett, or in Ireland, according to Joyce, “some people are wise and some are otherwise”⁸ or “half of the nation is mad and the other half not very sound”⁹.

The guide both for entering and for getting out of the labyrinth is for Smollett the author himself who, incorporated into the work as a

⁶ “His father once observed that if Joyce were dropped in the middle of the Sahara he would sit down and make a map of it”. Cf. Anderson 1967: 14.

⁷ See Cobham Brewer 1900: 974.

⁸ T. Smollett, *The Adventures of Roderick Random*.

⁹ T. Smollett, *The Adventures of Sir Launcelot Greaves*.

character¹⁰, together with the peculiarities of his linguistic and cultural traits (in the literary quarrels of the times Smollett is referred to as “peeregrine puckle”), is also set side by side and confronted with the characters of his own works (Ferdinand Count Fathom reappearing in *Humphry Clinker*, for example) and characters of his own family, acts as an adventurous traveller or as a pilgrim, or as a knight errant, lost in the labyrinth, still representing, at the same time, the only possible key to get out of it.

Adventures, journeys, pilgrimages, expeditions (even military ones) and their implications, errantry, randomness: these are the allusions we get from the titles of Smollett’s works, representing the experience of constantly crossing shifting borders, porous to alterity, “everintermutuomergent” (*FW* 55.11), where the variety of incidents and of linguistic experiences the travellers are confronted with, produces effects of randomness and “picaresqueness” (*FW* 486. 34), indifferently, rendered in a dry factual chronicle-like style, or, in an amplified, mock heroic, burlesque and comic one – with Joyce: “serialcosmically” (*FW* 263.24).

In a world which, both for Smollett and for Joyce, wavered between Vice and Folly, key philosophical and religious concepts are submitted to a radical scrutiny, according to the sudden twists of a blaspheme, heretic, anarchic style of thinking and of writing: Smollett and Joyce adopting similar strategic linguistic devices.

In the scatological satire of Smollett, the terms “christian” and “unchristian” oscillate, contaminating high and low, punning and equivocating in order to dismantle certitudes and orders, Smollett presenting the “church” as a place of “ignorant superstition”, while the apparently strictly architectural discourse on churches exhibiting gothic spires, as reminiscent of minarets, opens up into an atrocious space of torture and punishment as in “The long slender spire puts one in mind of a criminal impaled, with a sharp stake rising up through his

¹⁰ T. Smollett, *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker*, London, J.M. Dent & Sons, 1951, p. 165. Hereafter quoted as *HC*.

shoulder” (*HC* 172). Similarly, Joyce reveals the church as “crux” (*FW* 327.04); both in Smollett and Joyce “grace” is transformed into “grease”¹¹, Providence into “prodigence” (in *HC*) and in Joyce into “Pravidance” (*FW* 147.17), (in Joyce a sort of perverted “charys”), equally blasphemous, non-ritual and perverted as the “Phwriting” – “My eppripftaph, Be phwritt” (*U* 11.67) – a writing by *flatus ventris*, by which Bloom expresses and almost advertises himself as musical instrument (a rotten bagpipe) at the end of “Sirens”. And the novels of Smollett, rich in manifestations of physical life, abound in farts and belches.

A sign of the difficulties of apprehending reality as well as of writing about it, is given by the deformations and metamorphoses the verb “to know” undergoes: “mispelt” as “no” or “nose”, “gnose” in both Smollett and Joyce, again, a knowing by the senses, this spelling and meaning occurring several times in *Finnegans Wake* (133.16 “nose”, 322.13 “nose”). What appears in Smollett as psychological or a sociolinguistic problem – in a letter of the Welsh maid Winifred Jenkins in *Humphry Clinker* “As for madam Lashmiheygo, you nose, her picklearities” (*HC* 336) is by Joyce transformed into a more general modality of knowing. Not used as in the theatre, where malapropisms and misquotations are used as a diversion and a pretext for equivocations, deeper levels of meaning, deeper cognitive implications are presented. With Joyce, the problem of “gnosing” represents a philosophical stance infiltrated by doubt, the labyrinth becoming three-dimensional and even four-dimensional: “tales within tales”, “a rambling mock-heroic tale”, “Once upon a time”, as in:

Arabian Nights, serial stories, tales within tales to be continued, desperate story telling, caps another to reproduce a rambling mock-heroic tale. Scharazad’s feat impossible. Once upon a time.

(Joyce 1961: 25)

¹¹ Innumerable examples in Smollett (*Humphry Clinker*) and in Joyce (from *Dubliners* to *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*).

Smollett gives us an all-inclusive and totally explicit definition of what a novel is, describing it in terms of a labyrinth, the same idea being in Joyce reshaped as primigenius narrative structure of the Neanderthal man: “meandertale” (*FW* 18.22) or “meanderthailtale” (*FW* 19.25).

As for Smollett:

A novel is a large diffused picture, comprehending the characters of life, disposed in different groups, and exhibited in various attitudes, for the purposes of a uniform and general occurrence to which every individual figure is subservient. But the plan cannot be executed with propriety, probability or success without a principal personage to attract the attention, unite the incidents, unwind the clue of the labyrinth at last close the scene by virtue of his own importance¹².

The “principal personage uniting all the incidents” and “unwinding the clue of the labyrinth” is a strikingly Joycean concept, as it applies both to the Ulysses-Odysseus-Bloom role of a main character bound to embody the work itself and its rules, to survive in order to lead us out of the labyrinth by telling his tale, paying attention to the fact that, for Joyce, this is a hopeless enterprise having to deal with a “labyrinth mobile” (as in the Linati schema), consisting of “roccie erranti” (*sic*), where the “rocks” are the characters themselves, “wondering rocks” in a labyrinth from which, according to Apollonius Rhodius, there seems to be no possibility of escape, as it extends into the air and hurts the wings of birds.

To define the domain, the structure and the progress of the novel, Joyce uses the same explicit term: “the labyrinth of their samilikes and the alteregoases of their pseudoselves” (*FW* 576.33) and projects a cartographic representation (“prospector projector”) by the visual evo-

¹² The statement is reworked by Smollett both in the mock dedication to himself introducing *The Adventures of Ferdinand Count Fathom* (1753) and in *Humphry Clinker*.

cation of an old-fashioned symbolic kind of map (a 1432 kind of map used in Jesuit schools) featuring molehills as mountains and mountains (and countries) as molehills, a narratological as well as a cartographic principle:

Prospector projector and boomooster giant builder of all causeways woesoever, hopping offpoint and true terminus straxstraitens and corkscrewn perambulaups which bring hills to molehunter Big Maester Finnykin with Phenicia Parkes, bring them at suntime flush with the nethermost gangrung of their stepchildren, guide them through the labyrinth of their samilikes and the alteregoases of their pseudoselves, hedge them bothways from all roamers whose name are, from loss of bearings deliver them; so they keep to their rights (*FW* 576.33).

The entire domain of the novel lays open before both authors who recirculate forms and styles: Roderick Random, just like Peregrine Pickle, as both picaro and anti-picaro, Telemachus and Stephen Dedalus, as “dispossessed sons” at the mercy of a violent society, just as Ulysses, all characters who must rely on their ability to understand the situations in which they find themselves, escaping and surviving, being “escapemaster[s]-in-chief” (*FW* 127.10), masters in “escapology” (*FW* 428.22), in “escaping” (*FW* 232.12), perfectly calculating times by “Escupement” (*FW* 151.19), (deadbeat escapement invented by Thomas Compton, watchmaker) and, at the same time, adhering to their roots and natures, finding in themselves and in their universality, everybodiness and everydayness, the energies to regenerate themselves and start a new life cycle again.

The invention of a new language, originating from the sensed impossibility to use “cutanddry grammar and go ahead plot”¹³ anymore, relies on the power to dismantle language categories and invent new grammatical functions and structures in the utopian hope for a

¹³ J. Joyce, letter to Harriet Shaw Weaver, 24th November 1926.

universal grammar, a *Grammaire des Grammaires* – “Grammar’s grammar” only “mind your genderous” (*FW* 268.17) – to abolish all Grammars, being pure gesture, in order to speak “faciofacey” (*FW* 279.F08) as with God, but retaining all the sentiments and the sensations, as well as the “sintalks” (*FW* 269.03) “For you have sensed” (*FW* 268.F6) that originated them.

As for Joyce,

Stand forth, Nayman of Noland (for no longer will I follow you oblique like through the inspired form of the third person singular and the moods and hesitensies of the but address myself to you with the empirative of my vendettative, provocative and out direct), stand forth, come boldly, jolly me, move me, zwillling though I am, to laughter in your true colours ere you be back for ever till I give you talkingto!

Have your little sintalks in the dunk of subjunctions, dual in duel and prude with pruriel even the aoriest chaparound whatsoever plaudered perfect anent prettydotes and haec genua omnia... in the case to be becoming a pale peterwright in spite of all your accusatives whilsly you’re wall-floored like your gerandiums... For you may be as practical as is predicable (*FW* 269.04).

A new grammar of emotions must be set to work to render the complexity of reality in language, to reconcile “the practical” and “the predicable”: the invention of new modes, genres and “numbers”, as in the case of the “empirative”, of the “vendettative”, the “provocative”, of considering the ambiguities of the deponent, the animosity of the “dual in duel” (*FW* 111.02), could, in Smollett, only be matched by the invention and use of the “eructative”, the “regurgitative”, the “vomitive”, the “invective”, augmented expressive means, emphasizing the effervescent, animated and dazzling quality of his language.

As Melchiori (1956: 47) asserted, “the transformation of personal names” are examples of a creative and intimately animated language, of emotive energies shaping the language anew. While Smollett resorts to his experience as doctor, scientist, satirist, Joyce follows

the example of Jousse¹⁴ who had theorized and exemplified the use of “gestural names” (“noms gestuels”), as a way of achieving the full expressivity of “*geste*”. Names and nicknames together with gestures, postures and poses – in Joyce: “Erect, beseated, mountback” (*FW* 108.01) – embody actual characters with moral qualities (names with stories behind), occupational names, often with distinctive national characteristics: in Joyce “borsaiolini”, or “polthrone”, as in “polthrone chair” (“poltroon”, lazy person); in Smollett “scroconni” (in Italian in the text), “minchione” (in the misspelling of Winifred Jenkins, “minchioned”, meaning “mentioned”, but also “made a fool of”, “Dunquisset” (*HC* 292) (which stands for Don Quixote); in Joyce “donkey schott” (*FW* 482.14); “Random”, precisely for his traits of “randomness”, the “sullenness” of Matthew Bramble in search of his health signified in “Matthewsullin” (*HC* 291) as a distinctive trait of his character.

In the title and name of Humphry Clinker, the phrase “to dine with Duke Humphries”, meaning “to eat poorly or not at all” – “with good Jook Humprey” (*FW* 331.07) – combines with a slang meaning of “clinker[s]”: “foecal anal bits”, ending up by giving the impression of a very risky “expedition” predictably bound to end up in “satiety”, exhaustion and failure. With the names of Bruno and Browning, Joyce plays on many levels of meaning: from “Bruno”, meaning, on the one level, “burnt” (Bruno having been “horribly” burnt in Rome in Campo de’ Fiori), to “brown”, meaning “dead”, as in a poem by Browning¹⁵, “browning” (meaning “dying”), which is tragically playing on the same concepts.

Despite the fact that James Atherton, in *The Books at the Wake* (1959), denies any possibility of Joyce borrowing from Smollett’s

¹⁴ On this point see Vaglio Marengo 2014.

¹⁵ The quip on “brown” meaning “dead” had already been used by Joyce in “The Dead” (“brown enough” and “all brown”) and later taken up, with a possible reference to a sonnet by Browning in honour of Rawdon Brown, an Englishman who had chosen to die in Venice, that is almost a self-obituary, anticipating Browning’s deathbed scene in Venice. On this point see Vaglio Marengo 2012.

play on words or gestural names, many examples of his treatment of language can be supplied.

In *Finnegans Wake*, pages 28 and 29, the references to Smollett's works increase ("a big rodyram at random", "humphing his share", "a poked wife in pickle", "three lice little clinkers") ultimately leading to a sort of "Old Vico Roundpoint" (*FW* 260.15) by an exercise in repetition: "cursing and recursing" ("cursed and recursed"), where everything appears to be re-enacted, recirculated and constantly regurgitated through a practice of exaggeration, amplification, repetition with variation that has a strong stylistic and structural impact.

Repose you now! Finn no more! For, be that samesake sibsubstitute of a hooky samon, there's already a big rodyram lad at random on the premises of his haunt of the hungredf bordles, it is told me, Shop illicit, flourishing like a lordmajor or like a buaboabaybohm, yardalong on the breezy side...as Phineas Barnum, humphing his share of the showthers is senken on him he' much a grandfallar, with a poked wife in pickle that'is a flyfire and three lice little, two twilling bugs and one midget And he cursed and recursed ...or he was never done seeing what you cool pigeons know (*FW* 28.33-29.11).

While the stylistic mode of "cursing and recursing" may well refer to, and be reminiscent of, the quality of Smollett's language, identified as the language of hyperbole, rhetorical amplification, compression, cumulative lists, disproportion, fermentation, surfeit, nausea, "satiety"¹⁶, it is in the movement of circulation and recirculation of cultural elements that Smollett makes a general statement on the progress of humanity and on the state and health of the nation.

¹⁶ The term which had surfaced earlier on in Winifred Jenkins's words defining Bath as "the very squintasense of satiety" (42), where *satiety* stands for "society" and is used to bring the novel to a close, in the perfect ambiguity of a "society" that has become unbearable and nauseating. Maybe just as nauseating as the "satiety of arthurs" (the "society of authors") in *FW* 229.07.

In the grotesque description of the Pumproom in Bath – a “nauseous stew of corruption” (*HC* 62) – Smollett conveys his ideas about the health and progress of civilisation, as well as of science and of literature in his time. This is carefully prepared in an ironic *crescendo*, “cursing and recursing”:

I am now as much afraid of drinking as of bathing; for, after a long conversation with the Doctor, about the construction of the pump and of the cistern, it is very far from being clear with me, that the patients in the Pump-room don't swallow the scourings of the bathers. I can't help suspecting that there is, or may be, some regurgitation from the bath into the cistern of the pump. In that case what a delicate beverage is everyday quaffed by the drinkers; medicated with the sweat, and dirt, and dandruff, and the abominable discharges of various kinds from twenty different diseased bodies, parboiling in the kettle below (*HC* 44).

It all leads to the Pump-room at Bath, a Viconian round-point recirculating waters and by that spreading diseases and perpetuating corruption:

I find that the old roman baths of this quarter, were found covered by an old burying ground, belonging to the Abbey; through which, in all probability, the water runs in its passage so that, as we drink the decoction of the living bodies at the Pump-room, we swallow the strainings of the rotten bones and carcasses at the private bath – I vow to god the very idea turns my stomach! (*HC* 45).

Fearing the degeneration and self-destruction of the human species, “radical dr. Smollett” (Bruce 1954) denounces the adulterous beverages that are assumed as drinks for health; he points to the ominous circulation of secretive and excretive fluids, to the contiguity of death and life, of sublime and grotesque, an infernal situation with no possibility of escape offered:

Snares are laid for our lives in everything we eat or drink; the very air we breathe is loaded with contagion. We cannot even sleep without the risqué of infection, I say, infection. This place is the rendezvous of infection (*HC* 45).

We will not be surprised at reading, in Winifred Jenkins's letters, that "affection" is turned into "infection" (*HC* 292). All the sentiments and the senses seem to be affected. Sterne, who invented for Smollett the nickname of "smellfungus", points out how the moral boundary of his universe had to be defined by stink, putrid effluvia and stercoraceous flavours (luxury and corruption going hand in hand). This had also to be intended as a way of recirculating and renewing languages bearing in mind that, as Vico said:

Linguis ingenia, non ingeniis linguas formari.

Everything happens in language, everything can happen in the languages of Smollett and Joyce by the recirculation of high and low, of tragic, comic and grotesque.

We are produced by language, not the other way round.

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‘TELL US, AREN’T YOU AN ARTIST?’ (*SH* 26) –
REVISITING JOYCE’S KÜNSTLERROMAN.¹

In the infirmary at Clongowes Wood College, Stephen recalls a nursery rhyme and feels moved by its words:

How sad and how beautiful! He wanted to cry quietly but not for himself: for the words, so beautiful and sad, like music” (*P* 22).

Stephen’s initial visceral responses to aural, visual and linguistic stimuli will eventually morph into a sharp intellectual discernment and confidence in his own uniqueness, though they will also be muffled by moments of wariness:

[h]is thinking was a dusk of doubt and self-mistrust, lit up at moments by the lightnings of intuition, but lightnings of so clear a splendour that in those moments the world perished about his feet as if it had been fire-consumed (*P* 177).

¹ This essay is dedicated to Rosa Maria Bolletieri. It marks my celebration of the 100th anniversary of the publication of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, 29th December 1916, and is based on my presentation at the X James Joyce Italian Foundation Conference, University Roma Tre on 2nd February 2017. I thank organizers Franca Ruggieri and Enrico Terrinoni for allocating a separate session for my presentation; my Chair, Rosemary Guruswamy, for travel funds; and Kim Gainer (Radford University) and Stephanie Nelson (Boston University) for astute comments that greatly improved this piece

In this essay, a continuation of my discussion of the very young Stephen as a budding artist (Wawrzycka 2011),² I wish to focus on the older Stephen and to reflect on Joyce's engagement with the elements of the *Bildungsroman* and the *Künstlerroman*, hoping, as I revisit Joycean literature on the subject, to bring into sharper relief the complexity of Joyce's deployment of some of the elements of the genres, particularly of the *Künstlerroman*. The latter term has fallen from much critical discussion as most critics read *A Portrait* as a *Bildungsroman*. But given that Joyce problematizes biographical and fictional writing by inflecting Stephen's artistic development with his own, I want to propose that to read Joyce's novel *also* as a *Künstlerroman* is to trace the nuances of the genre that appear to have been very much on Joyce's mind. Tellingly, when Chester G. Anderson set out to produce his iconic critical edition of *A Portrait*, he sought to "place the *Portrait* in the tradition of the *Künstlerroman*" (Anderson 1968: 3). One of his contributors, Harry Levin, does just that: for Levin, "[t]he *Künstlerroman* ... is the only conception of the novel that is specialized enough to include *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*" (Levin 1960: 42; 1968: 400).³ For J. H. Buckley, the *Künstlerroman* is "a tale of the orientation of an artist" and, indeed, he sees most of the English *Bildungsroman* novels of "youth or apprenticeship" as "a kind of *Künstlerroman*" (Buckley 1974: 13).⁴ In such novels the hero

² See also note 17.

³ Levin's "The Artist" (1968) originally appeared in his book, *James Joyce* (1960). Anderson also includes Maurice Beebe's "Artist as Hero" which is an "Introduction" to Beebe's *Ivory Towers and Sacred Founts* (1964), though it is the last chapter of that book, "The Return from Exile," that offers a more comprehensive reading of *A Portrait* in terms of Stephen's artistic development. Beebe sees Joyce's *A Portrait* as "a demonstration of Stephen's fulfilment as artist" (50), but rather than *Künstlerroman*, he uses the term "*Künstlerdrama* form" because works in the artist-hero tradition such as Ibsen's *When We Dead Awaken* and Hauptmann's *Michael Kramer* were especially influential for Joyce (Beebe 1964: 267).

⁴ Buckley contrasts the English *Bildungsroman* with the German *Bildungsroman*, defined by Susanne Howe Noble as the "novel of all-around development or self-culture" with "a more or less conscious attempt on the part of the hero to integrate his powers, to cultivate himself by his experience." Howe Noble, 6; quoted in Buckley, 286 n.19.

emerges as an artist of sorts, a prose writer like David Copperfield or Ernest Pontifex, a poet like Stephen Dedalus, an artisan and aspiring intellectual like Hardy's Jude, a painter like Lawrence's Paul Morel or Maugham's Philip Carey".

(Buckley 1974: 13)

Joyce stands out in this group, states Buckley, because he "sums up, even as he transforms, the traditions of the nineteenth-century *Bildungsroman*" and, even though Joyce "had no great respect for Goethe,⁵ he referred to him several times in an early version of the *Portrait*," evidently

fascinated by *Wilhelm Meister* and a study of the artist at odds with a Philistine public and...by Wilhelm's quest for self-culture, comparable as it is to Stephen's self-conscious dedication to his Daedalian destiny".

(Buckley 1974: 226)

Interestingly, Castle, in his early discussion of *A Portrait* as a *Bildungsroman*, "subsumes" the term *Künstlerroman* "under the term *Bildungsroman*" (Castle 1989: 25). Following suit, Weldon Thornton, also deems the distinction between the *Bildungsroman* and *Künstlerroman* inconsequential, finding "no significant differences" between the two terms in his reading of *A Portrait* (Thornton 1994: 183n.11). By contrast, Margaret McBride, in her book *Ulysses and the Metamorphosis of Stephen Dedalus* (2001), discusses Stephen as a protagonist of the *Künstlerroman* and proffers examples of how Joyce revo-

⁵ The footnote here is Buckley's; it directs readers to Epstein (1971), pp. 128-129, 200. Buckley adds: "Epstein cites three mentions of Goethe in *Stephen Hero* and one in the published *Portrait*. He argues that the battle of the puppets David and Goliath in *Meister* suggested to Joyce the struggle of the artist against a hostile public. I suggest the theme of self-directed *Bildung* as the most striking parallel between *Meister* and the *Portrait*" (Buckley 1974: n.2, 320-321).

lutionized the genre (McBride 2001: 12, 39).⁶ Castle revisits the English *Bildungsroman* in his 2003 essay, “Coming of Age in the Age of Empire: Joyce’s Modernist *Bildungsroman*” and in his 2006 book, *Reading the Modernist Bildungsroman*. With the *Künstlerroman* still subsumed, Castle’s discussion of characters in select Modernist novels⁷ centres not so much on the characters’ artistic growth but on a broader idea of *Bildung*.⁸ Castle also illuminates critical polemics on the very nature of the *Bildungsroman* between the Germanists for whom the *Bildungsroman* “cannot exist outside the terrain marked out for it by German Enlightenment thinkers nearly two hundred years ago” (Castle 2003, 670), and critics who see the genre as thriving in early modern literary traditions outside Germany. He cites Franco Moretti’s contention that the *Bildungsroman*, in Castle’s words,

enters a period of revival and transformation and becomes *a powerful and relevant form for the negotiation of complex problems concerning identity, nationality, education, the role of the artist, and social as well as personal relationships.*

(Castle 2003, 670; my emphasis)

⁶ See especially McBride’s Chapter 2 for the Aristotelian underpinnings of the *Künstlerroman* (McBride 2001: 38-60). See also S. L. Goldberg (1963), esp. 72-75.

⁷ In addition to James Joyce’s Stephen Dedalus and Gerty MacDowell, Castle’s book also discusses Thomas Hardy’s Jude Fawley, D. H. Lawrence’s Paul Morel, Oscar Wilde’s Dorian Gray, and Virginia Woolf’s Rachel Vinrace. The term *Künstlerroman* appears in Castle in reference to Lawrence’s *Sons and Lovers* (2008: 271n75), and to Woolf’s *The Voyage Out* (2008: 290 n.201).

⁸ *Bildung* is understood as education through self-cultivation (Castle 2003: 665), an English equivalent to “coming of age” or “rites of passage” (Castle 2006: 7). Fritz Senn analyzes the term in great depth and points out that the noun “derives from verbs which in Old High German meant ‘to give shape and essence; or ‘to form or imitate a shape’; it could be applied to God the creator, reflexively it refers to natural forms.” Senn adds that “Oxen” fits that definition because the chapter is both “*bilden* and *bilding* (formation, creation, development, education, the generation of forms). ... If you were to recognize all the stylistic semblances that Joyce confects, you would be said to have *Bildung* (education, breeding, culture, often a wide-ranging knowledge in the humanistic tradition)” (Senn, 1995: 66-67).

Thus, *A Portrait* emerges as a modernist *variant* of the *Bildungsroman*, a form that allowed Joyce to “translate disempowerment into narratives of survival, even if survival meant descent and, ultimately, exile” (Castle 2003, 670).

In my argument, *A Portrait* emerges *also* as a modernist variant of the *Künstlerroman*. Joyce’s modernist re-dress of both genres includes Stephen’s nonconformity and his denunciation of all authority, except for the rule of art. While the youthful “apprenticeship” of Stephen’s nineteenth century novelistic predecessors culminates in a largely seamless integration into adulthood, Joyce’s design offers no such “arrival” for Stephen. But Stephen’s pronounced “artistic” bent bolsters the novel’s status as *Künstlerroman*, well captured in Buckley’s phrase, “a tale of the orientation of an artist”, referenced above. And yet there are elements in *A Portrait* that somewhat destabilize this status. Let me explain by referring to Stephen’s use of the word “exile” in his critically celebrated phrase, “I will try to express myself in some mode of life or art as freely as I can and as wholly as I can, using for my defence the only arms I allow myself to use – silence, exile, and cunning” (*P* 247). Joycean criticism tends to treat the phrase as a self-evident stance adopted by the young Stephen against the cultural and national milieu that wrought, but eventually, he felt, inhibited him. From the narrative point of view, the term “exile” (and its function as a weapon) is a baffling gesture of projection: Stephen appears to see “exile” in terms of noble high-mindedness, or a trying-on of an armour of courage, or as a licence to proclaim himself apart from any social order. However, it could also be seen as a kind of cowardly pusillanimity on his part, a performative move as ambiguous as that of Miss Ivors’ seemingly victorious departure from the Morkan sisters’ party before Gabriel can regain the upper hand. We could ask then, is *absenting* oneself arming oneself? What complicates this question is that Stephen’s exile never materializes in the novel. In the last pages we see him prepare for a departure whose nature will not be clear until a chapter in another, still-unwritten, novel will disclose that Stephen’s brief sortie – never exile – was to Paris. While for Stephen exile is just a potentiality, for Joyce, as he writes *A Portrait*, it is an all

too tangible *actuality*. In contrast to the novel's earlier content, which follows the events from Joyce's own life quite closely, any overlap between the real Joyce and the fictional Stephen cease around 1902/1904.⁹ And while to conflate character and creator is to court biographical fallacy, such an identification was not wholly discouraged by Joyce himself, as we see in his early use of "Stephen Daedalus" as a *nom de plume*,¹⁰ or in Herbert Gorman's 1939 biography of Joyce. As early as 1915 W. B. Yeats also saw the novel (which he read serialized in *The Egoist*) as "a disguised autobiography."¹¹ Ellmann mentions "the special difficulties of the autobiographical novelist" (*JIII* 149) that have followed Joyce throughout his life and reminds us that Joyce had commented on this later in life to Louis Gillet: "when your work and life are but one, when they are interwoven in the same fabric, as in my case, there you are..." (Gillet 1958: 18).¹² To me, the degree of Stephen's fictionality problematizes *A Portrait's* status as a *Künstlerroman*: while writers of the *Künstlerroman* (and of the English *Bildungsroman* mentioned above) obviously draw on their own lives, when does the *Künstlerroman* cease being the *Künstlerroman*

⁹ In both versions of his biography, *James Joyce*, Richard Ellmann writes that Joyce's departure for Paris from Kingstown Pier on 1st December 1902 is fused at the end of *A Portrait* with Joyce's departure for Zurich/Trieste in 1904 (*JII* 113; *JIII* 109). See also Robert Adams Day for a reading of the Stephen-Joyce of 1902-1904.

¹⁰ Stanislaus Joyce noted that early on "[his] brother condemn[ed] pseudonyms" even though he used one in his very early writings. He adds that Joyce ended up "bitterly regret[ing] the self-concealment. He did not feel that he had perpetrated bad literature of which he ought to be ashamed." This begs the question about Joyce's reasons for using a pseudonym in the first place, given the uncompromising self-confidence well-recorded in his letters, including those to Yeats and, especially, to Grant Richards. Stanislaus is quoted in *The Critical Writings*, 111. Mark Wollaeger (2003) writes that "Joyce's openly symbolic name for his fictional surrogate provides an index to his self-mythologizing" through St. Stephen the martyr and Daedalus the artist/inventor (2003: 344-345).

¹¹ See the letter from Yeats to A. Llewelyn Roberts, 29th July 1915, *Letters II*.

¹² In Gillet, the French text reads: "*Mais quand votre art et votre vie ne font qu'un, quand ils s'enchevêtrent (interwoven) dans le même tissu come c'est mon, allez-y voir...*" (133). In Ellmann, the quote appears as: "when your work and life make one, when they are interwoven in the same fabric, as in my case, there you are..." (*JIII* 149).

and be just a plain autobiographical novel of artistic development? Is there a *difference*?

If the *Künstlerroman* traces the development of a largely fictionalized¹³ protagonist-artist and culminates in some *measurable artistic outcome* recognizable in that artist's novelistic milieu, an autobiographical novel of artistic development would be about a writer's own artistic progress not necessarily crowned by a tangible artefact. By these criteria, *A Portrait* falls short of being a *Künstlerroman*. Castle and Thornton concluded as much, as did Hugh Kenner much earlier, for whom "Stephen does not become an artist at all...but an aesthete" (Kenner 1947: 151).¹⁴ For Beebe, Stephen is no more an accomplished artist at the novel's end than is Proust's Marcel (who "is at least ready to write the book we have just read"; Beebe 1964: 6). Both protagonists, continues Beebe, emancipated from social and familial burdens, participate in narratives whose themes – the "quest for self" and the conflict between life and art – make them into the "artist-as-hero" and "the artist-as-exile" (Beebe 1964: 6). Stephen's famous

¹³ Literature on genres in term of the *degree* of the protagonists' *fictionality* seems nonexistent, as far as I can ascertain. And if I'm splitting hairs here, Mark Wollaeger (2003) also implies that there is a (non-quantifiable) difference between autobiography and autobiographical fiction when he notes the "occasional critical practice of referring to a composite figure 'Stephen/ Joyce' as if *Portrait* and *Ulysses* were *autobiographies* instead of *autobiographical fictions*" (2003: 344, my emphasis); see also Wollaeger's chapter, "Between Stephen and James: Portraits of Joyce as a Young Man." On the "Stephen/Joyce" composite, see Margaret McBride (2001: 33-37). Fritz Senn remarks on characters that "become reflexive verbs" and we can "deduce the author himself who, biographically, is all to all [characters]. All the works are, truisitically, *pièce de Joyce*" (Senn 1995: 24-25). Of course, both *Bildungsromane* and *Künstlerromane* may be autobiographical, but a "true autobiography is necessarily always something of a fragment ... A novel, on the other hand, must ideally like any work of art, have a self-subsistence, a form and meaning quite intelligible apart from the life of the novelist. The *Bildungsroman* as autobiographical novel accordingly poses some problems to both writer and reader..." (Buckley 1970: 94).

¹⁴ The label stuck; for instance, Buckley's chapter on Joyce in his book, *Seasons of Youth*, is titled, "Portrait of James Joyce as Young Aesthete" (1974: 225-247). Sean Latham, too, speculates that Stephen may be just a "pretentious young man who has mistaken his own alienation for an aesthetic calling" (2005: 29).

pronouncement about the artist as “the God of the creation” who, in relation to his work, remains “invisible, refined out of existence, indifferent, paring his fingernails” (*P* 215), lands Stephen in Beebe’s Ivory Tower (Beebe 1974: 261-277)¹⁵ and earns him Buckley’s label as “dispassionate craftsman” (1974: 225). Such a godlike artist, however, stands only in theoretical and figurative relationship to Stephen who has yet to create something – and maybe grow those nails so that there is something to pare.

The real-life Joyce-artist, before his exile, had some success on Dublin’s literary scene; the fictional Stephen creates nothing but the villanelle (discussed below) and this lack has significant implications for the novel’s status as *Künstlerroman*. There are precedents for characters in Joyce’s works who think of themselves as “artists”, but are “potential artists who do not live up to their apparent promise”; they are “artists manqué,” as Morris Beja dubs them (1989: 7). In Beja’s reading, such characters as Little Chandler, Mr. Duffy or Gabriel Conroy “may come to stress what the *Wake* calls... ‘a poor trait of the artless’ (*FW* 114.32)” (Beja 1989:16). Stephen comes off as “an aspiring writer” (*ibid.*: 8) who creates a jingle (“Pull out his eyes”) out of “Dante” Riordan’s threats. Beja refers to Stephen as the “verbal artist” (*ibid.*: 9) who “composes this crude but moving poem” and “we begin to see other indications of the young child’s sensitivity to words and their sounds” (*ibid.*: 8). If for Buckley, *A Portrait* as a *Bildungsroman* is “strikingly successful in its depiction of *childhood*” (Buckley 1974: 231, my emphasis), Beja’s and my own reading stresses Stephen-as-*child-artist*, though Beja concludes that “after the ‘Apologise’ rhyme

¹⁵ Beebe addresses artist-hero novels without reference to the Germanic nomenclature and proposes his own taxonomy of the “portrait-of-the-artist novel” whereby “the individual portraits of the artist” can be best grasped in the patterns of “the three interlocking themes: the Divided Self, the Ivory Tower, and the Sacred Fount” (1964:6). Beebe states, however, that “the ambivalence of Stephen’s dedication to art and life anticipates Joyce’s personal, post-Stephen solution to the conflict between the Ivory Tower and the Sacred Fount” (1964: 277; Beebe’s emphasis).

it's downhill from then on" for Stephen "in terms of actual artistic or poetic accomplishment" (Beja 1989: 9).

Maybe not: there is, after all, that villanelle. It has received mixed reviews from critics. Hugh Kenner famously deemed it the effect of a wet dream (Kenner 1956: 123). For Buckley, the villanelle "hardly warrants the prediction of great things to come"; it only adds to "the fiction of Stephen's talent" as he celebrates "his aesthetic theology" (Buckley 1974: 245) by proclaiming himself "a priest of the eternal imagination" (*P* 221). Wayne Booth asks whether Joyce intended the villanelle to be a "serious sign of Stephen's artistry," as he also proposes that the poem be *not* "judged but simply experienced" (Booth 1961: 328-329). Robert Scholes answers Booth's questions citing aesthetic and biographical evidence (Scholes 1964: 469-472 and *passim*).¹⁶ Charles Rossman takes both critics to task in a largely psychological reading of Stephen's motives and intentions (Rossman 1975). For Beja, the villanelle is "a bit purple" (Beja 1989: 9). Whatever its merits, I would side with Booth about simply experiencing it. To do so is to experience the poetic rhythm of its cadences and the young poet's rather remarkable craftsmanship in handling a rigid and limiting form. I would additionally argue that it is Joyce's *presentment of the process* of artistic language formation in Stephen throughout the novel – the process that culminates in the villanelle's emergence from the smithy of Stephen's mind-soul – that tilts the novel towards the *Künstlerroman*: the sheer poetic force of Stephen's language brings him closer to unfettering the artist within him, one who is already pre-figured in the Stephen of Clongowes Wood College. In my reading, Joyce plays with the *Künstlerroman* genre by reversing it: I see Stephen as the artist at his *purest* in the opening pages of *A Portrait*, with subsequent chapters presenting the development of a sensitive and discerning *young man* following the path of education, indoctrination, and initiation, as he navigates the nets – familial, political, ideological

¹⁶ Readers of Chester Anderson's edition of *A Portrait* will find both Booth's and Scholes's discussions reproduced in the "Criticism" section (Booth: 455-467); (Scholes: 468-480).

– that threaten his flight. And if such a maturation of a young man confirms Thornton’s and others’ reading of *A Portrait* as a modernist *Bildungsroman*, I would reiterate that the elements of the *Künstlerroman* are equally manifest throughout the novel in Stephen’s premonition that his destiny is to be the *artist*.¹⁷ This unwavering sense of his fate is suggestive of the Platonic doctrine of *anamnesis* (ἀνάμνησις), understood as a deep fore-knowledge of the soul that underlies our capacity “to grasp what is true and good in the world, for, without at least some dim memory of what we are looking for, it is impossible that we could ever find it, or know it when we did, as Plato demonstrates in *Meno* and recalls synoptically in *Phaedo*” (Wawrzycka 2011: 377). Here is how Stephen’s premonitions weave through the novel (all italics mine):

- Stephen learns unfamiliar words by heart because “*through them he had glimpses of the real world about him. The hour when he too would take part in the life of that world seemed drawing near and in secret he began to make ready for the great part which he only dimly apprehended*” (P 62).
- The feeling that “*he was different from others*” never left Stephen; he longed (inspired by thoughts of Mercedes) “*to meet in the real world the unsubstantial image which his*

¹⁷ Already in *Stephen Hero*, Stephen realizes that “[t]he artist who could disentangle the subtler *soul of the image* from its mesh of defining circumstances most exactly and embody it in artistic circumstances chosen as the most exact for its new office, he was the supreme artist” (*SH* 1944: 65; my emphasis). Aristotle states that “to the *thinking soul* images serve as present sensations . . . this is why the *soul* never thinks without an image” (*De Anima* III.431a 14-17). Stephen evokes images associated with Rody Kickham (a decent fellow), with Nasty Roche (a stink), with his mother (nice but not so nice when she cries), or with Cecil Thunder (belt, toe in the rump), and many others. Thus, we see a very young artist-to-be at the vulnerable moment when the boy’s *thought* is indistinguishable from his *soul*, an identification made by Democritus and reported by Aristotle in *De Anima* (I.404a 31). See Wawrzycka, 2011: 374-375.

soul so constantly beheld” and “*a premonition that lead him on told him that this image would encounter him*” (P 65); he is again revisited by “*an intuition or foreknowledge of the future*” (P 66).

- Sexual (brothel) and spiritual (retreat) rites behind him, Stephen rejects priesthood re-remembering having always “*conceived himself as being apart in every order*” (P 161).
- Timing his walk “*to the fall of verses*” (P 164), Stephen reflects that “*the end he had been born to serve yet did not see had led him to escape by an unseen path: and now beckoned him once more and a new adventure was about to be opened to him*” (P 165).¹⁸
- Hearing his name (“Stephanos Daedalos”) – the name “*of the fabulous artificer*” – he recognizes it as “*a prophecy of the end he had been born to serve and had been following through the mists of childhood and boyhood, a symbol of the artist forging anew in his workshop out of the sluggish matter of the earth a new soaring impalpable imperishable being*” (P 168-169).
- His triumphant “*Yes! Yes! Yes!*” is followed by the feeling that “*[h]e would create proudly out of the freedom and power of his soul, a living thing, new and soaring and beautiful, impalpable, imperishable*” (P 170).

¹⁸ It is in this passage that Stephen, prompted by “a phrase from his treasure ... – A day of dappled seaborne clouds” (166), meditates on the colour and “rhythmic rise and fall” of words (P 166). The language of this highly poetic passage (166-167), like the “birds” passage (224-226), goes a long way to show how Stephen crystalizes into a maturing poet.

- By the time the echo of these words reappears as Stephen welcomes life and ventures famously “*to encounter for the millionth time the reality of experience and to forge in the smithy of [his] soul the uncreated conscience of [his] race*” (P 253), Stephen is poised to leave Ireland.

And poised to leave, vowing “silence, exile and cunning.” The last chapter, widely studied for Stephen’s pronouncements on art, has also been understood as (though I’d argue, mistaken for) the culmination of Stephen’s artistic development. Stephen’s proclamations (“Aristotle had not defined pity and terror. I have”; P 204) and engagements with Aquinas (“*Pulcra sunt quae visa placent*” (207); “*at pulchritudinem tria requiruntur: integritas, consonantia, claritas ...*”; P 212), parsed with aplomb in English, strike one as rehearsed declamations of concepts performed by Stephen-the-actor, and a good actor, as we can judge from his dramatic role, adeptly imitating the school principal. And if projection and imitation are a constant in Stephen’s life, that’s not all bad; Aristotle reminds us that an instinct for imitation is one of the building blocks of intellectual growth and learning, as is the instinct for harmony or beauty. Stephen’s artistic instincts expressed in the “Apologise” rhyme reach their poetic (if purplish) apex in the villanelle and fulfil the stipulations of the *Künstlerroman*’s genre in terms of content. The novel’s structure, however, complicates this resolve through its diary entries.¹⁹ Kenner suggests that “the diary form of the last seven pages *disarms us* with an illusion of auctorial impartiality” (1956: 123, my emphasis). Far from it: Joyce-the author dismantles the novel as a genre by ending it with a new voice that

¹⁹ Michael Levenson (2003) has written eloquently on the subject. His chapter in Wollaeger’s *Casebook* offers an overview of literature on the ending of *A Portrait*, including discussions by, among others, Kenneth Grose, Susan Lanser, Anthony Burgess and Robert Martin Adams (pp.184-185). Levenson’s own discussion situates Stephen’s diary entries in the diarist tradition (Pepys, Kafka, Burney, Turgenev, Lermontov) and posits that, in contrast to the diary’s traditional linear trajectory, Stephen’s diary repeats aspects of his earlier life. Levenson concludes that the novel’s ending intimates Stephen’s return rather than exile.

breaks up the unity of diction and by abandoning, in a grand modernist gesture, Aristotelian principles of plot: he offers no “end” to the well-presented “beginning” and “middle” of the novel. The actual *exile* of the artist is left out of the novel and the artist himself is left incomplete: he is the *artist manqué* presented in the *Künstlerroman manqué* – a fitting artistic product of Ireland’s *culture manqué* denounced by the young Joyce in his early critical writings and letters. Joyce’s aporetic ending makes *A Portrait* a new kind of *Künstlerroman*, one that abandons the positivistic paradigms of its nineteenth-century forerunner that grant the protagonist fulfilment as an artist. Joyce instead injects the *Künstlerroman* with a modernist ethos by suspending Stephen in the realm of potentiality and unfinalizability. Or, as McBride puts it, Joyce’s *Künstlerroman* “manages to revolutionize the genre: Stephen’s story appears to culminate with, ironically, the disintegration of its own artistic figure” (McBride 2001: 39). Stephen’s aporetic nature will be further articulated in *Ulysses*.

But Joyce himself left for the Continent and did become the artist. Ellmann sees Joyce’s 1904 departure as “a strategy of combat” (1982: 110). I would add that Joyce grafts his own ambivalence about self-exile onto Stephen for whom exile’s double-edged implications are unknowable. Hence “cunning?” Fritz Senn reminds us that Stephen’s name in Greek – *daidalos* (*δαίδαλος*) – means *cunningly wrought* (Senn 1995:149), but, given that Joyce is writing *A Portrait* as an older and wiser man, he could be arming Stephen with cunning as a retrospective kind of gesture – Stephen would know from Skeat that the word means both “knowledge/skill” and “temptation/trial.” If cunning, a necessary result of exile, can be seen as a survival strategy by which Joyce-the-exile managed to navigate the new realms of *place* and *art*, the *Künstlerroman* emerges as a cunning medium through which to present the “cunningly wrought” artist *in statu nascendi* as he, to no end, forges his artistic identity by negotiating not

exile but his own country's nets of religion, nationalism, and colonialism.²⁰ His creator, Joyce-the artist-exile, flew past them and soared.

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²⁰ See Castle (2006) where he discusses these aspects as elements of the *Bildungsroman* (159-191).

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2.

JOYCEAN GLEANINGS

FORSE CHE SÌ FORSE CHE NO.
JOYCE TRA PASCOLI E GADDA

Se non è vero son trovatore
FW 301.17

Questo mio intervento tratta di due sì e un no. Il primo dei due «sì» è la seconda cellula verbale, delle tre, in ordine di apparizione. Tutti conoscono, nell'«infinità di atomi eternamente mobili in ogni direzione»¹ di cui per Enrico Terrinoni (all'insegna di Giordano Bruno) consiste l'opera joyciana, questo particolare e quanto mai rilevato atomo linguistico che ha la valenza esplosiva, epifanica quant'altri mai, di un Aleph. «La più potente di tutte le parole»², come l'ha definita John McCourt, è la parola «Yes» che Molly Bloom pronuncia a più riprese e poi un'ultima volta, alla fine del suo monologo, nell'ultimo capitolo di *Ulisse*.

In fondo, quanto segue può essere considerato nient'altro che una nota di commento (un tentativo di nota di commento) a questa singola parola del testo di *Ulisse*. Certo, ancorché così rilevato dalla posizione e dalle insistite ripetizioni, questo «yes» è pur sempre una singola parola. Ma ogni parola dei testi joyciani maturi è un «chaosmos», come nella classica lettura, di Umberto Eco, del «cosmo einsteiniano, incurvato su se stesso» di *Finnegans Wake*: in cui «ogni

¹ Enrico, Terrinoni, *Ostregatto, ora ho capeto!*, introduzione all'edizione a cura sua e di Fabio Pedone di James Joyce, *Finnegans Wake. Libro terzo, capitoli 1 e 2*, Milano, Mondadori, 2017, p. XII.

² John, McCourt, *James Joyce. Gli anni di Bloom* [2000], traduzione di Valentina Olivastri, Milano, Mondadori, 2004, p. 275.

avvenimento, ogni parola si trovano in una relazione possibile con tutti gli altri ed è dalla scelta semantica effettuata in presenza di un termine che dipende il modo di intendere tutti gli altri»³.

La prima cellula in ordine cronologico è un altro «Sì». Lo pronuncia – prima in inglese, due volte, e alla fine in italiano – un'altra Molly, la bambina protagonista del poemetto *Italy* di Giovanni Pascoli. L'ultima delle tre cellule è invece un «No». Lo grida a squarciagola una delle indiziate del delitto Balducci, la giovane Assunta Crocchiapani, stretta all'angolo dal commissario Don Ciccio Ingravallo nell'ultima pagina di *Quer pasticciaccio brutto de via Merulana* di Carlo Emilio Gadda. Tre parole pronunciate da tre donne, di tre età diverse, in tre testi fra loro separati più o meno da tutto: dal tempo, dalla lingua, dai generi letterari.

Non voglio nascondere un'effettiva, tutt'altro che retorica, esitazione. Di essere a mia volta sospeso, insomma, fra due «sì» e un «no». In estrema sintesi – prima ipotesi: sì, le due (quella di Pascoli da parte di Joyce, quella di Joyce – rovesciata – da parte di Gadda) sono vere e proprie citazioni, consapevoli e intenzionali. Seconda ipotesi: no, sono semplici coincidenze (e non del genere «a-casuale» che affascinavano Jung), nel qual caso tutto quanto segue perde di ogni ipotetica validità. Terza ipotesi: sì o meglio, diciamo, *quasi-sì*: le due ricorrenze sono echi inconsapevoli, che dunque – al di là delle intenzioni degli autori – ci devono indurre a pensare che le due ipotetiche “fonti” (Pascoli per Joyce, Joyce per Gadda) significhino, per le due ipotetiche “foci”, molto di più di quanto la tutto sommato scarsa traccia lasciata, nell'uno e nell'altro, dall'uno e dall'altro, abbia sinora fatto pensare. *Quasi* sì, anche perché «quasi», in effetti, è l'ultima parola del *Pasticciaccio*:

³ Umberto Eco, *Opera aperta*, Milano, Bompiani [1962], 1976², p. 43. Ma cfr. poi, dello stesso Eco, la monografia (desunta dalle pagine joyciane espunte dalla prima edizione del libro del '62) *Le poetiche di Joyce*, Milano, Bompiani, 1966, pp. 113-71, in particolare (col Bruno di *De l'infinito universo e mondi*) la p. 137, sulla «natura metamorfica di ogni parola, di ogni etimo, disposto a divenire immediatamente “altro”, a esplodere in nuove dimensioni semantiche».

«no, nun so' stata io!». Il grido incredibile bloccò il furore dell'ossesso. Egli non intese, là pe' llà, ciò che la sua anima era in procinto d'intendere. Quella piega nera verticale tra i due sopraccigli dell'ira, nel volto bianchissimo della ragazza, lo paralizzò, lo indusse a riflettere: a ripentirsi, quasi.⁴

Non posso neppure nascondere che questa mia esitazione ne adombri una, di carattere teorico, decisamente di non poco momento. A dirla molto in breve: Joyce cita “tutto”? Si deve forse supporre che, come un famigerato personaggio di Borges, egli consapevolmente ricordasse tutto quanto nella sua esistenza matura aveva letto, ascoltato, sentito riferire?⁵ Per la verità lui, il diretto interessato, sosteneva l'esatto contrario. Nelle conversazioni con Arthur Power a un certo punto esclama: «Anche se la gente legge in *Ulisse* più di quanto io volessi dire, chi dirà che hanno torto?»⁶ – così «anticipando di alcuni decenni», ha commentato Terrinoni, «le più avanzate tesi sulla semiosi aperta e le più azzardate teorie della ricezione»⁷ [è stato proprio il teorico dell'*Opera aperta*, certo, a definire Joyce l'«autore che ha conce-

⁴ Carlo Emilio Gadda (1957). *Quer pasticciaccio brutto de via Merulana*, Milano, Garzanti, 1957; ora nell'edizione diretta da Dante Isella delle *Opere*, vol. II, *Romanzi e racconti*, II, a cura di Giorgio Pinotti, Dante Isella e Raffaella Rodondi, ivi 1989, p. 276 (le citazioni saranno da ora in poi condotte direttamente a testo, rinviando a questa edizione con la sigla *P* seguita dal numero di pagina).

⁵ Non a proposito di *Ulisse* ma di *Finnegans Wake* (ma è forse lecito interpretare *Penelope*, lo vedremo, come una specie di “ponte” fra i due testi) diceva Eco che Joyce «ostenta la pretesa orgogliosa di piegare il linguaggio a esprimere “tutto”, e a tale scopo impiega del linguaggio tutti quei termini e quei referenti che, compromessi con qualche dottrina, qualche sistema, qualche deposito di significati, possono sciorinare e far coesistere ogni affermazione fatta sul mondo, unificandole tutte grazie al tessuto connettivo di un linguaggio capace ormai di porre in relazione ogni cosa, di stabilire i corti circuiti più imprevedibili, di legare insieme, per violenza etimologica, i referenti più diversi» (Eco 1966: 160-1).

⁶ Arthur Power, *Conversazioni con Joyce* [1974], a cura di Franca Ruggieri, Roma, Editori Riuniti, 1980, p. 94.

⁷ Enrico Terrinoni, *Ostregatto, ora ho capeto!*, cit., p. XX.

pito un'opera aperta, e la più aperta di tutte»]⁸. E invece, a leggere certi commenti joyciani (come capita, forse, solo con quelli danteschi; oltretutto con tanta acqua testuale fluiva nel frattempo sotto i ponti), proprio questa condizione d'onnipotenza (che poi, nel Funes borgesiano, tutt'altro che onnipotenza comporta) sarebbe dato indurre. Ma se così stessero le cose com'è possibile ipotizzare, in un autore siffatto, la persistenza inconsapevole di una cellula testuale, incastonata oltretutto in luogo per eccellenza rilevato quale l'ultima parola del suo testo?⁹ Anche a proposito dell'"estremo" che rappresenta *Finnegans Wake*, nei *Limiti dell'interpretazione* lo stesso Eco ci invita ad applicare il rasoio dell'*economia ermeneutica*: «un testo è un organismo, un sistema di relazioni interne che attualizza certi collegamenti possibili e ne narcotizza altri», per cui a un testo «è possibile far dire molte cose – in certi casi un numero potenzialmente infinito di cose – ma è impossibile – o almeno criticamente illegittimo – fargli dire ciò che non dice. Spesso i testi dicono più di quello che i loro autori intendevano dire, ma meno di quello che molti lettori incontinenti vorrebbero che dicessero»¹⁰.

A complicare ulteriormente il quadro, l'allusione a Dante comportata – come vedremo – dal «si» della Molly di Pascoli. La «lingua del sì» è, secondo autorità dantesca appunto – tanto per Pascoli che per Joyce la suprema autorità letteraria convocabile – l'italiano: poiché l'Italia, per *Inf.* XXXIII, 80, è il «bel paese dove 'l sì suona» (in analogia alla lingua *d'oc* e a quella *d'oïl* in Francia)¹¹. Ma in quale

⁸ Umberto Eco, *Ostrigotta, ora capesco*, introduzione a James Joyce, *Anna Livia Plurabelle*, a cura di Rosa Maria Bollettieri Bosinelli, Torino, Einaudi, 1996, p. XVII.

⁹ Il finale del romanzo è in posizione rilevata anche dall'ipotesi della *fine* che il romanzo stesso configura (la considerazione vale, anche in questo caso, per entrambi gli ultimi romanzi scritti da Joyce): cfr. Enrico Terrinoni (2015). *James Joyce e la fine del romanzo*, Roma: Carocci (specie l'introduzione, «Where the novel begins... ovvero, Dove finisce il romanzo», pp. 11-29).

¹⁰ Si veda tutto il § «Economizzare su Joyce», pp. 106-10.

¹¹ In *Finnegans Wake* (129.27), peraltro, Joyce ironizza sulla formula dantesca con l'espressione «il belpaese» (Joyce, James (2001). *Finnegans Wake. Libro primo V-VIII*, a cura di Luigi Schenoni, con un saggio di Edmund Wilson, Milano: Mondadori, p. 129). Cfr.: «perché si sa che i maestri, padri Danti compresi, vanno mangiati in salsa piccante»

sensu allora – metalinguisticamente parlando – le due Molly pronunciano i propri rispettivi «sì»? Pronunciandolo oltretutto, quella di Joyce, in *inglese*?

Come dicevo, devo sospendere il giudizio. A mia volta, insomma, tocca ripetere *forse che sì forse che no*: rinviando l'ardua sentenza a chi mi legge. Un po' mi consola che anche gli ultimi traduttori di *Finnegans Wake*, Enrico Terrinoni e Fabio Pedone, licenziando il primo volume della loro fatica e ripercorrendo le inevitabili esitazioni, il rincorrersi vicendevole delle ipotesi che tale fatica inevitabilmente hanno punteggiato, abbiano finito per iscriverla sotto l'insegna del «ma anche sì» (capovolgendo un sintagma del corrente *sermo cotidianus*, «ma anche no»), «sull'onda dei “forse”, “sembra”, “potrebbe essere”»¹². Un'onda probabilistica dell'interpretazione che, a dirla tutta, appare quintessenzialmente joyciana. Come che sia, in questa sede vorrei limitarmi a esporre il “caso”. Anzi, i casi. Certo consapevole di non potermi spacciare, a differenza di Ingravallo, ad essi «ubiquo»¹³ appunto.

Il mio titolo a sua volta è una citazione, dal romanzo omonimo di Gabriele d'Annunzio, pubblicato nel 1910. Già in d'Annunzio, peraltro, è una citazione: quella di un motto istoriato nel soffitto ligneo della Sala del Labirinto, nel Palazzo Ducale di Mantova, dove si aggirano i protagonisti Paolo Tarsis e Isabella Inghirami nella prima parte del romanzo¹⁴. Il motto dei Gonzaga, nella narrazione di d'Annunzio,

in Fabio Pedone, *Per farla finita con la «Bella Patria»*, postfazione all'edizione cit. di James Joyce, *Finnegans Wake. Libro terzo, capitoli 1 e 2*, p. 318.

¹² Enrico Terrinoni, Fabio Pedone, *Nota dei traduttori*, in James Joyce, *Finnegans Wake. Libro terzo, capitoli 1 e 2*, cit., pp. LXIII-LXIV.

¹³ «Tutti ormai lo chiamavano don Ciccio. Era il dottor Francesco Ingravallo comandato alla mobile: [...] ubiquo ai casi, onnipresente su gli affari tenebrosi»: è l'*incipit* di Carlo Emilio Gadda, *Quer pasticciaccio brutto de via Merulana*, cit., 15.

¹⁴ Cfr. Gabriele d'Annunzio, *Forse che sì forse che no*, Milano, Treves, 1910; ora in Id., *Prose di romanzi*, edizione diretta da Ezio Raimondi, vol. II, a cura di Niva Lorenzini, Milano, Mondadori, 1989, p. 540. Si veda la nota della curatrice a p. 1332. Il motto inciso nel soffitto (con la virgola) è per tradizione attribuito a Vincenzo Gonzaga: il quale lo avrebbe concepito nell'incertezza dell'esito dell'assedio da lui intentato nel 1601 ai turchi

allude all'incertezza affettiva, all'ondeggiare dei sentimenti (e della sorte) dei personaggi (che si riflette, quasi al modo del *correlativo oggettivo* eliotiano, nella rappresentazione "liquida", ondeggiante appunto, del paesaggio). Non c'è bisogno di ricordare, in questa sede, lo speciale rapporto di Joyce con la lingua e la tradizione letteraria italiana¹⁵, anche contemporanea, in particolare proprio con d'Annunzio (anche se, in verità, Joyce ammirava soprattutto il precedente *Il fuoco*¹⁶; di quello invece destinato a restare l'ultimo suo – peraltro "wagneriano" e musicale, nella struttura, più ancora del precedente, già parossisticamente tale – non si sa in effetti Joyce cosa pensasse)¹⁷. D'Annunzio che a Pascoli era legato da un complesso dare-avere e da una contrastata, ma indubbia, reciproca stima¹⁸.

trincerarsi a Canizza (Nagykanizsa), in Ungheria (infine conclusosi con un nulla di fatto). La suggestione provenne a d'Annunzio da una visita da lui compiuta a Mantova nel 1907.

¹⁵ Da ultimo, sul tema, si veda anche il contributo di John McCourt (McCourt 2013: 61-79) *Joyce, il Bel Paese and the Italian Language*, in *Joycean Unions. Post-Millennial Essays from East to West*, numero monografico a cura di R. Brandon Kershner e Tekla Mecsnober di «European Joyce Studies», 22, 2013, pp. 61-79, al quale come si vedrà devo fra l'altro la mia principale pezza d'appoggio. Ringrazio Enrico Terrinoni per avermi segnalato questo saggio.

¹⁶ Da lui definito «highest achievement of the novel to date», come ricorda Stanislaus Joyce nel suo ben noto *memoir* (Joyce Stanislaus 1958: 154).

¹⁷ Oltre al *Fuoco* – disse ad Alessandro Francini Bruni – Joyce ammirava di d'Annunzio in special modo opere teatrali come *La nave*, *La città morta* e *Fedra* (McCourt 2004: 221).

¹⁸ Cfr. Marco Santagata (2002). *Per l'opposta balza. La cavalla storna e il commiato dell'Alcyone*, Milano: Garzanti. Contrastato ma forte il rapporto di Gadda tanto con l'uno che con l'altro (per il primo si veda Antonio Zollino (1998). *Il vate e l'ingegnere. D'Annunzio in Gadda*, Pisa: ETS, e la sintesi dello stesso autore, (2002). *D'Annunzio, nella Pocket Gadda Encyclopedia* curata da Pedriali, Federica G. nell'«Edinburgh Journal of Gadda Studies»:

<http://www.gadda.ed.ac.uk/Pages/resources/walks/pge/dannunziozollin.php>; per il secondo si pensi intanto – ma si veda poi, *infra*, la nota 112 – all'impasto linguistico e tonale delle *Poesie gaddiane*, per lo più proprio a Pascoli riconducibile: cfr. Maria Antonietta Terzoli [1993]. *Introduzione a Gadda poeta* in Ead. (2009). *Alle sponde del tempo consunto. Carlo Emilio Gadda dalle poesie di guerra al «Pasticciccio»*, Milano: Effigie, pp. 32-50; si veda ora, al riguardo, l'approfondita tesi di dottorato di Dalila Colucci, «Ogni poema è nel mondo infinito». *Un'ipotesi interpretativa per le poesie di C. E. Gadda*, rela-

Cominciamo a contestualizzare il nostro primo «si». I *Poemetti*, la cui prima edizione è del 1897, trasfondono in una dimensione narrativa l'immaginario e gli strumenti tecnici della poesia di Pascoli – in precedenza affidatasi a una poetica impressionistica, per *flash*, che aveva imposto al libro per antonomasia di tale poetica, *Myricæ*, pubblicato per la prima volta nel 1891, un titolo tratto dalla *IV Ecloga* virgiliana, «Non omnes arbusta juvant humilesque Myricæ» ossia «Non a tutti piacciono gli arbusti e le umili tamerici» – in una dimensione narrativa; e infatti dal medesimo testo virgiliano prendono l'esergo «Paulo maiora»: alludendo all'ambizione strutturale e linguistica, nonché all'estensione materiale, dei testi¹⁹. *Italy*, in particolare, viene composto nel 1904 (proprio l'anno del Bloomsday) per essere quello stesso anno aggiunto alla silloge nella sua terza edizione (che da quel momento prende il nuovo titolo di *Primi poemetti* per distinguerla dai *Nuovi poemetti*, pubblicati di conserva coi precedenti)²⁰. *Italy* si compone di due canti in terzine di endecasillabi (struttura metrica che richiama subito Dante e la *Commedia*, poema narrativo per eccellenza), a loro volta suddivisi rispettivamente in nove e venti capitoli, per un totale di 450 versi. Mentre i *Poemi conviviali*, sempre del 1904, tente-

tore Carla Benedetti, Pisa, Scuola Normale Superiore, anno accademico 2015-2016, specie alle pp. 213 sgg.).

¹⁹ Per la contrapposizione tra il filone di *Myricæ* e quello dei *Poemetti*, e la loro lettura in chiave essenzialmente narrativa («in questa cifra [...] i *Poemetti* raggiungono risultati più alti di *Myricæ* e rappresentano il fiore di tutta la poesia del Pascoli»), seguo la linea del grande saggio di Luigi Baldacci, *Poesie del Pascoli* [1974], in Id., (2003). *Ottocento come noi. Saggi e pretesti italiani*, Milano: Rizzoli, pp. 209-45 (la citazione a p. 238).

²⁰ Giovanni Pascoli, *Italy*, in Id. (1904). *Primi poemetti*, Bologna: Zanichelli (la prima edizione dei *Poemetti* era stata pubblicata presso Paggi, a Firenze, nel 1897). Per l'inspiegabile e inqualificabile assenza del poemetto dall'antologia dei «Meridiani», Id. (2002), *Poesie e prose scelte*, a cura di Cesare Garboli, Milano, Mondadori, ricorro a Id. (2001). *Tutte le poesie*, a cura di Arnaldo Colasanti, Roma: Newton Compton, pp. 171-83 (le citazioni saranno da ora in poi condotte direttamente a testo, con l'indicazione a numeri romani maiuscoli del canto, a numeri romani minuscoli del capitolo, e a numeri arabi del verso).

ranno di raccontare con gli strumenti della poesia moderna l'immaginario classico (da Ulisse a Socrate ad Alessandro Magno), con i *Poemetti* Pascoli cerca di affrontare problemi del suo tempo, sociali e politici.

Italy, in particolare, è uno dei primi testi della nostra letteratura che tocchi il tema dell'emigrazione. La sua dedica suona infatti «Sacro all'Italia raminga», e racconta la storia (vera)²¹ di una famiglia di emigranti originari di Caprona, in Toscana, che tornano dagli Stati Uniti per una visita ai famigliari, e la loro difficile integrazione col vecchio contesto paesano. L'immagine simbolica del «nido», topica nel primo Pascoli, acquista così una dimensione storica e politica: il «nido» è la patria dalla quale i «rondinini» si sono dovuti allontanare, finendo per assorbire linguaggi e suoni diversi. Un bel giorno però Ghita e Beppe (detto «Ioe», come Pascoli immagino trascriva *Joe*) – i due “migranti economici”, come li chiameremmo oggi – tornano a casa portando con sé una bella novità, la loro bambina, alla quale hanno dato appunto il nome Molly: nella lingua del paese d'adozione (allo stesso modo in cui i figli di Joyce, Giorgio e Lucia, prenderanno il loro dalla lingua di quello in cui, di lì a poco, nasceranno). La Molly di *Italy* è nata appunto in America e non parla una parola d'italiano, né ovviamente può conoscere alcunché della realtà dalla quale provengono i genitori. Il «fanciullino», in questo caso la fanciullina, vive dunque un'estraneità linguistica e storica insieme²². Ma, a differenza della madre Ghita, la ragazza emigrata che non riesce più a integrarsi nel proprio contesto d'origine, Molly mostra una sorprendente capacità di adattamento.

L'aspetto più avvincente di questo testo è senz'altro la sua particolarissima mescola stilistica: che ne fa un *unicum* anche nell'opera

²¹ Si veda *infra* la nota 26.

²² «La prima mutilazione che l'emigrante subisce è nella costrizione o a un linguaggio per lui disumano, quasi pregrammaticale e uccellino (il *cheap cheap* suona *cip cip*) o a una lingua imbastardita, in parte ancora vernacolare e sempre povera, in parte straniera e storpiata»: Nadia Ebani, nel commento all'edizione a sua cura di Giovanni Pascoli, *Primi poemetti*, Milano, Guanda-Fondazione Bembo, 1997, p. 408.

sempre sorprendente, da questo punto di vista, del suo autore. Come ha sintetizzato quello che di Pascoli è stato il maggior critico, Gianfranco Contini, «l'emigrante che, tornato in Lucchesia dagli Stati Uniti, parla un linguaggio impastato di italiano e di americano, in cui il toscano incastona o, più spesso, assorbe, adattati alla sua fonetica e forniti di connessioni mnemoniche in tutto nuove, i vocaboli stranieri»²³. La voce della natura, i versi degli animali onnipresenti nella poesia del primo Pascoli – e che fanno parlare lo stesso Contini di un «linguaggio agrammaticale o pregrammaticale, estraneo alla lingua come istituto»²⁴ – diventa ora plurilinguismo nell'accezione più consueta: perché nel tessuto italiano penetrano massicciamente da un lato il sostrato vernacolare toscano e, dall'altro, l'inglese. Ma i due livelli s'intrecciano e si mescolano quanto mai arditamente, per esempio quando il verso delle rondini – uccelli migratori al quale Pascoli paragona con insistenza la sorte dei migranti – viene trascritto come «*sweet... sweet*» (II, vii, 1-3; e poi ancora II, xx, 26), cioè con quella che è a un contempo un'onomatopea e una parola inglese²⁵.

All'inizio del testo Molly ci viene presentata «malatella». Al suo rifiuto del paese sconosciuto nel quale è stata portata dai genitori, rifiuto espresso nella «sua lingua d'oltremare» («*Bad country, Ioe, your Italy!*»: I, iii, 25), il paese miticamente personalizzato – «Italy» appunto – «se la prende a male» (I, iv, 1), cosicché il tempo peggiora (siamo all'inizio di febbraio, gli emigrati sono arrivati in paese il giorno della «Candelora»: I, iv, 2), e di conseguenza peggiora pure la salute della «malatella» («*poor Molly!*»: I, iv, 25); si arriva a temere per la sua vita. Chi la accudisce è la nonna, una tessitrice (altra figura ricorrente nell'immaginario pascoliano) il cui lavoro umile e antico non

²³ Gianfranco Contini, *Il linguaggio di Pascoli* [1955], in Id., *Varianti e altra linguistica. Una raccolta di saggi (1938-1968)*, Torino, Einaudi, 1970, p. 223.

²⁴ Ivi, p. 222.

²⁵ «il poeta gioca sulle possibilità onomatopeiche della parola *sweet*, che suggerisce con immediatezza fonosimbolica la positività del rapporto Molly : casa = rondini : nido»: così Giuseppe Leonelli nel commento all'edizione a sua cura di Giovanni Pascoli, *Primi poemetti*, Milano, Mondadori, 1982, p. 259.

viene compreso da Ghita, ormai del tutto integrata nei costumi d'oltreoceano («“Mamma, a che filate? / Nessuna fila in Mèrica. Son usi / d'una volta, del tempo delle fate. / [...] Or c'è la macchina che scocca / d'un frullo solo centomila fusi [...]”»: I, viii, 7-12). Saltando la generazione perduta di Ghita, però, proprio nel lavoro della tessitura nonna e nipote trovano un'imprevista solidarietà. Così, man mano, Molly torna in salute; mentre, quasi in un passaggio rituale di consegne, si ammala la nonna – sino a morire («Non piangere, *poor Molly!* Esci, fa piano, / lascia la nonna lì sotto il lenzuolo / di tela grossa ch'ella fece a mano»: II, xix, 1-3)²⁶. Giunge il momento del congedo, la famiglia degli emigranti si appresta a fare ritorno oltreoceano. Molly viene attorniata dai bambini del paese, coi quali nel frattempo è riuscita a legarsi: «chiedeano i bimbi con vocio di festa: // “Tornerai, *Molly?*?”. Rispondeva: – Sì! –» (II, xx, 32). È questa l'ultima parola del poemetto, la prima da lei pronunciata in italiano (dopo aver detto, per due volte, «Yes»)²⁷: così segnalando – per via linguistica, e dantesca – la sua riconquistata identità italiana.

I possibili motivi d'interesse da parte di Joyce, per un testo simile, sono diversi. Anzitutto, come mi suggerisce Ana López Rico che assai ringrazio, il fatto che la narrazione sia ambientata nel giorno della Candelora, ossia il 2 febbraio: compleanno di Joyce nel quale egli

²⁶ Così nel *memoir* di Maria Pascoli (per questa parte redatto però da Augusto Vicinelli), *Lungo la vita di Giovanni Pascoli*, Milano, Mondadori, 1961, p. 753: «era venuta dall'America (“da Cincinnati, Ohio”) una nipote dello Zi' Meo» – al secolo Bartolomeo Caproni, vicino di podere del poeta al Ciocco, nel comune di Barga, e suo assiduo consulente in fatto di idioma e costumi locali – «Isabella, per tentare di riprendere salute: era, il suo, un lento, doloroso deperire. Il poeta, preso da grande pietà per la piccola, s'interessò non solo con sorrisi e cartoline, ma con preoccupati aiuti (anche di roba propria) per farla migliorare. Ricorre ai consigli e alle medicine del celebre professore Ceci di Pisa, e dà paterni anzi talvolta un po' rudi ammonimenti». Ma la bambina, «cui il Pascoli sembrava aver pregato migliori fati con il canto di *Italy*», sarebbe morta la notte fra l'8 e il 9 gennaio 1906 – mentre la nonna, che invece nel poemetto muore, sarebbe sopravvissuta sino al 1911 (cit. da Giuseppe Leonelli nel commento cit., p. 239).

²⁷ «Yes» lo dicono varie volte il padre di Molly, «Loe» (nel capitolo V del canto I), e la madre Ghita (nel capitolo VII del canto I e nel capitolo XX del canto II). Lo dice invece Molly due volte nel capitolo IX del canto I (quando sembra in punto di morte).

amava far uscire i suoi libri²⁸, e che è secondo solo al Bloomsday nel calendario liturgico della confraternita joyciana. Poi l'attività del tessere, come quella che miticamente pertiene a Penelope. Ma è soprattutto la dimensione polifonica del testo che difficilmente poteva lasciare Joyce indifferente²⁹: specie perché mai come in *Italy* il plurilinguismo pascoliano mette in causa la dimensione sociale (e, come vedremo, anche politica) del linguaggio, dunque anche dell'espressione letteraria. Una dimensione che i primi lettori italiani di Joyce non potevano non attribuire all'«universalismo modernista»³⁰ delle sue opere mature, e alla loro circolazione in contesti culturali nei quali l'osservanza delle norme monolingustiche dell'uso nazionale adombrava ben più stringenti vincoli di natura appunto sociale e politica (come precisamente nel caso dell'Italia).

Se è comprensibile la fruizione di Joyce in chiave “cosmopolitica”, negli anni autarchici del fascismo, non va però dimenticato che l'esistenza raminga in giro per l'Europa fu, per Joyce e la sua famiglia, meno una scelta che una necessità. Vale anche per lui, insomma, la protesta di Amelia Rosselli nei confronti del mentore Pasolini, che nel presentarla aveva parlato di «questa specie di apolide dalle grandi tradizioni famigliari di Cosmopolis»: «Non sono apolide [...] La definizione di cosmopolita risale a un saggio di Pasolini che accompagnava le mie prime pubblicazioni sul “Menabò” (1963), ma io rifiuto per noi quest'appellativo: siamo figli della seconda guerra mondiale. [...]

²⁸ Cfr. Richard Ellmann, *James Joyce* [1959], traduzione di Piero Bernardini, Milano, Feltrinelli [1964], 1982, p. 35.

²⁹ Ancora dal cit. saggio di Luigi Baldacci, *Poesie del Pascoli*: l'interesse di una riletture di *Italy* è «dovuto esclusivamente alla fortissima istanza sperimentale di questo poemetto, cioè alla sua realtà plurilinguistica fatta di italiano, lucchese, inglese e soprattutto gergo italo-americano degli emigrati. [...] Il risultato ti fa salire alle labbra il nome di Joyce: anche se poi ti accorgi che il plurilinguismo non è qui originato da precise ragioni espressive o di registro ma da un positivistico proposito di descrizione e catalogazione di neologismi gergali: è chiaro che per Joyce parlare di neologismi non avrebbe senso» (pp. 238-9).

³⁰ Gabriele Frasca, *Il rovescio d'autore. Letteratura e studi letterari al tramonto dell'età della carta*, Napoli, Edizioni d'If, 2016, p. 148.

Noi non eravamo dei cosmopoliti; eravamo dei rifugiati»³¹. Sono appunto i rifugiati o, diciamo più joycianamente, gli *esuli* quelli che, ancorché ben integrati nella patria d'adozione come appunto Joyce nei suoi anni triestini, non possono fare a meno di rivolgersi *verso e contro* il paese nativo. Come ha scritto Gianfranco Corsini, è nei modi della «nostalgia» e insieme della «protesta», che «Joyce ha espresso fino alla fine la sua condizione volontaria di esule»³².

È allora soprattutto l'argomento, di *Italy*, che non poteva non destare l'interesse di Joyce che – proprio in quel 1904, in ottobre, arriva a Trieste – per restarvi sino al 1915. E che, dopo il 1912, non metterà più piede nella sua Irlanda. Quella dell'esilio, per Joyce e la sua famiglia, non fu solo una condizione metaforica, trascendentale, bensì una scelta obbligata quanto dolorosa. Quella cioè che, per usare una categoria meno evocativa dell'*esilio*, si chiama emigrazione.

Lo fanno capire i suoi scritti politici, articoli com'è noto scritti in italiano per il giornale triestino «Il Piccolo della Sera» fra il 1907 e il 1912, nei quali torna il tema dell'emigrazione che ha colpito l'Irlanda in una misura paragonabile a quella di un solo altro paese europeo, appunto l'Italia. Una vera «spopolazione» (con dizione che fa pensare a un titolo a venire del discepolo Beckett, *Le dépeupler...*), definisce Joyce nel primo di questi articoli, quello sul *Fenianismo*, «lo spettacolo della popolazione che diminuisce di anno in anno con regolarità matematica»³³. Ma è soprattutto nella conferenza tenuta nello stesso 1907 all'Università Popolare di Trieste, *L'Irlanda: isola dei Santi e dei Savi*, che risuonano accenti, al riguardo, di grande e addo-

³¹ Amelia Rosselli, *Figli della guerra*, intervista a Paola Zacometti [1990], in Ead., *È vostra la vita che ho perso. Conversazioni e interviste (1965-1995)*, a cura di Monica Venturini e Silvia De March, prefazione di Laura Barile, Firenze, Le Lettere, 2010, p. 117. La definizione rigettata in Pier Paolo Pasolini, *Notizia su Amelia Rosselli* [1963], in Id., *Saggi sulla letteratura e sull'arte*, a cura di Walter Siti e Silvia De Laude, con un saggio di Cesare Segre, Milano, Mondadori, 1999, tomo II, p. 2419.

³² Gianfranco Corsini, *La politica di Joyce*, in James Joyce, *Scritti italiani*, edizione a cura sua e di Giorgio Melchiori, con un saggio di Jacqueline Risset, Milano, Mondadori, 1979, p. 29.

³³ James Joyce, *Il Fenianismo. L'ultimo Feniano* [1907]. p. 725.

lorata passione. Calcola Joyce che ogni anno l'Irlanda veda emigrare «40.000 dei suoi figli», e che a partire dal 1850 più di cinque milioni di loro abbiano trovato rifugio solo in America. Sottolineando il fatto che «l'irlandese quando si trova fuori d'Irlanda, in un altro ambiente sa molte volte farsi valere», Joyce precisa:

Le condizioni economiche ed intellettuali che vigono in suo paese non permettono lo sviluppo dell'individualità. L'anima del paese è indebolita da secoli di lotta inutile e di trattati rotti, l'iniziativa individuale paralizzata dall'influenza e dalle ammonizioni della chiesa, mentre il corpo è ammanettato dagli sbirri, i doganieri e la guarnigione. Nessun che si rispetta vuol stare in Irlanda ma fugge lontano siccome da un paese ch'abbia subito la visitazione di un Gèova adirato. Dal tempo del trattato della città di Limerick, o piuttosto dal tempo della sua rottura dagli inglesi di fede punica milioni d'irlandesi hanno lasciato la patria per altri lidi.³⁴

Passando poi in rassegna i meriti degli emigrati irlandesi in paesi come gli Stati Uniti e la stessa Inghilterra, aggiunge: «se l'Irlanda ha potuto dare tutto questo talento pratico al servizio altrui vuol dire che ci deve essere qualcosa di nemico d'inausto e di tirranico nelle sue condizioni attuali se i suoi figli non possono dare l'opera loro alla loro patria». Conclude infine Joyce con una singolare immagine teatrale: non sa, l'esule, se un giorno o l'altro l'Irlanda potrà «finirla una buona volta con gli insuccessi» e saprà così «risorgere», ma profetizza che quel giorno egli non potrà, o forse non vorrà, vederlo:

Se vuol darci finalmente lo spettacolo ch'abbiamo aspettato per tanto tempo che sia, questa volta, completo, integrale e definitivo. Ma abbiamo un bel dire agli impresari irlandesi d'affrettarsi, come lo dissero anche i nostri padri or non è guari. Io, almeno, son sicuro di non veder mai quel sipario alzarsi perché sarò già tornato a casa coll'ultimo tram.³⁵

³⁴ Id., *L'Irlanda: isola dei Santi e dei Savi* [1907], ivi, pp. 769-70.

³⁵ Ivi, p. 772.

L'immagine è davvero curiosa, specie se si pensa al testo letterario che più direttamente Joyce dedicherà al tema dell'esilio, e per il quale pensò congeniale proprio la forma drammatica. Il suo unico dramma, scritto nel 1914 e pubblicato nel '18, proprio *Exiles, Esuli*, s'intitola³⁶: anche se già qui la dimensione dell'esilio acquista quei connotati metaforici, per non dire mitici, coi quali nella maggior parte dei casi lo tratterà la critica futura³⁷. Lo stesso Joyce, commentando la traduzione che del dramma aveva fornito Carlo Linati nel 1920, gli dirà di preferire il titolo italiano «*Esuli* anziché *Esigliati*» perché nei personaggi è «l'esiglio loro volontario», e infatti *Exiles* non è *Exiled*: «l'*exil* è lo stato di essere esule non la persona»³⁸. Infatti i protagonisti del dramma (lo scrittore Richard Rowan e sua moglie Bertha in piena crisi coniugale, trasparenti *avatar* di Jim e Nora) hanno sì per nove anni «sperimentato a Roma, come era successo a Joyce e alla sua compagna» a Trieste (ma lui anche a Roma, proprio, dall'agosto 1906 al marzo dell'anno seguente), «l'esilio più penoso»: ma «sono ormai tornati in Irlanda» e dunque «non sono più esuli nel senso proprio del termine»³⁹; dunque quello cui allude il titolo è uno «stato di alienazione, l'esilio emozionale – della coppia e nella coppia»⁴⁰, al quale del resto alludono le interessantissime note d'autore intitolate *Appunti per Esuli*⁴¹. (Solo *a posteriori* quel titolo finirà per suonare profetico: quando il 26 giugno 1915 i Joyce, un mese dopo l'entrata in guerra dell'Italia contro l'Austria, lasciano Trieste per Zurigo: come ha scritto Franca Ruggieri, «il titolo della commedia sembra ora ancora più allusivo alla condizione della famiglia dell'autore che, all'esilio volon-

³⁶ Lo si legge nella traduzione di Carla de Petris, *Esuli*, in Id., *Poesie e prose*, a cura di Franca Ruggieri, Milano, Mondadori, 1992, pp. 319-477.

³⁷ Cfr. Masolino D'Amico (1982), *Introduzione* a James Joyce, *Exiles*, Pordenone: Studio Tesi, specie alle pp. XXIV-XXVI.

³⁸ James Joyce a Carlo Linati, 8 marzo 1920, in Id., *Lettere e saggi*, cit., p. 371.

³⁹ Carla de Petris, *Nota introduttiva* a James Joyce, *Esuli*, cit., p. 315.

⁴⁰ Ivi, p. 317.

⁴¹ Sul titolo, ancora Carla de Petris, *Nota introduttiva*, in particolare, cfr. ivi, p. 464 e p. 474.

tario dall'Irlanda, aggiunge quello dalla propria casa triestina»⁴²; infatti al fratello Stanislaus, che a Trieste era rimasto, Joyce scriverà una volta firmandosi coll'antico nome della città, «Tergestis Exul»⁴³.

Nel dramma vale dunque la stessa accezione metaforica in cui la categoria di «esilio» figura nel celebre slogan, il cosiddetto *non serviam* messo in bocca a Stephen Dedalus nel *Ritratto*, scritto nello stesso periodo ma pubblicato due anni prima di *Esuli*: «Non sarò mai più servo di ciò in cui non credo, che si tratti della mia casa, della mia patria o della mia chiesa: e cercherò di esprimere me stesso in uno stile di vita o di arte il più liberamente e compiutamente possibile, usando in mia difesa le sole armi che consento a me stesso di usare – il silenzio, l'esilio e l'astuzia»⁴⁴. L'«esilio come condizione dell'arte» (ispirandosi all'adorato Ibsen) secondo Richard Ellmann⁴⁵, l'«esilio perpetuo» di cui parla Jacques Mercanton nel suggestivo *memoir* intitolato *Le ore di James Joyce*⁴⁶, *L'exile de James Joyce* che dà il titolo a un bel libro di Hélène Cixous⁴⁷, sono più categorie dello spirito – o, diciamo, esistenziali – che non condizioni storiche concrete: condizioni che a quella dimensione dell'anima danno uno spessore umano, e un'urgenza emotiva, invece inconfondibili⁴⁸.

⁴² Franca Ruggieri, *Introduzione a Joyce*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 1990; cito dall'edizione aggiornata e ampliata, col titolo *James Joyce, la vita, le lettere*, Milano, Franco Angeli, 2012, p. 103.

⁴³ «Heb. Vat. Terg. Ex. Lut. Hosp. Litt. Angl. Pon. Max.» (cioè *Hebræus Vaticanus Tergestis Exul Lutetiae Hospes Litterarum Anglicarum Pontifex Maximus*): James Joyce a Stanislaus Joyce, 29 agosto 1920, in Id. (1966), *Letters*, vol. I, a cura di Stuart Gilbert, New York: Viking, p. 18.

⁴⁴ James Joyce, *Un ritratto dell'artista da giovane* [1916], a cura di Franca Cavagnoli, Milano, Feltrinelli, 2016, p. 230.

⁴⁵ Richard Ellmann, *James Joyce*, cit., p. 72.

⁴⁶ Cfr. Jacques Mercanton, *Le ore di James Joyce* [1988], a cura di Laura Barile, Genova, il melangolo, 1992.

⁴⁷ Hélène Cixous, *L'exile de James Joyce ou l'art du remplacement*, Paris, Grasset, 1968.

⁴⁸ Fa eccezione la biografia per immagini di John McCourt, *James Joyce. A passionante exile*, New York, St. Martin's Press, 2000, che a p. 65 così commenta *Exiles*: «In this context, "exile" not only conveys physical dislocation, but also implies emotional and spiritual extrangement as much from a partner as from a country».

Il paradigma della *lingua minore*, introdotto da Gilles Deleuze e Félix Guattari col loro seminale libro su Kafka del '75⁴⁹ (e che Barry McCrea ha di recente applicato appunto a Joyce)⁵⁰, ha il merito di mettere in relazione dinamica queste due sfere, quella diciamo esistenziale e quella storico-sociale. Autori come Kafka e Beckett adottano, per dirla con Deleuze, un «uso minore della lingua in cui si esprimono interamente: *rendono minore* questa lingua, come nella musica, in cui il modo minore indica combinazioni dinamiche in perpetuo squilibrio»⁵¹; ma lo fanno a partire dalle particolari condizioni socio-linguistiche e politiche della Boemia e appunto dell'Irlanda, che Joyce aveva potuto imprevedibilmente ritrovare a Trieste (motivo non ultimo, è da credere, del suo perdurante amore per la città “irredenta”)⁵².

Nella conferenza sull'amico Joyce tenuta al circolo milanese del «Convegno» l'8 marzo 1927, Italo Svevo – che, al secolo Aaron (detto Ettore) Schmitz, a ben vedere s'era scritto nel nome la radice “minore” di quell'«esperanto» che era il suo «italiano fortuito e avventizio»: come, quantunque con parole non troppo tenere, di lì a poco inquadrerà bene la sua situazione Giacomo Debenedetti⁵³ – equiparava Trieste all'Irlanda in considerazione certo della loro perifericità ma anche per la condizione di *minorità*, appunto, a lungo subita dalla prima nei confronti dell'Austria-Ungheria (e in qualche misura di nuovo e più sottilmente avvertibile nei confronti dell'Italia “maggiore”): simile a quella, perdurante, della seconda rispetto alla Gran Bretagna. Di con-

⁴⁹ Cfr. Gilles Deleuze-Félix Guattari, *Kafka. Per una letteratura minore* [1975], traduzione di Alessandro Serra, Macerata, Quodlibet, 1996.

⁵⁰ Cfr. Barry McCrea, *Languages of the Night. Minor Languages and the Literary Imagination in Twentieth-Century Ireland and Europe*, New Haven-London, Yale University Press, 2015.

⁵¹ Gilles Deleuze, *Balbettò*, in Id., *Critica e clinica* [1993], traduzione di Alberto Panaro, Milano, Cortina, 1996, p. 148.

⁵² Suggestiva l'ipotesi, di Enrico Terrinoni (*James Joyce e la fine del romanzo*, cit., p. 158n), che il legame con Trieste si prolunghi sino alla parola iniziale di *Finnegans Wake*, «Riverrun», in assonanza con l'espressione del dialetto triestino «riverà» («arriveranno»).

⁵³ Giacomo Debenedetti, *Svevo e Schmitz* [1929], in Id., *Saggi critici. Seconda serie* [1945]; ora in Id., *Saggi*, a cura di Alfonso Berardinelli, Milano, Mondadori, 1999, p. 444.

seguenza parla addirittura di un «odio del Joyce» nei confronti dello «strumento perfetto che gli serve tanto bene e che egli dovrebbe adorare, quella lingua inglese per sua natura breve e nervosa e che in mano sua si fa rapida e docile come un puro sangue». E più avanti, descrivendo il rapporto fra Stephen Dedalus e «l'ebreo Bloom» in *Ulysses*, aggiunge che «tale avvicinamento era reso possibile da altre ragioni. L'ebreo e l'irlandese sono i due popoli dalla lingua morta»⁵⁴ (una nota inedita di Joyce confermerà: «gli ebrei e gli irlandesi ricordano il passato»)⁵⁵.

Si sa come Leopold Bloom – personaggio almeno in parte modellato proprio su Svevo – rappresenti appieno, nel romanzo di Joyce, il tipo eterno dello *straniero*: anzitutto, appunto, per la sua estrazione ebraica⁵⁶. Ma pure la sua consorte mostra, sebbene meno evidenti dei suoi, curiosi connotati di estraneità. Sappiamo intanto che è mezza ebrea a sua volta, essendo figlia, oltre che del militare anglosassone Brian Tweedy, dell'ebrea spagnola Lunita Laredo; e che è nata e cresciuta a grande distanza da Dublino: in una colonia inglese all'estremo Occidente d'Europa, a Gibilterra. Giusto sulle colonne d'Ercole, cioè, che – secondo il mito riportato da Ovidio, e ripreso da Dante nel XXVI dell'*Inferno* – segnano il destino di *hybris* e perdizione di Ulisse *dopo* il ritorno a Itaca. Infatti il capitolo conclusivo, dominato dallo *stream of consciousness* di Molly-Penelope, segue quello contrasse-

⁵⁴ Italo Svevo, «Faccio meglio di restare nell'ombra». *Il carteggio inedito con Ferreri seguito dall'edizione critica della conferenza su Joyce*, a cura di Giovanni Palmieri, Lecce-Milano, Piero Manni-Lupetti, 1995, pp. 75-132 (le citazioni a p. 92 e a p. 113). Rinvio, per una filiera “triestina” del paradigma deleuze-guattariano, all'*Introduzione, La lingua minore*, al mio *La fisica del senso. Saggi e interventi su poeti italiani dal 1940 a oggi*, Roma, Fazi, 2006, p. XXXVII.

⁵⁵ *Joyce's «Ulysses» Notesheets in the British Museum*, a cura di Phillip F. Herring, Charlottesville, University Press of Virginia, 1972 (cit. da John McCourt, *James Joyce. Gli anni di Bloom*, cit., p. 308).

⁵⁶ Il lascito del fu Rudolph Bloom al figlio Leopold, come viene specificato nel capitolo «Itaca» di *Ulisse* (a cura di Enrico Terrinoni, traduzione dello stesso con Carlo Bigazzi, Roma, Newton Compton, 2012, p. 689), è «un arrangiamento retrospettivo di migrazioni e insediamenti a e tra Dublino, Londra, Firenze, Milano, Vienna, Budapest, Szombathely con dichiarazioni di soddisfazione».

gnato col titolo *Itaca* – al punto che diversi interpreti, e non solo per considerazioni stilistiche, lo considerano quasi un’appendice, un *post-factum* collocato al di là dell’esito diegetico della narrazione⁵⁷; in effetti lo stesso Joyce scrisse una volta a Harriet Weaver che «l’episodio *Itaca* [...] è in realtà la fine, dal momento che Penelope non ha inizio, né metà, né fine»⁵⁸ (al modo cioè, appunto, del *Finnegans Wake* a venire). Ma se *Penelope* va invece considerato, come credo, il capitolochiave di *Ulisse* è non solo perché fornisce «una vera e propria soluzione psicologica all’intricata narrazione di *Ulysses*»⁵⁹, ma proprio in virtù di questo decentramento, di questa *extraterritorialità*: di questo suo essere – in tutti i sensi – un ponte verso l’altrove, il futuro.

Non credo sia peregrino interrogarsi sul perché Joyce abbia chiamato proprio Molly la moglie di Leopold Bloom (all’anagrafe, Marion Tweedy)⁶⁰. Naturalmente, anche in questo caso, la partitura verbale joyciana obbedisce a quella poligenesi che Aldo Tagliaferri, parlando di Beckett, ha chiamato una volta «iperdeterminazione letteraria»⁶¹. Di recente, per esempio, Sara Sullam ha collegato in modo suggestivo il personaggio di Molly alla Moll Flanders di Daniel Defoe – autore al quale, a differenza di Pascoli, Joyce ha sempre tributato la massima stima⁶². Ma è difficile per me non pensare che il *pun*

⁵⁷ Cfr. per esempio Gabriele Frasca, *Joycity. Joyce con McLuhan e Lacan*, Napoli, Edizioni d’If, 2013, pp. 260 sgg.

⁵⁸ James Joyce a Harriet Shaw Weaver, 7 ottobre 1921, in Id., *Letters*, vol. I, cit., pp. 172-3.

⁵⁹ Enrico Terrinoni, commento all’edizione cit. di *Ulisse*, p. 847 (e si veda la p. sg. per la discussione dei tratti di stacco di *Penelope* dal resto del romanzo).

⁶⁰ Va intanto annotato che il personaggio, dalle più recenti ricerche biografiche, non è forse ispirato alla moglie di Joyce, Nora Barnacle, come si è per lo più pensato sinora, bensì a un’altra signora dublinese, Marion – appunto – Hunter; così come lo spunto per Bloom proviene, più ancora che da Svevo, da suo marito Hunter (cfr. Enrico Terrinoni, *Ostregatto, ora ho capeto!*, cit., p. XLVI). Opportuno ricordare che il vero nome della bambina che in *Italy* Pascoli chiama Molly è in effetti Maria (cfr. I, i, 14).

⁶¹ Cfr. Aldo Tagliaferri, *Beckett e l’iperdeterminazione letteraria*, Milano, Feltrinelli, 1967.

⁶² Mi riferisco alla relazione dal titolo *Moll(y) & co.: Defoe, Joyce and Female Characters*, tenuta da Sara Sullam alla X James Joyce Italian Foundation Conference (Roma, Università Roma Tre, 2-3 febbraio 2017). Su Defoe Joyce tenne in italiano una

coll'aggettivo italiano *molle* possa essere casuale. A fronte di un nazionalismo machista, *duro e puro* – linguisticamente ed etnicamente puro, e duro come i confini nazionali che nell'Europa ante e post-Grande Guerra si andavano nevroticamente chiudendo (proprio come succede oggi, manco a farlo apposta, giusto un secolo dopo) –, il principio femminile celebrato dal finale di *Ulysses* sembra essere per Joyce quello dell'apertura, dell'inclusività, dell'accoglienza: dell'ammorbidimento – a non voler dire *rammollimento* – di quegli stessi confini, di quelle identità, di quei vincoli etnici nazionali e linguistici.

È in questo senso soprattutto, che «è la donna a tenere i fili del racconto»⁶³: «è colei che lega i giorni»⁶⁴, aveva detto il grande Michel Butor (come sarà Anna Livia a tenere il bandolo di *Finnegans Wake*: «È lei che lega il tempo, che assicura il passaggio, che fa scorrere l'uno nell'altro il presente e il passato, come, proprio alla fine del libro, farà scorrere l'uno nell'altro il futuro e il presente»)⁶⁵. Molly Bloom, appunto, è il personaggio che dice *sì* – e lo dice nel nome della corporeità: nello “schema Linati” all'episodio, del corpo umano, è associato il «grasso», nello “schema Larbaud” semplicemente la «carne»⁶⁶; e in una lettera scritta da Joyce a Frank Budgen si legge quanto segue:

conferenza, colma d'ammirazione, all'Università Popolare di Trieste nel 1912: *Verismo e idealismo nella letteratura inglese* (ora in Id., *Saggi e lettere*, cit., pp. 783-95); e il topónimo «Flanders» appare nel monologo di *Penelope* (cfr. James Joyce, *Ulisse*, ed. cit., p. 718). Un'altra «signorina Molly» segnala John McCourt, *James Joyce. Gli anni di Bloom*, cit., p. 194: è un personaggio dell'operetta *La geisha*, testo di Harry Greenbank e musica di James Philips, che deliziò Joyce quando vi assistette all'anfiteatro Minerva, a Trieste, nell'estate del 1908 (e che lascia una traccia nel capitolo *Ade* di *Ulisse*: ed. cit., p. 120).

⁶³ Enrico Terrinoni, *James Joyce e la fine del romanzo*, cit., p. 104.

⁶⁴ Michel Butor, *Piccola crociera preliminare a un'esplorazione dell'universo Joyce* [1948], in Id., *Repertorio. Studi e conferenze 1948-1959* [1960], traduzione di Paolo Caruso, Milano, il Saggiatore, 1961, p. 217.

⁶⁵ Ivi, p. 228. A ben vedere, anche il segno di infinito nel celebre “schema Linati” (James Joyce a Carlo Linati, 21 settembre 1920, in Id., *Lettere e saggi*, cit., pp. 399-403) apposto a *Penelope* attrae anche questo episodio di *Ulisse* alla non-linearità che sarà programmatica in *Finnegans Wake*.

⁶⁶ Lo “schema Larbaud”, noto anche come “schema Gorman”, fu redatto da Joyce nel novembre 1921.

«*Penelope* è il climax del libro. La prima frase contiene 2500 parole. Ci sono otto frasi nell'episodio. Inizia e finisce con la parola femminile *sì*. Gira in tondo e rotea come la grande sfera terrestre, lentamente, ineluttabilmente e costantemente, i suoi quattro punti cardinali sono i seni femminili, il culo, l'utero e la fica, espressi dalle parole *perché, fondo* (in tutti i sensi: fondo, fondoschiena, il fondo della classe, il pro-fondo del mare, il pro-fondo del cuore di lui), *donna, sì*. Nonostante sia probabilmente più osceno di tutti gli episodi che lo precedono, a me sembra perfettamente lucido, pieno, amorale, fecondabile, inaffidabile, avvincente, scaltro, limitato, prudente, indifferente»⁶⁷.

E conclude con le parole tedesche «*Weib. Ich Bin der Fleish der stets bejaht*» – «Femmina. Sono la carne che sempre dice sì» –: fantastico *détournement* della frase di Mefistofele nel *Faust* di Goethe: «*Ich bin der Geist, der stets verneint*», «Sono lo spirito che sempre dice no»⁶⁸. Stando a questo autocommento, dunque, lo *yes* di Molly si originerebbe dal capovolgimento di un *no* precedente⁶⁹. Ed è infatti, questa, anche la storia di un ravvedimento, da parte di Joyce, sulla questione femminile (nonché su quella ebraica)⁷⁰. John McCourt ha indicato come nel capitolo *Circe* dell'*Ulisse* emergano tracce del pensiero di Otto Weininger, a Trieste assai circolante negli anni di Joyce: ma capovolte di segno. Se ancora nel 1907 a Stanislaus confessava l'«odio nei confronti del genere femminile che è alla base del *suo* carattere», e l'anno seguente un'«antipatia per le donne [...] quasi barba-

⁶⁷ James Joyce a Frank Budgen, 16 agosto 1921, in Id., *Letters*, cit., pp. 169-70 (cito la traduzione di Federico Sabatini nella silloge da lui curata di James Joyce, *Scrivere pericolosamente. Riflessioni su vita, arte, letteratura*, Roma, minimum fax, 2011, pp. 64-5).

⁶⁸ Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Faust* [1808], prima parte, scena III, v. 1338 (traduzione di Franco Fortini nell'edizione a sua cura di Id., *Faust*, Milano, Mondadori [1970], 1997, p. 103; la traduzione dal tedesco di Joyce è invece mia).

⁶⁹ La sola parola (se così si può chiamare) pronunciata da Molly prima del monologo finale, nel capitolo «Calipso», è un «No» (così lo traduce mentalmente Bloom) – in effetti un «fievole brontolio assonnato», «Mn» – quando, ancora semiaddormentata, il marito le chiede premuroso se vuole qualcosa per colazione (James Joyce, *Ulisse*, ed. cit., p. 82; Terrinoni nel suo commento, pp. 769-70, richiama l'attenzione su questo dettaglio ricorrendo ai «Sì» del finale).

⁷⁰ Cfr. John McCourt, *James Joyce. Gli anni di Bloom*, cit., pp. 286 sgg.

rica»⁷¹, più tardi, in *Ulisse*, Bloom si mostra viceversa in grado di «accettare l'“altro” (l'ebreo/la parte femminile) entro se stesso, cosa che aveva spaventato Weininger al punto di spingerlo a togliersi la vita»⁷²: la sua Molly incarna l'*Eterno Femminino* (è il caso di goethianamente dire) esattamente nei termini demonizzati da Weininger – si ripete, rovesciati di segno. Un *no*, dunque, che diventa *sì*. Il *no* di Mefistofele – puro spirito – era nei confronti della vita e della generazione («Nulla / c'è che nasca e non meriti / di finire disfatto. / Meglio sarebbe che nulla nascesse», dice subito dopo la sua presentazione). Il *sì* di Molly – pura carne – è un *sì* alla vita fisica e corporale, «un'accettazione immanentistica e vitale della realtà di “ognuno”⁷³: è letteralmente *con lei* – dando a lei la parola, alla fine del libro – che Bloom può sperare che la sua ricerca di un'eredità possa venire soddisfatta.

Volendo individuare un punto di svolta nel passaggio di Joyce dal *no* al *sì*, facendo evidentemente forza a un percorso tortuoso e multivettoriale come il suo, sarei tentato di indicarlo nel suo testo forse più enigmatico e segreto, originato da una questione privatissima e forse per questo lasciato nelle sue carte - anzi, ancora più significativamente, lasciato a Stanislaus a Trieste nel partire per Parigi con Nora⁷⁴, nonché l'unico suo «testo in prosa non ambientato a Dublino»⁷⁵.

⁷¹ Ivi, p. 267; Le citazioni sono dall'inedito *Triestine Book of Days 1907-1909* di Stanislaus Joyce, rispettivamente in data 19 aprile 1907 e 21 aprile 1908 (fotocopie del diario originale inedito di Stanislaus, conservato in Inghilterra da sua nuora, sono depositate nel Fondo Richard Ellmann presso la Biblioteca McFarlin della Tulsa University: cfr John McCourt, *Eternal Counterparts: James and Stanislaus Joyce, Eternal Counterparts*, in Stanislaus Joyce, *Joyce nel giardino di Svevo In Svevo's Garden*, a cura di Renzo S. Crivelli e John McCourt, Trieste, MGS Press, 1995, pp. 61-73; Laura Pelaschiar, *Of brother, diaries, and umbrellas: news from Stanislaus Joyce*, in *Fin de siècle and Italy*, «James Joyce in Italy», 5, a cura di Franca Ruggieri, 1998, pp. 213-24; Ead., *Stanislaus Joyce's «Book of Days»: The Triestine Diary*, in «James Joyce Quarterly», 36, No 2, 1999, 61-72).

⁷² John McCourt, *James Joyce. Gli anni di Bloom*, cit., p. 299.

⁷³ Franca Ruggieri, *James Joyce, la vita, le lettere*, cit., p. 117.

⁷⁴ John McCourt, *James Joyce. Gli anni di Bloom*, cit., p. 265.

⁷⁵ Franca Cavagnoli, *Diario di un amore incompiuto*, postfazione all'edizione a sua cura di James Joyce, *Giacomo Joyce*, Milano, Henry Beyle, 2016, p. 33.

Giacomo Joyce è davvero il testo più “esule” di Joyce: a partire dal titolo che, italianizzandone il nome, bizzarramente deforma i tratti del suo autore. Richard Ellmann, che lo portò alla luce nel 1968, lo data all'estate del 1914, e lo indica come «perno» fra il *Ritratto*, che allora una fase della sua vita»⁷⁶. E questa svolta si consuma al risuonare di un primo, decisivo *yes*: lo pronuncia la «giovane donna di classe» dai «movimenti timidi e nervosi» – con ogni probabilità Amalia Popper, quella fra le giovani allieve delle sue lezioni d'inglese che scatenò lo «scompiglio romantico-sessuale»⁷⁷ testimoniato da *Giacomo Joyce* – alla terza riga del testo: «*Si*: una breve sillaba. Una breve risata. Un breve battito di palpebre»⁷⁸. Questa sillaba, pronunciata con sorriso ammiccante dalla giovane ebrea triestina, risuonerà a lungo nel suo ammirato docente in esilio⁷⁹.

Nei *Morti*, l'ultima e più celebre novella di *Gente di Dublino*, Molly Ivors ci viene presentata come una compagna di studi e poi una collega insegnante del protagonista Gabriel Conroy⁸⁰; nel corso del «ballo annuale delle signorine Morkan», dove i due si rincontrano do-

⁷⁶ Richard Ellmann, *Introduzione*, in James Joyce, *Giacomo Joyce*, a cura di Francesco Binni, Parma, Guanda, 1983, p. 15. Per la datazione cfr. *ivi*, p. 18 (sulla scorta delle riprese testuali dall'inedito nel *Ritratto* e in *Esuli*).

⁷⁷ John McCourt, *James Joyce. Gli anni di Bloom*, cit., p. 268.

⁷⁸ James Joyce, *Giacomo Joyce* [inedito del 1914 pubblicato nel 1968], traduzione di Enrico Frattaroli in Id., *Envoy. verso : in : attraverso : da* : Giacomo Joyce, supplemento a «Studi irlandesi. A Journal of Irish Studies», 2, postfazione di Donatella Pallotti, Firenze, Firenze University Press, 2015, p. 77 (l'edizione “di servizio” fornita dal regista teatrale – la voce italiana di Joyce – è l'unica pubblicata in Italia, come spiega con ampiezza lui stesso, che rispetti scrupolosamente l'impaginazione “musicale” del manoscritto originale, riprodotto integralmente alle pp. 19 sgg.).

⁷⁹ «E accadrà inoltre che la più potente di tutte le parole, quel “*Si*” che apre timidamente *Giacomo Joyce*, alla fine si trasformerà e si moltiplicherà dalla “breve sillaba”, sussurrata pianissimo nella pagina iniziale della novelletta lirica e misteriosa di Joyce, nel “*si*” allegro andante, che riverbera attraverso gli sfoghi finali del soliloquio di Molly fino a diventare l'ultima parola di Molly e dell'*Ulisse*»: John McCourt, *James Joyce. Gli anni di Bloom*, cit., p. 275.

⁸⁰ Sul rapporto fra i due personaggi cfr. Marian Edde, *Gender and sexuality*, in *James Joyce in context*, a cura di John McCourt, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009, pp. 76-87.

po diverso tempo, viene ritratta come una nazionalista irlandese che accusa Gabriel di essere «un anglofilo», reo di pubblicare ogni tanto recensioni letterarie su un giornale in lingua inglese, il «Daily Express». Molly incalza Gabriel: «“non avete già la vostra lingua con la quale fare esercizio: l’irlandese?”», al che lui ha buon gioco a replicare: «“se è per questo [...] l’irlandese non è la mia lingua”». Ci si ricorda che il poliglotta Joyce, di madre lingua inglese, si rifiutò sempre d’imparare il gaelico (al fratello disse una volta che considerava «ogni ora dedicata allo studio dell’irlandese un’ora sprecata»)⁸¹, ritenendo evidentemente regressivi certi eccessi puristici del Rinascimento celtico. E infatti, dopo qualche scambio di battute di tenore analogo, Gabriel sbotta: «“A dir la verità [...] sono stufo di questo mio paese. Proprio stufo!”»⁸².

Di questo battibecco resta traccia in *Ulisse*, nell’episodio «Il ciclope», quando un personaggio designato come «il cittadino», a Bloom che deplora la «storia del mondo» piena di «odi nazionali tra le nazioni», aggressivamente si rivolge così: «Qual è la tua nazione, se è lecito chiedere?». Bloom risponde che è l’Irlanda, «sono nato qui»⁸³, ma soggiunge: «appartengo a una razza [...] odiata e perseguitata. Ancora oggi. Proprio in questo momento. In questo stesso istante». Di questo sistema dell’odio, «lo sanno tutti, la vita è il suo esatto contra-

⁸¹ Ancora un’annotazione del citato *Triestine Book of Days 1907-1909*, cit. in John McCourt, *James Joyce. Gli anni di Bloom*, cit., p. 401n. A Dublino Joyce aveva preso qualche lezione d’irlandese da Padraic Pearse (il futuro leader dell’insurrezione del 1916), ma smise – dirà a Frank Budgen – per la sciovinistica «sua continua derisione della lingua inglese» (Frank Budgen, *James Joyce and the making of «Ulysses» and Other Writings*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1972, p. 359, cit. ivi, pp. 160-1). Lo stesso McCourt ricorda come a sua volta Svevo, benché appartenesse alla Lega Nazionale e scrivesse per il giornale irredentista «L’Indipendente», «mantenne sempre le distanze dagli atteggiamenti nazionalisti, alquanto grossolani, che dominavano molte delle attività culturali e politiche a Trieste» (ivi, p. 149). Ma la questione dei rapporti fra Joyce e l’indipendentismo irlandese è complessa, e in assoluto fra le più discusse dalla critica.

⁸² James Joyce, *I morti*, in Id., *Gente di Dublino* [1914], a cura di Daniele Benati, Milano, Feltrinelli, 1994, pp. 176-8.

⁸³ Id., *Ulisse*, ed. cit., p. 332.

rio», la vita ossia «l'amore [...], il contrario dell'odio»⁸⁴. Più avanti, uscito Bloom dalla taverna, la discussione prosegue in sua assenza. Il solo «John Wyse» prende le sue difese mettendo sul tavolo la questione, sino a quel momento implicita, che fa scaldare definitivamente gli animi: «perché mai un ebreo non dovrebbe amare la propria nazione come chiunque altro?». Gli risponde a muso duro «J.J.»: «perché prima deve capire di che nazione sta parlando». Al che la masnada degli avventori dà finalmente la stura ai suoi berci antisemiti. «Ned» chiede esasperato «che diavolo è? [...] O meglio, chi è?»; «Crofter» asserisce che, chiunque sia, «noi non lo vogliamo»; mentre a Ned risponde «Martin»: «È un ebreo pervertito [...] che viene da un posto in Ungheria»⁸⁵. Come dice Terrinoni (che ricorda come «il cittadino» sia con ogni probabilità modellato su Michael Cusack, fondatore della Gaelic Athletic Association – nello “schema Linati”, infatti, l'episodio corrisponde ai «muscoli»), la scena «fornisce uno spaccato abbastanza realistico del dibattito sul nazionalismo culturale nell'Irlanda del periodo»⁸⁶.

Ma si tratta anche di una sottile, ancorché “robusta”..., riscrittura di *Giacomo Joyce*: la cui prima parola, subito prima del «sì», e a introdurre il personaggio che lo pronuncia, è il «Chi?» che verrà rivolto aggressivamente a Bloom dai nazionalisti celtici. Ma soprattutto la battuta acre di «J.J.» riprende l'unico passo che nel testo “segreto” sia dedicato a temi politici: «Lei pensa che i gentiluomini italiani abbiano fatto bene a trascinare via dalla platea il critico del *Secolo*, Ettore Albini, perché non si è alzato in piedi quando la banda ha suonato la Marcia Reale. L'ha sentito dire a cena. Già! *Amano la patria quando sono ben certi quale patria sia*»⁸⁷. (L'episodio era accaduto la sera del 17 dicembre 1911: Albini – che era il critico dell'«Avanti!», non del «Secolo» – venne espulso dalla Scala, appunto per quel motivo, du-

⁸⁴ Ivi, p. 333.

⁸⁵ Ivi, p. 337.

⁸⁶ Enrico Terrinoni, *James Joyce e la fine del romanzo*, cit., p. 90. Terrinoni mi fa anche notare come un *nick* impiegato da Joyce nelle sue lettere, per designare il Duce italiano, fosse «Muscoloni»...

⁸⁷ James Joyce, *Giacomo Joyce*, ed. cit., p. 93. Corsivo mio.

rante un concerto di beneficenza per la Croce Rossa Italiana e le famiglie dei caduti in Libia: di quest'ultima circostanza dovremo ricordarci.) L'innominata giovane parrebbe nell'occasione dare ancora voce a quella "weingeriana" incertezza di sé ebraica che porta a invidiare amaramente il nazionalismo altrui, quello che può permettersi *chi sa quale sia la propria nazione*. Ma è proprio conversando con lei, guardandola negli occhi dietro il suo vezzoso «occhialino», che il suo docente innamorato sta cominciando a capire che solo *l'amore, il contrario dell'odio*, può contrastare quell'ideologia nefasta. Solo la passione del *sì*.

Se il monologo di Molly Bloom verrà definito da Contini «flusso di continuità totale»⁸⁸, la successiva "consorte trascendentale" portata in scena da Joyce, l'Anna Livia Plurabelle di *Finnegans Wake*, sarà da lui addirittura assimilata a un fiume, la pur torbida Liffey che bagna Dublino: a sancirne lo *status* di simbolo arcipossente d'infinita fluidofluenza anti-identitaria. Ed è ormai evidente, a quest'altezza, come la «riscrittura simbolica della storia dell'umanità» che è *Finnegans Wake* sia «nel segno del principio femminile»⁸⁹ (tanto più se, come ha intuito Terrinoni, il famoso *riverrun* sarà da leggere come «river Anne»: il fiume che s'identifica con Anna Livia/Liffey)⁹⁰.

Il tema dello *scioglimento* di vincoli già saldi appare in un ennesimo testo appartenente a quell'anno di svolta che sempre più, per Joyce, ci appare il 1914. Una delle *Poesie da un soldo* ha un titolo italiano – ripreso da una meravigliosa aria della *Sonnambula* di Vincenzo Bellini, su libretto di Felice Romani –, *Tutto è sciolto*⁹¹ (che nel ca-

⁸⁸ Gianfranco Contini, *Espressionismo letterario* [1977], in Id., *Ultimi esercizi ed elzeviri (1968-1987)*, Torino, Einaudi, 1989, p. 81.

⁸⁹ Enrico Terrinoni, *James Joyce e la fine del romanzo*, cit., p. 132.

⁹⁰ L'identificazione di Livia colla Liffey renderebbe più pregnante l'altra, canonica (ed esplicitata al marito dallo stesso Joyce in una lettera in italiano del 20 novembre 1924: Italo Svevo, *Carteggio con James Joyce, Eugenio Montale, Valery Larbaud, Benjamin Crémieux, Marie Anne Comnène, Valerio Jahier*, a cura di Bruno Maier, Milano, Dall'Oglio [1965] 1978², p. 31), con Livia Veneziani Svevo. Riporto qui, col suo consenso, una comunicazione privata di Enrico Terrinoni: che ringrazio una volta di più per le nutrienti conversazioni joyciane che ha voluto regalarmi.

⁹¹ James Joyce, *Poesie da un soldo* [1927], traduzione di Alberto Rossi, in Id., *Poesie e prose*, cit., p. 65. Il componimento reca la data «Trieste, 1914».

pitolo “musicale” di *Ulisse*, «Le sirene», verrà definita «la più bella aria per tenore mai scritta» – e, in generale, parrà incarnare lo *sciogliersi* musicale dell’esistenza...) ⁹². Difficile non pensare che la forte impressione suscitata da quest’opera – alla quale quell’autunno, al Politeama Rossetti ⁹³, assisté un Joyce ai suoi ultimi mesi triestini (e italiani) – possa aver influito sul clima di dormiveglia frequente nell’*Ulisse* ⁹⁴ (la cui stesura comincia quell’anno a prendere una forma definita) e nel quale per intero, più avanti, sarà immerso l’universo di *Finnegans Wake*. Quasi una diagnosi clinica suona in particolare, nello “scheletrico” capitolo «Itaca» di *Ulisse*, la qualifica di «sonnambula» riferita a Milly (Millicent), la figlia adolescente di Bloom e Molly ⁹⁵.

A leggere i versi di Joyce, ancora una volta parrebbe di udire echi (i «giovani occhi chiari», la «candida fronte», i «fragranti capelli») dell’irrealizzato *affair* con Amalia Popper (o chiunque abbia incarnato lo spettro di *Giacomo Joyce*): sul «tempo d’amore, sì remoto, sì spento» incombe ormai – dopo gli spari di Sarajevo – l’abbandono

⁹² Cfr. Id., *Ulisse*, ed. cit., pp. 279-80.

⁹³ Cfr. John McCourt, *James Joyce. Gli anni di Bloom*, cit., p. 311.

⁹⁴ Insiste su questa dimensione Gabriele Frasca, *Joycity*, cit., pp. 55 sgg.: nel capitolo «Le Simplegadi», per esempio, vede «una pletora di personaggi letteralmente in *trance*, fra le rocce vaganti del potere politico e di quello religioso» (pp. 57-8) e più avanti (p. 165), «in un mondo in cui il sogno della cultura borghese (fra romanzo e romanza, appunto) s’impadronisce definitivamente della realtà», ricorda la frase attribuita a Hitler «Vado avanti dritto come un sonnambulo» (la metafora circolava, per la verità, già alla vigilia della Grande Guerra: non a caso Christopher Clark l’ha potuta impiegare nel titolo del suo libro dedicato a quell’estate del ’14 nella quale le diplomazie europee non seppero sottrarsi a quello che parve un piano inclinato verso la catastrofe: *I sonnambuli. Come l’Europa arrivò alla Grande Guerra* [2013], traduzione di David Scaffei, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 2013).

⁹⁵ Cfr. James Joyce, *Ulisse*, cit., p. 663. Nello stesso capitolo (ivi, p. 686) ci vengono inoltre riferiti i seguenti convincimenti di Bloom: «Da fisico aveva appreso che di settant’anni totali di vita umana almeno 2/7, ovvero 20 anni li trascorriamo dormendo. Da filosofo sapeva che il termine della vita a ognuno riservata veniva realizzata solo una parte infinitesimale dei desideri delle persone. Da fisiologo credeva nel poter placare artificialmente le forze maligne operative soprattutto durante la sonnolenza». Nonché il suo timore di poter «commettere omicidio o suicidio durante il sonno per aberrazione della luce della ragione, l’intelletto categorico incommensurabile sito nei meandri della mente».

di Trieste, che coincide con una perdita tanto più insanabile, paradossalmente, quanto meno coincisa con un possesso. Ma, se si considera la situazione dell'opera di Bellini, è piuttosto al rapporto con Nora che si pensa, cioè alla crisi quello stesso anno trasposta in *Esuli*: il tradimento di cui Jim l'aveva accusata è simile a quello che sembra far saltare le nozze imminenti fra Elvino («Tutto è sciolto», appunto: non solo il fidanzamento ma la sua anima stessa: «il mio cor per sempre è morto / Alla gioia e all'amor») e Amina, il cui ambiguo comportamento – viene trovata nella stanza del ricco Rodolfo, senza che sappia spiegare come e perché vi sia pervenuta – è dovuto in realtà, tenta invano di spiegare ai paesani lo stesso Rodolfo, al sonnambulismo della ragazza. Malgrado le professioni d'innocenza di Amina («Io tel giuro. / Colpa alcuna in me non è»), Elvino le richiede indietro l'anello di fidanzamento, deciso a tornare fra le braccia d'una vecchia fiamma, Lisa. Una notte, però, vede coi suoi occhi Amina camminare pericolosamente sul cornicione del tetto di casa e all'improvviso, con rimorso cocente, si rende conto che davvero non gli aveva mentito. Le restituisce l'anello, il villaggio torna a preparare le nozze, e vissero tutti felici e contenti.

Non credo esistano, nel repertorio lirico italiano, linee melodiche più “liquide”, morbide e *moll*i di quelle della *Sonnambula*: il *Tutto è sciolto* di Elvino (coll'ineffabile quanto breve introduzione per corno solista); l'aria che canta Amina in stato di sonnambulismo (su una semplice quanto struggente frase degli archi), *Ah! non credea mirarti* (sono le parole che la giovane rivolge, in lacrime, al fiore donatole il giorno prima da Elvino come «d'eterno affetto / tenero pegno», e che ora vede invece «inaridito» ed «estinto»)⁹⁶; il lamento di Elvino che, impotente a intervenire (Rodolfo ha messo tutti in guardia dal risvegliare Amina: «Silenzio: un sol passo, / Un sol grido l'uccide»), assiste alla disperazione dell'amata da lui a torto accusata («Più non reggo a tanto duolo»: raddoppiando un indimenticabile motivo del corno in-

⁹⁶ Ammirevole lo sprezzo di ogni verosimiglianza drammatica da parte di Romani e Bellini: una giovane disperata in bilico su un cornicione peritosamente cammina, sonnambula, e insieme piange – il tutto cantando meravigliosamente.

glese). Il risveglio del fiore d'amore che pareva *inaridito*, e ora inopinatamente torna fresco tenero e *molle*, davvero *scioglie* l'intreccio di sospetti e rigidità e durezza che aveva messo a rischio la vita degli amanti.

Non posso non annotare, a margine, che *molle* è lessema squisitamente pascoliano, (ricorre in testi chiave come *I gemelli*, *L'aquilone* e soprattutto nel *Gelsomino notturno* dei *Canti di Castelvecchio* – la cui situazione voyeuristica, fra l'altro, parrebbe ben applicarsi al triangolo “segreto” fra James, Nora e Stanislaus...⁹⁷ – dove «l'urna *molle* e segreta» rinvia all'ovario del fiore ma è ovvia traslazione simbolica del sesso femminile)⁹⁸. Nello stesso *Italy*, in effetti, risuona compiaciuta a un certo punto la rima equivoca fra «*poor Molly!*» e i suoi «occhioni molli» (I, v, 5:9), gonfiati dalla febbre. Letto come *pun* interlinguistico anglo-italiano, il nome «Molly Bloom» parrebbe insomma un nome floreale e, in quanto tale, abbastanza precisamente pascoliano (nonché, a monte, dantesco e virgiliano); più volte in effetti la Molly di Joyce viene associata a elementi floreali, lei stessa nell'ultima pagina del suo monologo ricorda come Bloom nel corteggiarla l'avesse paragonata a un «fiore di montagna», e concorda: «sì siamo tutte dei fiori il corpo di una donna è un fiore»⁹⁹. E sebbene di sesso in *Italy* non si

⁹⁷ A Richard Ellmann Maria Jolas, che fu vicina a Joyce negli anni parigini, confidò una frizione tra Nora e Stanislaus «forse perché le aveva fatto delle avance»: l'annotazione inedita è riportata in John McCourt, *James Joyce. Gli anni di Bloom*, cit., p. 261.

⁹⁸ Giovanni Pascoli, *Il gelsomino notturno*, in Id., *Canti di Castelvecchio* [1903]; in Id., *Poesie e prose scelte*, cit., tomo II, pp. 794-6. «Questo piccolo episodio di voyeurismo censurato», ricorda Garboli nel suo commento (pp. 793-4), fu scritto per le nozze con Amalia Luporini dell'amico Gabriele Briganti (insegnante d'inglese e poi bibliotecario a Lucca) e pubblicato una prima volta, come diversi di quelli pascoliani, nella *plaque* con cui era allora usanza festeggiare consimili lieti eventi.

⁹⁹ James Joyce, *Ulisse*, ed. cit., p. 741. Nel suo monologo Molly ricorda come da ragazza, a Gibilterra, fantasticasse di essere «fidanzata per scherzo col figlio di un nobile spagnolo di nome Don Miguel de la Flora» (ivi, p. 721). Del resto anche Bloom – che nel capitolo «Circe» metterà a nudo la sua *anima* androgina – partecipa della medesima natura, a partire dal cognome (tradotto dall'ungherese «Virag» dal padre Rudolph); «Henry Flower» suona inoltre il suo *senhal* nell'*affair* adulterino, forse solo epistolare, che intrattiene con Martha Clifford (la quale è usa allegare fiori, appunto, alle sue missive, e quel

parli, né vi si alluda, neppure alla piccola Molly di Pascoli manca una connotazione vegetale: quando ci viene presentata, usando una parola del vernacolo toscano, come «una tallà / del ceppo vecchio» (I, i, 13-14), cioè il giovane germoglio di una pianta antica.

Per tornare alla definizione etnica dei personaggi joyciani, par di capire che fra i suoi non pochi pretendenti Molly abbia finito collo scegliere Bloom, seppure senza pensarci troppo («è pensato bè lui o un altro che cambia»)¹⁰⁰, proprio per il suo aspetto, che non si può certo dire risponda allo stereotipo anglosassone (nel capitolo «Nausicaa» Bloom ricorda come gli avesse risposto, Molly, quando lui le aveva chiesto «Perché me?»: «Perché eri così differente rispetto agli altri»¹⁰¹; in precedenza, più esplicitamente, Gerty McDowell aveva capito «subito dagli occhi scuri e da quel volto pallido da intellettuale che era straniero»)¹⁰². Forse se decide di dire *sì* proprio a lui, allo Straniero, è perché un po' straniera, l'anglo-ispanica, si sente pure lei (non è un caso che, verso l'irresistibile *climax* finale, le impressioni mnestiche del paesaggio multietnico di Gibilterra si facciano sempre più insistenti). E forse, se dice *yes*, non lo dice solo all'affermarsi della vita corporale e sensuale, tramite Bloom suo rappresentante; ma appunto, come la sua omonima italo-americana nel poemetto di Pascoli, alla prospettiva di accettare una lingua *maggiore*, entro la quale di lì in avanti far lavorare la propria natura *minore* (in termini deleuze-guattariani): come aveva fatto Gabriel Conroy, nei *Morti*, contro la prospettiva regressivamente puristica, etnica, propositagli dall'altra Molly, Miss Ivors¹⁰³. Al di là della sua collocazione geografica, insomma, Molly-Penelope, e con lei Joyce, sceglie – per dirla alla ma-

«fiore giallo stropicciato» – scopriremo poi, appunto in «Circe» – Bloom se lo porta sempre in tasca: cfr. *ivi*, p. 102 e p. 445). Nel suo commento (p. 772) Terrinoni ricollega questa criptoidentità ai fiori allucinatori del capitolo «Lotofagi».

¹⁰⁰ *Ivi*, p. 741.

¹⁰¹ *Ivi*, p. 375.

¹⁰² *Ivi*, p. 355. Cfr. Gabriele Frasca, *Joycity*, cit., p. 111.

¹⁰³ In pagine assai suggestive (*ivi*, pp. 132 sgg.) Frasca insiste – seguendo però un ragionamento diverso dal mio – sul parallelismo rovesciato tra il finale dei *Morti* e quello di *Ulisse*.

niera di Dante, ma anche di Pascoli – la *lingua dello yes*. E così, con formidabile pan per focaccia, «colonizza l'inglese» dei colonizzatori della sua terra d'origine¹⁰⁴.

Che Joyce conoscesse Pascoli e la sua opera, seppure in una misura che al momento non sono in grado di precisare, non mi pare possa essere messo in dubbio¹⁰⁵. È circostanza curiosa – segnalatami da Ana López Rico – che a un certo punto il fratello Stanislaus si sia posto a tradurre *La tovaglia*, uno degli *highlights* dei *Canti di Castelvecchio* del 1903¹⁰⁶. Ipotizzo che a distogliere sino ad oggi le ricerche degli studiosi di Joyce dall'opera di quello che comunque, negli anni da lui passati in Italia, era considerato il nostro maggior poeta vivente sia la delusione che un qualunque lettore di *Ulysses* può facilmente provare accostandosi al *link*, nelle premesse, potenzialmente più produttivo: ossia il poemetto di Pascoli *L'ultimo viaggio*, contenuto nei *Poemi*

¹⁰⁴ Enrico Terrinoni, *James Joyce e la fine del romanzo*, cit., p. 141.

¹⁰⁵ Al di là di quanto potesse aver letto di Pascoli sui giornali triestini in occasione della morte del poeta, il 6 aprile 1912 (grande la partecipazione alle sue esequie, alla Basilica di San Petronio, il 9 aprile: cfr. *Funerali di Giovanni Pascoli a Bologna*, in «Genius Bononia», 5 aprile 2014: <http://www.geniusbononiaeblog.it/funerali-giovanni-pascoli-bologna/>), o di quanto della sua opera potesse aver letto nelle biblioteche della città, Joyce poté assistere alla conferenza in sua memoria del senatore Guido Mazzoni, tenuta alla Società di Minerva nell'annata 1912-1913: la stessa istituzione che vide protagonista lui stesso con ben dodici lezioni a cadenza settimanale sull'*Amleto*, dall'11 novembre 1912 al 10 febbraio 1913. I testi delle lezioni shakespeariane di Joyce non si sono purtroppo conservati, ma è verosimile siano serviti da base per l'*excursus* di Stephen su *Amleto* nel capitolo «Scilla e Cariddi» dell'*Ulisse* (cfr. John McCourt, *James Joyce. Gli anni di Bloom*, cit., pp. 259-60 e, per la notizia relativa a Mazzoni, p. 408n).

¹⁰⁶ Stanislaus Joyce, *The tablecloth: a poem from the Italian of Giovanni Pascoli beginning «Remember child, the neighbours said»*, in «Irish Writing», 10, gennaio 1952, pp. 58-9. Proprio la tesi di laurea di Ana López Rico («*Vi prego! Ditemi almeno chi sono io! Chi ero?*»). *Un'indagine sulla sfortuna di Pascoli*, relatore Floriana Calitti, correlatore Roberto Dolci, Università per stranieri di Perugia, anno accademico 2012-2013, pp. 20-1), che ringrazio ancora, mi risulta essere sinora l'unico contributo critico che ipotizzi con decisione un effettivo influsso di Pascoli su Joyce (di *Myricæ*, in particolare, per quanto riguarda la poetica dell'*epifania*).

conviviali pubblicati nel solito 1904¹⁰⁷, che, come il romanzo di Joyce, è una riscrittura narrativa dell'*Odissea*.

Comunque l'unico commento di cui si abbia notizia, di Joyce su Pascoli, non è granché incoraggiante. In una conversazione con Stanislaus – che conosciamo grazie a John McCourt, il quale ha potuto vedere il diario di questi, il *Triestine Book of Days* risalente al 1907-1909 – Joyce lo avrebbe definito a «word monger», «un mercante di parole» incapace di mettere l'anima in quello che scrive¹⁰⁸. Curioso moralismo, questo di Joyce (specie considerando la sua ammirazione, di contro, per d'Annunzio...). E che si può ipotizzare, forse, motivato dalla sua delusione nei confronti di chi aveva toccato temi così vicini ai suoi interessi (l'emigrazione, la confusione delle lingue, la riconquista del linguaggio atavico, lo stesso palinsesto omerico) senza però soddisfare le sue esigenze, evidentemente, sul piano letterario. Oppure è possibile che nella celebrazione del «nido»-patria, da parte dell'autore di *Italy*, antivedesse Joyce la successiva involuzione del pensiero politico di Pascoli – che, come lui, era stato a suo tempo socialista – in direzione nazionalista e imperialista, quella testimoniata dalla famigerata conferenza pronunciata al teatro di Barga il 26 novembre 1911 (pochi mesi prima della morte, dunque), dal titolo *La grande proletaria s'è mossa*, con la quale – senza far mancare un pensiero per gli italiani sino ad allora costretti all'emigrazione, e che invece sulla “Quarta sponda”¹⁰⁹ potranno trovare, «come in Patria, a ogni tratto le vestigia dei grandi antenati»¹¹⁰ – Pascoli giunge a cele-

¹⁰⁷ Cfr. Giovanni Pascoli, *L'ultimo viaggio*, in Id., *Poemi conviviali* [1904]; ora in Id., *Poesie e prose scelte*, cit., tomo II, pp. 1085-144.

¹⁰⁸ John McCourt, *Joyce, il Bel Paese and the Italian Language*, cit., p. 72.

¹⁰⁹ Così verrà definita la colonia libica dalla pubblicistica fascista: in aggiunta a quelle adriatica, tirrenica e jonica del territorio italiano.

¹¹⁰ Cfr. Giovanni Pascoli, *La grande proletaria s'è mossa. Discorso tenuto a Barga per i nostri morti e feriti* [1911], in Id., *Patria e umanità*, Bologna, Zanichelli, 1914; ora in Id., *Prose*, a cura di Augusto Vicinelli, Milano, Mondadori, 1952, pp. 557-69 (la citazione a p. 552). L'introduzione di Nadia Ebani al suo eccellente commento cit. ai *Primi poemetti*, p. XXXI, attenua questa componente dell'ideologia di Pascoli, contrapponendone gli accenti drammatici e patetici a quelli eroici ed esplicitamente imperialistici del rivale d'Annunzio (per esempio, nello stesso 1904 di *Italy*, in *Elettra*: che si conclude col

brare l'invasione della Libia, allora in corso da due mesi: quell'*acting out* imperialista che appena tre settimane dopo verrà celebrato pure alla Scala, una certa sera famigerata, e che in *Giacomo Joyce* finisce per far cambiare idea al già nazionalista, e misogino, e un filo antisemita suo autore.

Nei suoi celebri *entretiens* con Alberto Arbasino, Gadda si sofferma tra l'altro proprio su Pascoli. «L'incuriosisce sia lo sperimentatore filologico sia il ghiotto viluppo freudiano del vecchio scapolone o vieux garçon che va avanti per tutta la vita a far cupi giochi bambineschi con le sorelle», indiscreto spigola Arbasino, «ma non vuole dir niente». Qualcosa gli dice, invece, su «qualche eventuale eccitazione a un eventuale plurilinguismo (attualmente negatissimo) del grande Montale»; ma soprattutto di Pascoli l'Ingegnere apprezza aspetti che, del pari, lo riguardano da molto vicino:

l'eroica e geniale ricerca di una possibile innovazione artigiana populista della espressione poetica italiana; e psicologicamente, moralmente, il suo avvicinamento alle sofferenze e alla purezza degli umili, dei lavoratori della campagna, degli emigranti – e della

Canto augurale per la nazione eletta, votata dal Vate al «dominio del mondo»: *Versi d'Amore e di Gloria*, edizione diretta da Luciano Anceschi, a cura di Annamaria Andreoli e Niva Lorenzini, Milano, Mondadori, 1984, vol. II, p. 408): «la voce pascoliana, senza esplicita polemica, si pone radicalmente agli antipodi di d'Annunzio, inneggiante alla conquista, all'elogio della stirpe, alla guerra». La nave sulla quale Beppe, Ghita e Molly riprendono il mare per tornare a «Cincinnati, Ohio», si chiama «Irene», cioè «pace», per un attraversamento di pace: l'ultimo viaggio, l'unico progresso auspicato e possibile è quello di un ritorno, e la conquista dell'era nuova è quella, tutta interna, della coscienza e della misura umana». A giudizio di Ebani, l'ideologia sottesa all'epica pascoliana dell'emigrazione resta quella del «socialismo patriottico» esposta nella conferenza pronunciata a Messina nel 1900, dal titolo *Una sagra* (in Giovanni Pascoli, *Prose*, cit., pp. 165-82, la formula citata a p. 170).

espressione che il poeta può dare ai loro discorsi quando ne raccoglie il grido.¹¹¹

Di questo stesso sentimento *psicologico e morale*, infatti, anche Gadda aveva vissuto un'involuzione simile a quella di Pascoli¹¹² (anche se, al contrario di lui, farà in tempo ad amaramente pentirsene – avendo visto come sarebbe andato a finire il «Ducato in fiamme» che il Duce fra quelle fiamme aveva portato): iscritti al Fascio “antemarcia”, nel 1921, alla vigilia della propria stessa emigrazione in Argentina, dove resterà dal '22 al '24 e dove, per la stampa degli esuli italiani, vergherà i primi articoli di fede fascista di una lunga e imbarazzante serie destinata a prolungarsi fino al 1941¹¹³. La questione del

¹¹¹ Alberto Arbasino, *L'Ingegnere e i poeti* [1963], in Id., *Sessanta posizioni*, Milano, Feltrinelli, 1971; ora in Id., *L'Ingegnere in blu*, Milano, Adelphi, 2008, pp. 69-70. Segue, alle pagine su Pascoli, la lunga e memorabile discussione su d'Annunzio.

¹¹² Ed è probabile che, appunto *a posteriori*, lo infastidisse la medesima parabola che da Pascoli può aver allontanato Joyce. Parrebbe dirlo la citazione irridente che gli viene riservata nell'ottavo capitolo del *Pasticciaccio*, dove la fattucchiera Zamira mostra un'improbabile contezza della poesia lirica italiana dell'Otto-Novecento: «“Chi è, ar giorno d'oggi, co tutti sti maschioni che va in giro, che nun cià du sorelle da marità? Ce l'aveva perfino quer gran poeta patriottico, che cià fatto tanto piagne, de Natale, in Libia, ad Ain Zara, col sesto berzaglieri... che se chiamava, perché adesso è morto, poveretto! Giovanni... sapete, quei posti dove ce cresce l'erba,” e con la mano cavava il nome dalla fronte, “Giovanni, Giovanni Prati! ma no Giovanni Prati, aspetta,” e seguitava con la mano, “possibile che nun me l'aricordo? So' li dispiaceri che m'è toccato de passà... che m'hanno fatto perde la memoria. Giovanni Pascoli! Ecco, ora me lo so' aricordato: ce lo sapevo che erano posti da facce er fieno» (P 204). Ha richiamato l'attenzione su questo passo Vincenzo Vitale, *All'ombra del lauro. Allegorie di scrittura nel Pasticciaccio di Gadda*, premessa di Maria Antonietta Terzoli, Roma, Carocci, 2015, pp. 156-7.

¹¹³ Cfr. Carlo Emilio Gadda, *Il quaderno di Buenos Aires*, a cura di Dante Isella e Clelia Martignoni, in «I Quaderni dell'Ingegnere. Testi e studi gaddiani», n.s., 2, Milano, Guanda-Fondazione Pietro Bembo, 2011, pp. 5-84; col commento di Guido Lucchini, *Appunti sul «Quaderno di Buenos Aires»: tra le pagine di cronaca e di ideologia*, ivi, pp. 165-90; dieci articoli di propaganda, esclusi dalle *Opere* dirette da Isella, sono raccolti in Carlo Emilio Gadda, *I Littoriali del Lavoro e altri scritti giornalistici 1932-1941*, a cura di Manuela Bertone, Pisa, ETS, 2005. Sull'importanza del soggiorno argentino di Gadda cfr. Giuseppe Bonifacino, *Verso il «mondo capovolto». Gadda migrante, dall'Argentina al Maradagàl* [2009], in Id., *Incanti figurati. Studi sul Novecento letterario italiano. Gadda, Pirandello, Bontempelli*, Lecce, Pensa Multimedia, 2012, pp. 39-77.

fascismo di Gadda prima, e della violenta sua riconversione in viscerale e isterico antifascismo poi, è stata da ultimo rilanciata con vigore dalla pubblicazione, cui ho già fatto cenno, della «versione originale» di *Eros e Priapo*, l'osceno e scandaloso e maledetto *pamphlet* antimussoliniano scritto nel '44-45 ma pubblicato solo nel '67¹¹⁴.

Siamo così giunti all'ultimo lato del triangolo: all'ultima cellula verbale fra quelle qui convocate. Un'altra *quæstio* spesso *vexata*, senza al momento poter essere risolta conclusivamente in una direzione o nell'altra, è infatti quella appunto del rapporto fra Gadda e Joyce. Va ascritto fra i non pochi meriti di Gabriele Frasca, e del suo ultimo libro, nel suo complesso «Telemachie. Una costellazione di saggi sul padre interdetto e l'eredità joyciana»¹¹⁵.

Già nel parafrasare con la sua «funzione Joyce» la «funzione Gadda», Frasca colloca la sua ricerca nelle orme di quella del maggior interprete storico appunto di Gadda (come lo era stato di Pascoli), Gianfranco Contini: che impiega quest'ultima formula, destinata a divenire celebre, a partire da un breve pezzo sull'ottocentista piemontese Giovanni Faldella del '43¹¹⁶; la sviluppa nell'*Introduzione ai narratori della Scapigliatura piemontese* del '47¹¹⁷ e soprattutto nella celebrata *Introduzione alla «Cognizione del dolore»* del '63¹¹⁸; per però

¹¹⁴ Cfr. Carlo Emilio Gadda, *Eros e Priapo. Edizione originale*, a cura di Paola Italia e Giorgio Pinotti, Milano, Adelphi, 2016. Rinvio al mio *La mano pesante del Gaddus. Mascherate priapèe di Gadda*, in «il verri», LXI, 64, maggio 2017, pp. 60-71.

¹¹⁵ Gabriele Frasca, *Joycity*, cit., p. 14. Nel 2011 a Gadda Frasca ha dedicato un brillantissimo episodio a sé stante delle «Telemachie»: *Un quanto di erotia. Gadda con Freud e Schrödinger*.

¹¹⁶ «Carlo Emilio Gadda è, in un certo senso, una funzione: la deformazione linguistica, l'espressionismo, al servizio d'una urgenza spirituale, lungo sofferto rancore e disperata nostalgia in lui, come d'una crisi religiosa in Joyce, d'una crisi di civiltà in Folengo e Rabelais»: Gianfranco Contini, *Una pagina rosminiana di Giovanni Faldella* [1943], in Id., *Domodossola entra nella storia e altre pagine ossolane e novaresi*, pp. 51-2.

¹¹⁷ «quella eterna “funzione Gadda” che va da Folengo e gli altri macaronici, così efficaci su Rabelais, al Joyce di *Finnegan's Wake*» [sic]: Gianfranco Contini, *Introduzione ai narratori della Scapigliatura piemontese* [1947], in Id., *Varianti e altra linguistica* (dove reca la datazione d'autore al 1942-43), p. 539.

¹¹⁸ «Il nome di Joyce, al limite quello di *Finnegans Wake* (o di quel tanto che, come *Work in Progress* o altrimenti, era già allora pubblico), era caduto ovviamente dalla penna

infine risolversi a definirli (nel “cappello” preposto alla scelta di passi gaddiani nella celebre antologia del '68 sulla *Letteratura dell'Italia unita*), Joyce e Gadda, semplicemente «colleghi di alta statura nel tipo formale che si potrebbe definire di manierismo espressionistico», capace di mostruosamente miscelare «elementi linguistici disparati, maneggiati con estrema sapienza, volta a rendere, con effetti di grottesco enorme [...], il caos d'una cultura e d'un mondo in crisi». Ad ogni buon conto escludendo, «ovviamente», che il primo possa essere annoverato tra le «“fonti” di Gadda»¹¹⁹.

Al di là della considerazione, inconfutabile, della rispettiva altezza entro le letterature che hanno avuto la ventura di fregiarsi di simili campioni, una quantità di voci critiche più o meno illustri hanno tentato di definire tale “colleganza”¹²⁰, senza mai troppo affannarsi però – prima di Frasca, appunto – a indagare la più spinosa questione d'una possibile, quanto meno parziale, filiazione: del «collega» più giovane (di undici anni) da quello più anziano. Eppure, prima di arrendersi a questa formula diciamo burocratica, a tal riguardo Contini qualche sondaggio, sul diretto interessato, non aveva mancato di effettuarlo. Era stato proprio lui quello, fra i «primi recensenti» trent'anni dopo ricordati introducendo la *Cognizione del dolore*, a fare il nome di Joyce (sia pure come «metafora»): nelle prime righe del primissimo scritto da lui dedicato al futuro amico, la recensione al *Castello di*

dei primi recensenti. [...] La differenza non resta affatto all'estrinseco: Joyce, per segnare il caso estremo, mescola sulla sua tavolozza i dati d'una ricchissima esperienza plurilinguistica, ma ciò è al servizio d'un'inaudita introversione (tradotta appunto nel famoso monologo interiore) per cui non vige più la normalità d'uno stato di lingua euclideo; pur sorgendo dal buio, dove non immora, ma se ne svincola, quello di Gadda è un mondo robustamente esterno, nel quale l'autore crede. Il suo, considerato da quest'angolo, è un espressionismo naturalistico»: Id., *Introduzione alla «Cognizione del dolore»* [1963], ivi; ora in Id., *Quarant'anni d'amicizia. Scritti su Carlo Emilio Gadda (1934-1988)*, Torino, Einaudi, 1989, p. 25-6.

¹¹⁹ Id., *Una «voce» di antologia* [1968], ivi, p. 82.

¹²⁰ Si veda per esempio, da ultima, Loredana Di Martino, *Gadda-Joyce*, in «Edinburgh Journal of Gadda Studies», 4, 2004; Ead., *Il caleidoscopio della scrittura. James Joyce, Carlo Emilio Gadda e il romanzo modernista*, Napoli, Edizioni Scientifiche Italiane, 2009.

Udine pubblicata su «Solaria» nel '34¹²¹. Letto il pezzo Gadda si profonde in ringraziamenti gaddianamente cerimoniosi, ma non senza puntiglio s'affretta pure a precisare – in quella che è appena la seconda lettera del loro carteggio –: «Non conosco il Calandra; dello Joyce solo i *Dubliners*»¹²². Qualche anno dopo, siamo al '41, scrivendogli col travestimento ludico e quasi circense che da molto presto si fa, del loro dialogo a distanza, regime stilistico dominante, con studiata lepidezza Contini la butta là: evocando un futuro compilatore di «antologie scolastiche» (cioè appunto prefigurando il proprio stesso libro del '68...) che si troverà a schedarlo, il Gadda, quale «“bizzarro autore di evidente ascendenza espressionista, sotto l'influenza di James Joyce e di A.G. Cagna”»¹²³.

Sia pure nei modi celianti che si son detti, pare insomma quasi volerlo “torchiare”, Contini, proprio come farà Ingravallo con l'Assunta nell'ultima scena del *Pasticciaccio*. Stavolta Gadda, prudentemente, non replica. Solo nel '57, significativamente all'atto della sospirata uscita in volume del *Pasticciaccio*, torna sulla questione. In un'intervista gli si chiede: «Come lavora Gadda? Il *Pasticciaccio* è

¹²¹ «Vorremmo dire che lo stesso Joyce del *Work in Progress* è meno egoista del Nostro: asceta del sistema, e santo, come tutti coloro che lasciano allinearsi un'opera nelle dimensioni eroiche, lavorative, d'un'immensa durata, Joyce non riesce tuttavia a cancellare, attraverso volumi folti, attraverso puntate e puntate, il fondo, l'esiguo fondo, d'una provincia; col proprio attaccamento e livore. Ecco dunque (in veste di metafora che contribuisca a risolvere il caso Gadda) almeno un altro esempio di manipolazione linguistica che “facit” un'“indignatio” geografica, locale: europeo solo in apparenza, e per il materiale grezzo messo in opera»: Id., *Primo approccio al Castello di Udine* [1934], in Id., *Esercizi di lettura sopra autori contemporanei con un'appendice su testi non contemporanei*, Firenze, Parenti, 1939; ora in Id., *Quarant'anni d'amicizia*, cit., p. 3.

¹²² Carlo Emilio Gadda a Gianfranco Contini, 20 luglio 1934, in Gianfranco Contini-Carlo Emilio Gadda, *Carteggio 1934-1963*, a cura di Dante Isella, Gianfranco Contini, Giulio Ungarelli, Milano, Garzanti, 2009, p. 102. Edoardo Calandra, “scapigliato” piemontese, figurava fra le altre possibili ascendenze gaddiane elencate da Contini nel suo articolo.

¹²³ Gianfranco Contini a Carlo Emilio Gadda, lettera non meglio datata del 1941, in Gianfranco Contini-Carlo Emilio Gadda, *Carteggio 1934-1963*, cit., p. 71. Achille Giovanni Cagna è un altro “scapigliato” piemontese la cui lettura, a differenza di quella di Calandra, Gadda aveva subito ammesso.

davvero un libro intellettualistico e sperimentale come vogliono i critici che hanno parlato di Joyce?». Al che Gadda risponde:

Se lor signori a Milano han trovato una possibilità di parallelo, son ben lieto. Ho letto *I racconti di Dublino* e *Ulisse* com'è giusto e conveniente che uno scrittore faccia. Direi [...] che non ho inteso di ambire ad esperimenti intellettualistici e disperati come il nome di Joyce può far pensare. Umilmente, come è logico, ho creduto di portare avanti un lavoro che Verga ha fatto per la Sicilia usando il dialetto. Forse questa strada italiana conforta il lavoro di uno scrittore come me.¹²⁴

Al sommario essenziale delle proprie letture joyciane, come si vede, fra il '34 e il '57 Gadda aggiunge il tassello fondamentale dell'*Ulisse*: pur denegandone, una volta di più, ogni possibile influsso sul proprio «lavoro». L'*impasse* registrata al riguardo dall'industria critica gaddiana, non meno alacre di quella joyciana seppure meno diffusa a livello globale, si deve con ogni probabilità all'aver trascurato un aspetto fondamentale del capolavoro di Gadda. Proprio a partire da questo elemento, infatti, Frasca ha potuto riaprire il cantiere. Il fatto è che il *Pasticciaccio* – proprio come *Pinocchio* nella classica lettura di Emilio Garroni¹²⁵ – è *uno e bino*. Non solo perché dei suoi primi quattro capitoli esistono due redazioni fra loro piuttosto diverse (prima del libro Garzanti del '57, quella stampata – con un capitolo in più, cassato poi all'altezza appunto dell'edizione in volume – sulla rivista «Letteratura» fra il '45 e il '46); ma perché appunto l'interruzione della pubblicazione a puntate interrompe pure la scrittura di Gadda, la quale entra in una fase di “latenza”, probabilmente, sino al '53. Quando – sollecitato da Livio Garzanti che ha fiutato l'affare, e dai suoi prestigiosi *editors* e consulenti, tutti suoi amici: Attilio Bertolucci, Pietro

¹²⁴ Alberto Cavallari, *Bussiamo all'uscio di casa dei nostri scrittori. C.E. Gadda* [1957], in Carlo Emilio Gadda, «Per favore, mi lasci nell'ombra». *Interviste 1950-1972*, a cura di Claudio Vela, Milano, Adelphi, 1993, pp. 49-50.

¹²⁵ Cfr. Emilio Garroni, *Pinocchio uno e bino*, Roma-Bari, Laterza, 1975.

Citati e Pier Paolo Pasolini – Gadda rimette mano al romanzo e finalmente lo licenzia (anche se alla fine, in effetti, glielo devono letteralmente strappare dalle mani: mentre Gadda vagheggia una seconda parte della quale, a quanto pare, fa in tempo a scrivere solo le pagine finali – le quali saranno presto pubblicate, si spera, nella nuova edizione che del *Pasticciaccio* sta ultimando Giorgio Pinotti)¹²⁶.

Insomma, se il nesso fra Gadda e Joyce appare quanto meno labile sino al “primo” *Pasticciaccio*, quello del 1945-46, le cose con ogni probabilità cambiano all’avvento del “secondo”, quello del 1953-57: all’altezza in cui Gadda, in effetti, attesta di aver letto *Ulisse*. E, sebbene la sua biblioteca conservata e schedata corrisponda solo a una parte dei libri da lui effettivamente letti, in questo caso specifico i conti tornano: perché l’edizione di *Ulisse* ivi presente è sì la traduzione francese di Auguste Morel, Stuart Gilbert e Valery Larbaud, uscita per la prima volta nel 1929, ma nella seconda edizione: quella pubblicata da Gallimard nel ’48¹²⁷. È anzi verosimile ipotizzare che proprio le reiterate pressioni indagatorie di Contini possano aver finalmente spinto Gadda all’acquisto, e alla lettura, di quel libro maledetto dell’ingombrante «collega». È un fatto che proprio a Contini scriva, Gadda, di aver rimesso mano al *Pasticciaccio*, cominciando a impostarne la seconda parte: quella che chiama «coda serpentescia del cocodrillone»¹²⁸. E siamo, a questo punto, giusto nel ’48.

¹²⁶ Si veda intanto Giorgio Pinotti, *Ingravola in campagna. Un inedito finale («imperfetto») del «Pasticciaccio»*, in «Strumenti critici», XXXI, n.s., (2041), maggio-agosto 2016, pp. 199-211.

¹²⁷ Cfr. *Catalogo*, a cura di Andrea Cortellessa e Maria Teresa Iovinelli, in *La biblioteca di Don Gonzalo. Il Fondo Gadda alla Biblioteca del Burcardo*, a cura di Andrea Cortellessa e Giorgio Patrizi, Roma, Bulzoni, 2001, vol. I, p. 140.

¹²⁸ Carlo Emilio Gadda a Gianfranco Contini, 3 aprile 1948, in Gianfranco Contini-Carlo Emilio Gadda, *Carteggio 1934-1963*, cit. p. 145. Proprio nel cruciale ’48, all’*explicit* della recensione dedicata ad *Agostino* di Moravia – magari con una punta di polemica, nei confronti della pur ambivalente ammirazione di questi per *Ulisse* – Gadda scriverà che «ricorda e supera “An encounter” nei *Dubliners* di Joyce»: «*Agostino*» di *Alberto Moravia* [1948], in Id., *I viaggi la morte* [1958]; ora in Id., *Opere*, edizione diretta da Dante Isella, vol. III, *Saggi giornali favole I*, Milano, Garzanti, 1991, p. 611.

Difficile non accorgersi, del resto, del formidabile stacco stilistico fra il “primo” e il “secondo” *Pasticciaccio* (destinato a restare, per il precocemente invecchiato Gadda, l’estremo suo sforzo: nonché, con ogni probabilità, il punto più alto della nostra narrativa novecentesca). Per dirla con Frasca, «troppi sono gli elementi che stendono sulla seconda parte del *Pasticciaccio* l’ombra dello *Ulysses*»¹²⁹: a partire dal “quasi” *stream of consciousness* di diverse parti del testo, massime il cosiddetto “sogno del brigadiere” (la freudianissima fantasmagoria metamorfica dell’ottavo capitolo, nel corso della quale la stregafattucchiera Zamira Pacori, *maîtresse* di un giro semi-prostitutorio nello sprofondo dell’*hinterland* romano, si metamorfosa a un certo punto in «contessa Circea ebriaca», P 194), il quale appunto rinvierebbe in particolare all’episodio «Circe» dell’*Ulisse*¹³⁰. C’è poi il dettaglio sorprendente dell’apparizione – verso la fine di entrambi i libri: nel sedicesimo episodio di *Ulisse*, «Eumeo», e nel nono capitolo del *Pasticciaccio* – di un vetturino che guida un calesse a cavallo male in arnese. Lo «stupido ronzino nervoso senza un pensiero in testa che fosse uno», col suo «signore» che «se ne restava lì sul trespolo, a curarsi dei fatti suoi»¹³¹, di Joyce, e la «povera creatura» col suo «conducente citrullissimo», di Gadda (P 249), assistono ai conversari a tema musicale di Bloom e Stephen da un lato, e delle cugine Camilla e Lavinia Mattonari dall’altro, senza nulla capirne; dopo la loro breve comparsata, si congedano dalla scena dei due romanzi lasciandovi una deiezione, rispettivamente «tre globi di sterco fumanti»¹³² e «un ippurico laghetto» (P 250); «chiusa escrementizia» che, nella lettura di Frasca, si configura come una strizzata d’occhio intertestuale, da parte

¹²⁹ Gabriele Frasca, *Il rovescio d’autore*, cit., p. 123. Il capitolo dedicato alla questione, «Dalla funzione Joyce alla questione della lingua» (alle pp. 115-42), amplia la relazione pubblicata, col titolo *Gadda lettore di Joyce?*, in *Joyce in/and Italy*, numero monografico a cura di Franca Ruggieri ed Enrico Terrinoni di «Joyce Studies in Italy», 14, Edizioni Q, 2013, pp. 39-48.

¹³⁰ Cfr. *ivi*, pp. 127-8.

¹³¹ James Joyce, *Ulisse*, ed. cit., p. 633.

¹³² *Ivi*, p. 636.

di Gadda, pressoché certa (proprio perché dissimulata in una piega poco illuminata della narrazione)¹³³.

Stando a questa ipotesi, Gadda avrebbe impostato il suo romanzo sul tema, dissimulato sotto il torbido del “giallo”, della ricerca di «una filiazione [...] in condizioni dichiaratamente non-generative»¹³⁴ (quella che porta Liliana Balducci, malinconicamente sterile, ad assumere al proprio servizio delle «figliocce», come vengono definite dai casigliani, cioè delle avvenenti ragazze del popolo come le cugine Virginia Troddu e Assunta Crocchiapani, cui fantasmaticamente delegare la maternità: ma nei confronti delle quali finisce ogni volta per concepire un’attrazione morbosamente omoerotica) e solo in un secondo momento – spinto alla sua lettura da chi si ostinava a ravvisare in quell’autore parentele, con lui, su un piano squisitamente formale – avrebbe incontrato un libro, l’*Ulisse* appunto, che, seppure su un piano completamente diverso, presentava invece – e in modo più esplicito che nel suo – precisamente quel tema (incarnato, in questo caso, dall’inconsapevole ricerca reciproca, sullo sfondo di una città non meno deuteragonista di quanto fosse la sua Roma, di Bloom-Ulisse – che ha perso il figlio Rudy – e Stephen-Telemaco). Naturale che il piano dell’opera ne venisse sconvolto, costringendola a entrare nel famoso periodo di “latenza”.

Ma, conoscendo un po’ l’io diviso di Gadda – che nel bel mezzo di quella “latenza” pubblica il suo più importante scritto di poetica, definendosi un «dissociato noëtico»¹³⁵ –, non sorprende neppure che, sulle circostanze di quell’accoppiamento sin troppo giudizioso, egli abbia continuato a stendere una cortina fumogena piuttosto spessa. Sospensione che assomiglia a quella del finale del *Pasticciaccio*, almeno per come lo si poté leggere nell’edizione Garzanti del 1957. Un finale che, com’è noto, *non conclude*. Il “giallo” non trova il suo colpevole: alla fine Ingravallo, «la sua anima» anzi, «intende la verità» e

¹³³ Cfr. Gabriele Frasca, *Il rovescio d’autore*, cit., pp. 130-1.

¹³⁴ Ivi, p. 176.

¹³⁵ Carlo Emilio Gadda, *Come lavoro* [1950], in Id., *I viaggi la morte*, cit.; ora in Id., *Opere*, edizione diretta da Dante Isella, vol. III, *Saggi giornali favole I*, cit., p. 431.

dunque – come dirà Gadda, anni dopo, in una celebre intervista – il romanzo è da intendersi «letterariamente concluso. Il poliziotto capisce chi è l'assassino e questo basta»¹³⁶.

Ma chi è, effettivamente, l'assassina di Liliana Balducci? Considerando i dati “esterni” (in particolare la quarta puntata della prima redazione, poi espunta dal romanzo in volume; e un trattamento cinematografico che del romanzo Gadda abbozzò nel '48, *Il palazzo degli ori*)¹³⁷, la risposta quasi unanime della critica è Virginia. È lei la «figlioccia» che con maggiore insistenza Liliana ha concupito, e quella che alle *avances* ha risposto con minacce esplicite e sguardi, è il caso di dire, assassini. Così si legge nella puntata tagliata che, dichiarò Gadda, andava sacrificata appunto alla volontà di non svelare troppo presto, ai lettori, l'identità del colpevole. Ma restando invece all'interno del testo, e in particolare leggendo il suo finale, la colpa pare pendere piuttosto sull'altra principale indiziata: la cugina di Virginia, Assunta. Quando Ingravallo la va a interrogare, in uno squallido abituro nel paese (inesistente, nella reale geografia laziale) di Tor di Gheppio, dove lei s'è ritirata per assistere il padre morente, pensa di strappare ad Assunta l'indicazione risolutrice, quella che definitivamente incolpi colui sul quale aveva sino a quel momento indirizzato i propri sospetti, ossia quell'Enea Retalli che, nello stesso stabile di Via Merulana dove si sarebbe compiuto l'orribile omicidio di Liliana, tre giorni prima aveva rapinato dei suoi gioielli un'altra inquilina, la vedova Menegazzi. Ma imprevedibilmente Assunta esplode, di fronte all'«ossesso», in quel «grido incredibile»: «No, sor dotto', no, no, nun so' stata io!».

¹³⁶ Carlo Emilio Gadda come uomo, intervista a Dacia Maraini [1968], in Carlo Emilio Gadda, *«Per favore, mi lasci nell'ombra»*, cit., p. 172.

¹³⁷ Cfr. Carlo Emilio Gadda, *Il palazzo degli ori* [inedito del 1948 pubblicato nel 1983], in Id., *Opere*, edizione diretta da Dante Isella, vol. V, *Scritti vari e postumi*, a cura di Andrea Silvestri, Claudio Vela, Dante Isella, Paola Italia e Giorgio Pinotti, Milano, Garzanti, 1993, pp. 925-87.

Come ha mostrato Ferdinando Amigoni¹³⁸, siamo di fronte a un caso da manuale di *Verneinung*, di denegazione freudiana¹³⁹. È stato lo stesso Gadda, nel trattato filosofico *Meditazione milanese*, a invocare un'«ermeneutica a soluzioni multiple»¹⁴⁰: e mai come in questo caso penso vada applicata al suo testo. Il nome di chi ha posto fine ai giorni di Liliana Balducci lo sa «il poliziotto», «e questo basta». Non lo sappiamo noi, invece, e con ogni probabilità non lo sapeva neppure l'autore del *Pasticciaccio*: il cui io diviso pensava contemporaneamente, insomma, a tutte e due le «figliocce»¹⁴¹.

Ma la medesima ermeneutica ci può forse prestare soccorso nel “caso” meno cruento, ma non meno torbido, dell'altra «filiazione negata». Non quella di Liliana nelle due «figliocce», e neppure quella di Bloom in Stephen. Ma quella di Joyce nei confronti di Gadda. Scopri-

¹³⁸ Cfr. Ferdinando Amigoni, *La più semplice macchina. Lettura freudiana del «Pasticciaccio»*, Bologna, il Mulino, 1995, pp. 123-42.

¹³⁹ «Lei mi domanda chi possa essere questa persona del sogno. *Non è mia madre*». Noi rettifichiamo: dunque è la madre [...]. Il contenuto rimosso di una rappresentazione o di un pensiero può dunque penetrare nella coscienza a condizione di lasciarsi *negare*»: Sigmund Freud, *La negazione* [1925], in Id., *Opere*, vol. X, *Inibizione, sintomo e angoscia e altri scritti*, Torino, Bollati Boringhieri, 1978, pp. 197-8. Gadda, che di Freud era lettore assiduo da decenni, con ogni probabilità non poteva conoscere il saggio del '25, che circolò in francese – la lingua in cui appunto Gadda leggeva, oltre a Joyce, Freud – solo negli anni Cinquanta, via Jacques Lacan, e in italiano nel decennio ancora seguente, via Elvio Fachinelli. Ma Gadda, come detto, “pensava freudiano” da par suo, e per suo conto giunse, anche ispirandosi a un passo simile di un romanzo da lui amatissimo come *I fratelli Karamazov*, alla situazione narrativa che a quel concetto dava carne.

¹⁴⁰ Carlo Emilio Gadda, *Meditazione milanese* [inedito del 1928 pubblicato nel 1974], in Id., (2009). *Scritti vari e postumi*, Milano: Garzanti p. 748.

¹⁴¹ Tanto più se davvero, come pare ormai accertato, la *fabula del Pasticciaccio* si ispira al caso di cronaca dell'omicidio di Angela Barrauca, nell'ottobre del 1945, perpetrato di concerto da due diverse assassine, Franca e Lidia Cataldi, tra loro sorelle anziché cugine: cfr. Giorgio Panizza, *Da due sorelle a due cugine: alle origini del «Pasticciaccio»*, in «Strumenti critici», XXIII, n.s., 3 (118), settembre 2008, pp. 365-87; cfr. anche Maria Antonietta Terzoli, *Iconografia criptica e iconografia esplicita nel Pasticciaccio*, in *Un meraviglioso ordegno. Paradigmi e modelli nel Pasticciaccio di Gadda*, atti del convegno di Basilea, 9-11 maggio 2012, a cura sua e di Cosetta Veronese e Vincenzo Vitale, Roma, Carocci, 2013, p. 160; e la sua nota di commento al «No, sor dotto', no, no, nun so' stata io!» in Ead., con la collaborazione di Vincenzo Vitale, *Commento a Quer pasticciaccio brutto de via Merulana*, Roma, Carocci, 2015, vol. II, p. 932).

remmo così che, all'interno di un testo *uno e bino* come il *Pasticciaccio*, anche i *no* improvvisamente si duplicano. Non siamo più di fronte a due sì e a un no: bensì a due diversi sì, a fronte dei quali stanno due diversi no. A dirla tutta, insomma, quel «no» gridato in clausola da Assunta all'inquisitore Ingravallo, non varrà anche come risposta postrema agli interrogativi, o meglio agli interrogatori, di Contini? Con tanta insistenza gli avevano chiesto, lui e tanti altri, se l'avesse letto, quel libro; e Gadda risponde *no*, lo grida: proprio nel corpo del testo che ha trovato modo di concludersi, in verità, solo dopo aver effettivamente letto l'altro. Un *no* che dunque, anche in questo caso freudianamente, afferma. Ma qui, a differenza che nel "giallo", *davvero inconsciamente*. Il primo *no* è quello di Assunta: è dunque il personaggio a essere inconsapevole che in questo modo, in effetti, sta dicendo *sì*. Il secondo *no*, invece, è quello di Gadda: inconsapevole stavolta è l'autore che, per negare la sua angoscia dell'influenza, clamorosamente convoca, capovolto, proprio il testo che tanto lo angoscia. La *negazione effettiva* dell'autore dentro la *negazione rappresentata* del personaggio.

Ma la complessità di questo labirinto di specchi non può impedirci di ricordare che, in qualsiasi regime retorico, due negazioni – seppur turbate dalla riserva di quel «quasi» – una cosa sola possono fare. Affermano.

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Abstract

The famous “Yes” repeatedly uttered by Molly Bloom in the final episode of *Ulysses* is positioned between another conclusive “Yes” spoken by another Molly (the young daughter of an Italian emigrant couple who have returned to their place of birth, in Tuscany) in *Italy*, the tale in verse by Giovanni Pascoli (1904), and an equally impressive “No” cried by Assunta (one of the people implicated in the murder of Liliana Balducci), who is interrogated by police commissioner Ingravallo in the mystery novel *Quer pasticciaccio brutto de via Merulana* by Carlo Emilio Gadda (1957). At the very end of three masterworks of modern European literature, these two “yeses” and a “no” seem to reply to each other as if in dialogue. But while after the publication of Gadda’s novel there was much conjecture on the possible influence of Joyce (never confirmed by Gadda), critics have never put forward the hypothesis that Pascoli might have had an influence on Joyce in his Triestine years. There is no conclusive evidence concerning this, but it is quite likely that Joyce may have had many reasons to be interested in Pascoli’s epic narrative of exile, written in a paroxysmally multilingual style.

JOYCE IN THE SHADOW OF WAR AND FASCISM:
A REVIEW OF *FINNEGANS WAKE* BY MARIO PRAZ
(1939)

“Children may just as well play as not.
The ogre will come in any case”
(*LIII*: 144)

This essay offers a contextualisation of the reception of *Finnegans Wake* around the time that Britain and France declared war on Germany, when the ogre of totalitarianism was on the rampage in Europe, and when European culture was moving into a state of suspended animation, or taking flight across the Atlantic. It will consider Joyce’s distraught state on the day of that declaration, which related specifically to Lucia, though also more generally to the reception of his book which had appeared in May; it will consider in passing the value of biographical criticism; and it will examine one hostile review which appeared in *La Stampa* in December 1939, written by the great critic Mario Praz.¹ This fascinating review deserves – though it has not received any² – attention, especially as questions arise from it: if *Finne-*

¹ A translation of this review appears at the end of this essay in an appendix. I am immensely grateful to Stefano Rosignoli who did the lion’s share of the translation, and also helped with a sense of Praz’s reputation in Italy.

² Umberto Eco drew attention to Praz in 2008, focusing on his 1930 ‘Commento a Ulysses’ (which he incorrectly says came out in 1939). See Eco (2009, 253).

gans Wake, as Phillippe Sollers later famously described it, was the most formidably anti-fascist book produced between the two wars, then how far might a negative review written in Italy in 1939 express a fascist aesthetic?³ Did responses to *Finnegans Wake* reflect political divisions of the day? Is it possible for a critical response to be autonomous and isolated from cultural politics? Or do such questions draw on simplistic assumptions about the cultural politics of the time? Praz's review is a place to try out these questions, though it offers no easy answers.

On 3rd September 1939, Joyce sent a telegram from the town of La Baule in Brittany to his son Giorgio in Paris. I retain the capitals – that feature of telegrams that ensures their legibility – but offer it in the translation (slightly touched up) from the original French as it appears in the edition of Joyce's letters:

ABSOLUTELY NO PROVISION MADE HERE TO RECEIVE MAISON DE SANTE STOP DELMAS THINKS HE CAN ARRANGE EVENTUALLY IN A WEEK OR FORTNIGHT STOP MEANWHILE LUCIA IS ABANDONED IVRY IN SPITE OF ALL MY ARRANGEMENTS STOP TRY TO GET IN TOUCH WITH THE STAFF OF MAISON WE ARE AT HOTEL ST CRISTOPHE HERE TELEPHONE 21-30 COURAGE GOOD LUCK BABBO(LIII: 454)

The editors of Joyce's *Letters* did not transcribe the time at which this was sent or received, something telegrams normally record. The original being in private hands, it is difficult to check: but the time is of potential interest – did Joyce know, as he dictated the message, that Britain and France were at war with Germany? At 11.15 am, the British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain had announced on the radio that Britain had been at war since 11, when the ultimatum had expired. Did Joyce write this in the morning or evening, before or after the announcement? Was Joyce listening, like most people, to a radio? Have all the “clever hopes expired” yet, as Auden had declared they had al-

³ Sam Slote (2004, 397).

ready on 1st September, or were they just about to? The content of the telegram, in either case, is silent on this matter. Is the silence a sign of Joyce's indifference to the bigger picture, an indifference produced by his sometimes troubling fatalism which knew that "children may just as well play as not. The ogre will come in any case." (LIII: 144)? Or does it simply reflect the efficient concision of telegrams, the enforced brevity of which is a vehicle for wit, condensed impersonality, terse instruction, stoic directness? Joyce knew this genre well, inserting a 'cable' comically into *Finnegans Wake*: "Starving today plays punk opening tomorrow two plays punk wire splosh how two plays punk Cabler" (488.27-28). But if he doesn't yet know, is the message dictated, with a fraught expectation at the end when he bids his son 'COURAGE, GOOD LUCK'? Or can we detect an edge in the urgent tone, anxious about the imminent bombardment of Paris, where Lucia remained? Whatever the answers, the lack of allusion to the day's events has an enigmatic eloquence.

The declaration of war was shocking but came as a surprise to no one. A minority harboured hopes or retained fears of a settlement that might signal yet more appeasement. Among these were the economist John Maynard Keynes and certain dead souls who spoke to Geraldine Cummins, the spiritualist medium for *Psychic News*.⁴ The realist Joyce, unimpressed by Chamberlain (see LI: 367), was, I would guess, not among them. Joyce's pessimistic fatalism, as seen in the 1926 letter to Harriet Shaw Weaver, quoted above, is adaptable to the circumstances, since the ogre can be read variously as death, repressive regimes, totalitarianism, war itself. The sentiment provides the narrative line for chapter II.1, the 'Nightgames' of *Finnegans Wake*; Joyce's prophetic realism echoes powerfully in 1939, with the ogre on the rampage; and we have heard echoes of it stomping in 2017.

Joyce's pessimism was uttered not as a warning, however, nor as something to discourage us from play. It says one must ignore the inevitable doom: drink and be merry, though tomorrow we die. Make

⁴ Buckland (2005, 435).

music, even though war will come down upon us. Harry Levin (whose review was Joyce's favourite) picked up on this quality of gay abandon – or gay science – when he described *Finnegans Wake* in the autumn of 1939 as gaily proclaiming the millenium, and, in his introductory book, as a “genial proclamation of doom”.⁵ Given the powerful expectation of war, preparations were well under way, including, in France, general mobilisation, and the mass evacuation from Paris of children and vulnerable hospital patients, like Joyce's daughter Lucia. Evacuation is the primary explanatory context of the telegram, and sharpens any intuitions we have of Joyce's anxiety. Lucia had, since 1936, been at a *Maison de Santé* just south east of Paris, in Ivry-sur-Seine, run by the relatively liberal psychiatrist, Dr. Francois Achille-Delmas. The plan, once war was declared, was for the building in Ivry to be requisitioned by the State. There were also expectations of air raids (which we now see were exaggerated), and so the patients would have to be evacuated. Joyce seems to have been told that this would happen the minute that mobilization of troops in France began – which was on 1st September. Joyce had thus arrived at La Baule in advance, had been waiting there anxiously, and was now furious to find no Lucia, believing her ‘abandoned’. The evacuation from Ivry was perhaps delayed because Delmas had not found a suitable place for his patients, or because it was proving tricky to organise a fleet of cars to move the patients, or because the sense of urgency had subsided (LI: 407). To Joyce it seemed Delmas was irresponsibly breaking a promise; but I suspect Joyce had misunderstood what must have been provisional plans for the evacuation, and by turning up in advance had over-reacted. In any case he is allowing little leeway for the complexity of the situation, which was typical of him at the time.

Indeed, as Geert Lernout has shown, Joyce's letters of this period – many waiting to be published – were anxious in the extreme: he was impatient, irritable, bordering on paranoid and tyrannical, as he blamed everyone, except himself and his family, for any perceived

⁵ Levin (1939, 460) and Levin (1941, 121).

problem or slight – even such devoted friends as Harriet Shaw Weaver and Paul Léon.⁶ The trials of his children, the labour of completing *Finnegans Wake*, his vulnerable health, his drinking, had all been taking their toll. And so too was the underwhelming critical response to *Finnegans Wake* which had come out four months before in May.

Lucia would finally arrive, with other patients, on 11th September, and be safely installed, as planned, with other patients at a hotel in Pornichet, just next to La Baule.⁷ Joyce would remain – at the St Christophe hotel – for over a month, before returning to Paris. He may have visited occasionally at weekends but it is possible this was the last time he saw her. At Christmas he moved to be near Maria Jolas at St-Gérand-le-Puy near Vichy. Travel across France was challenging, especially after the fall of France in June 1940, and, after he'd gone to Switzerland in December, Joyce could not affect a transit visa for her. She stayed at Pornichet till 1951, when she was transferred to Northampton in the UK.

Even if critics accept the idea that biography can be relevant to the works of an author (after all, some do not, though I am willing to make a case for it), this vignette and my analysis, might seem to bear little or no relevance to Joyce's works, since all of it post-dates the appearance of his last work, *Finnegans Wake*. I'm dwelling on it for a number of reasons, however.

First, it's not exactly true that *Finnegans Wake* was finished. As he was writing from Brittany to Giorgio, a copy of the unbound sheets of *Finnegans Wake* were, as Joyce had requested, winging their way from Faber & Faber in London to Paris, care of Paul Léon. Joyce had yet to correct the first flawed edition, something he wouldn't get around to for another few months. He was however filling in a notebook (VI.B.48), as if developing ideas for a new novel – or unable to alter his habitual practices. We tend to think of the publication date of *Finnegans Wake* as May 1939, that it was completed before the war,

⁶ Lernout (2013, 3-32).

⁷ Bowker (2012 512).

giving it a particular symbolic valency. But what appeared in May was botched in several – though very minor – ways. Joyce not only corrected, but also altered the first edition. They are indeed different texts, which you can think of as in series to each other or in parallel. An example of their difference: a question in the 1939 text is turned, in 1940, into an exclamation, as if the latter seems to be answering the former: “The sweetest song in all the world?” asked the first edition, receiving the echoing answer: “The sweetest song in all the world!”⁸ Uncertainty is transformed, as if scorning the mixed reviews, into an assertive confidence. So *Finnegans Wake* is not strictly an inter-war text: its composition was still – *just* – taking place against the backdrop of a major war in Europe. The war, moreover, prevented the corrections being inserted into the published version of the text for several years.⁹ So this period remains part of the compositional context of *Finnegans Wake*, and its publication history.

Secondly, the work does not of course stop at publication: it continues in its reception, and also in an author’s responses to that reception, responses which are themselves shaped by the author’s situation. We can describe these exchanges between critics and authors as *annexes* of the text. One critically prominent expression for this position appears as “readers write texts”; *Finnegans Wake* has its own version: “his producers are they not his consumers?” (497.01-02). In September 1939, we remain in that period when there are still dialogues between Joyce and his readers, still loops that will only be interrupted by death. I consider these textual “annexes”, in which responses can potentially still affect revisions to the text, as primary contexts because of the author’s involvement. The subsequent loops between readers and readers we can consider as secondary contexts. A good example is Joyce’s correction of “blunders” made by Edmund Wilson in his hasty review for ‘The New Republic’, June 1939 (LI: 405). The genealogy of interpretations of the completed *Finnegans Wake* was in

⁸ Fordham (2002, 48).

⁹ They were incorporated first in Faber’s 1950 edition. See Slote and Crispi (2007, 493).

its early stages. In spite of the impact on subsequent readings, I'm separating from this genealogy such early responses as 'Exagmination...', because they were responding to an unfinished work. Biography is crucial to help construct these annexes to the text. Alongside Joyce's anxiety about Lucia, close beneath it, this vignette gives a window into a period when Joyce was depressed about the reception of *Finnegans Wake*. In letters at the time his responses to the reviews look like someone clutching at straws. Gone are the confident moods, alternating between excitement and indifference in his responses to the banning of *Ulysses*. Some reviews must have confirmed his opinions of the philistine readers, and the philistine times; but others, including negative reviews like the one by Mario Praz, which it is quite possible he read (see LI: 408), would have come as a bitter blow. It is, admittedly, not at all easy to assert clear links between Joyce's amendments and the reception of the book, or the world now at war. But this is itself significant: the amendments were made according to rules established within the world of the book. Joyce kept the world outside it at arm's length.

Thirdly, the anxiety about Lucia is an important, if painful, context for *Finnegans Wake* in general, both to its composition and, as we see increasingly, its interpretations. Lucia within the *Wake* has become an extraordinarily fertile field for scholarly and, in particular, creative responses. It is well known that, as Joyce's work on the *Wake* faltered, so too did Lucia's dancing career. The *Wake*'s uneven composition and his daughter's uneven development ran alongside each other, especially in the 1930s. In Joyce's mind – the developing young woman, the developing text, and her developing illness became co-eval. Joyce indulged in magical thinking – by completing the book he believed Lucia would be cured.¹⁰ As long as he was writing it and she was unwell, both he and the book seemed cursed (see LI: 403). It was as if he'd struck a deal with the world to write a visionary book: but he would lose his daughter as an unintended consequence. In this he

¹⁰ Potts, (1979, 209).

resembles the mythic fathers Agamemnon and Jephthah who achieved their worldly desires, but sacrificed their daughters in the process. As I've written elsewhere, a tragic line is scored across Joyce's original intention of a cyclical 'comic book'. Now that, in 1939, that book was abroad, taking the air as it were – at a time when the air was a threatening place – she was still not better, still institutionalized. His hopes for the book's reception, for Lucia's recovery, and for contributing to the latter – were simultaneously dashed. And while he was able to devote himself to Lucia's care, for a while, Lucia eventually seemed to be healthier without him there.¹¹ The tragedy of Lucia's life and Joyce's family life, was still playing out in this telegram to Giorgio, nor is its impatient tone entirely detachable from moments in the *Wake*, that "paroxysm of wroughtness" as Beckett called it. For the reader oriented towards Joyce's biography, his expressions in and outside the *Wake* come together as continuations and adaptations of each other. Perhaps a writer's *mood*, their personality even, are relevant contexts for a work, even when finished. Though in stark contrast to theories of impersonal art, I would be willing to argue for it. It is a complicated, provocative, and, even after the historical turn, still an unfashionable suggestion. But I will leave it for another day, as, like Stephen Dedalus, I'm not sure I believe my own theory.

Fourthly, and finally, I dwell on this telegram, because it contributes in a small way to a research project I am working on: an examination of cultural life in Britain and of British citizens, or of people resident in Britain, or networked with British culture – at a particular moment of shock – the declaration of war, the day this telegram was sent, which, in England and France, happened to be a bright and very warm Sunday. This telegram, which gives us a direct insight into Joyce's activities on that day, will form one piece in a mosaic of multiple vignettes detailing the activities of many cultural figures. As well as the usual suspects from the period (Orwell, Woolf, Eliot, Waugh), the study examines Brits abroad (Auden, Isherwood, Huxley, Britten,

¹¹ Bowker, 517.

Bertrand Russell, Wyndham Lewis, Alfred Hitchcock) and emigrés or visitors in Britain (Freud, Mondrian, Stefan Zweig, Anais Nin).

I am also aiming to see how far the days around that moment can be presented as a hinge or fulcrum on which people's lives and their cultural production swung or turned. Many shifted ideologically from individualism to patriotism; from pacifism to militarism (A.A. Milne); from supporting Soviet Communism, to supporting liberal capitalist democracy (Rex Warner). Others held on doggedly to their Fascist or Stalinist or pacifist standpoints. Tastes shifted also. Some did not change – Joyce amongst them, even though his life was affected for the worse. I want to examine especially how experimental art and its consumption were threatened by the priorities of a war effort, which demanded practical and instrumentalised arts, a clarity of general expression for what was perceived as the good of the broader community - in short, propaganda. Around the day of the declaration, cultural production and consumption were restricted (in the big cities theatres and cinemas were shut down, radio stations and the new TV service came off air; publishers soon found that paper was rationed). The war effort and preparations for it quietly and subtly undermined experiment, complexity, difficulty, subversion in the arts, and all those forms of art that demand time for their consumption and enjoyment, or that say little immediately about the concerns of supposed 'relevance' to people: this threatened the reception of Joyce's last work, and creative responses to it.

With this project, I am aiming to see in more detail how this ending or pause or suspension occurs, whether 'modernism' and the 'avant-garde' unravelled. Or whether, on the contrary, it held together, but went into hibernation, where it sought a way to survive and reappear in a new form after the hiatus of war, with its unpredictable duration, its disturbing violence, with the State's expectations of dutiful contributions. Beckett is perhaps the paradigm of this survival. His war period in France can be seen as a form of incubation for a nascent late modernist.

The fact of war and of imminent war, had a colossal impact on the early reception of *Finnegans Wake*. In Europe, it was a terrible

time to produce a vast avant-garde novel. The dominant taste with respect to new cultural forms was for first hand social realism (Mass Observation, for example) or documentary accounts of mounting horror from war zones around the globe (Spain or China). In the United States, however this trend was noticeably less advanced, and humanities departments at American universities were able to shore up a 'pure' approach to literature that was shortly – in 1941 – to be announced as the 'New Criticism'. Along with many modernist canvases, *Finnegans Wake* found "a way a lone" across the Atlantic. This assisted the establishment of Joyce studies in the U.S., and determined the U.S. as the home of Joyce Studies. Fulsome reviews and early studies of *Finnegans Wake* all came out in the States – beginning in 1939 with important pieces by Edmund Wilson, Harry Levin, John Crowe Ransom, then *The Skeleton Key* (1946), and, eventually, Adaline Glasheen's *Census* (1956). In the States, there was institutional support for this kind of work and fewer people were going off to war. As a contrasting example, Anthony Burgess, a Master's student at Manchester University, went off to train for the army in 1940, with, apparently, a copy of *Finnegans Wake* in his kitbag.¹² If he'd been in America, he might have made a start on a PhD on Joyce. Elizabeth Bowen describes the cultural atmosphere in Britain most sharply in a piece for the Dublin journal *The Bell* written shortly after Joyce's death:

Wartime England is in a state of reaction against what seems to her febrile or over-cerebral: she has only room, now, for the primary feelings, for plain speech and properly drilled thought.¹³

Bowen called on Ireland to take on Joyce as one of their own. Though not at war, Ireland was also strapped in terms of resources, and still had problems with Joyce. It would take decades for Bowen's call to be heard, at least at the institutional level.

¹² Biswell (2005, 77).

¹³ Walshe (2011, 75).

The broad case for this argument – and for other consequences – is well known, but I suggest there is much more work to be done in the nitty gritty of detail around the reception of *Finnegans Wake*, especially in the complex context of cultural politics, and its role in emerging attitudes to the avant-garde. Material in archives is also beginning to show that the public expression of a critic in a review might well be at odds from their private expression in letters or diaries.¹⁴

The response in Europe, not including Britain and Ireland, was particularly distressing for Joyce (LIII: 463). It appears that there were only a couple of reviews in Germany which is hardly surprising, but also only two apiece in France (by Jacques Mercanton and Georges Pelorson) and in Italy, even though he had lived in both those countries.¹⁵ Of the Italian reviews, one, by Salvatore Rosati, was positive and the other, by Mario Praz, negative. These early reviews of *Finnegans Wake* are fascinating because, unlike readers today, the reviewers were working with so little, by and large lost in the wood of Joyce's words, and guided or alienated by such critical works as had appeared. I want to focus on the negative Italian review, partly because of the occasion of this conference, but also because it has, as noted, received very little attention, in spite of being an extraordinary review. Its writer, Mario Praz, was a brilliant critic. Since he was key in establishing Comparativist Literary Studies in Italy, had taught Giorgio Melchiori and Franca Ruggieri, it could be argued, that without him, the annual Joyce Conference in Italy might not be taking place.

Praz's review appeared on 2nd December 1939, in *La Stampa*, the Turin newspaper for which Praz wrote a regular thousand-word review roughly once a month. 'L'Ultimo Joyce' – a translation of which appears below in an Appendix – appeared alongside a photo in Finland of crowds "under the menace of war." The Soviet Union had just invaded. When the Finns were winning Joyce famously declared that 'The Finn again wakes' as if his book had prophesied their victory

¹⁴ For example Louis Gillet's private response to E.R. Curtius. See Bénéjam (2011, 745-50).

¹⁵ See Lernout and Van Mierlo (2009) and Deming (1970).

(for a while), and the victory was a correct reading of the book, and a part of its reception (LIII: 464).

By 1939, Praz was already a well-established critic after a groundbreaking, and still dazzlingly insightful study of Romanticism called *La carne, la morte e il diavolo nella letteratura romantica* in 1930 (from which Beckett, we know, took notes), translated as *The Romantic Agony* in 1951.¹⁶ In 1934, he was made Professor of Literature at “La Sapienza” in Rome, with the involvement of Giovanni Gentile (known as the ‘Philosopher of Fascism’). In 1939 Praz published an important study of imagery in 17th century poetry, showing an enduring affiliation to T.S. Eliot. He also wrote short articles for *La Stampa* in August, October and November 1939, which covered works about Emily Dickinson and Walter Pater. He wrote about Freud’s death in October for *La Prospettiva*. August he took off, so no article appeared around the time of the declaration of war. I suspect he was beginning to research for his Joyce review, which appeared in December.¹⁷

Praz’s review looks like one of the most negative responses to *Finnegans Wake* from the time, and this might explain why it has never surfaced within Joycean circles. We might call it ‘ogre-ish’. I want to present the review briefly, before trying to examine its relation to its moment through the lens of ideology, with hostilities breaking out across Europe, and totalitarian ogres in the ascendant. I recommend the reader now turns to the Appendix to read the review.

Through the title ‘L’Ultimo Joyce’, Praz implies Joyce is writing himself off to a mythical edge of the map: to Ultima Thule, beyond which there is only an icy blankness. This might seem like a compliment, conjuring courageous explorations of extremity, voyages to the void in a sublime Mallarméan way. But we soon discover it is not: Joyce should in fact be punished for writing *Finnegans Wake*, in a Dantean Inferno. He has abused Art, which – quoting Dante’s Virgil –

¹⁶ Ackerley (2002).

¹⁷ See list of publications in Vittorio (1996).

Praz tells us is God's nephew. Praz, adopting an exalted position, is unable to hold back this heavy Shaun-like judgement of the artist-as-abuser, and has not noticed that such a judgement is already caricatured in the book itself. The denunciation sounds a particularly harsh note in a review that, while negative, is also often playfully over-articulate. In his conclusion, by contrast, Praz seems to strike a sympathetic note: Joyce wrote the book as a therapeutic response to his blindness and his isolation. Grounds for mercy may appear here, but these are for Praz further signs of Joyce's self-engrossment. In this reworking, he chose to extend his criticism of Joyce's message, describing it as a "metaphysical nihilism". He sees neither joy nor affirmation in Joyce.

What little content Praz glimpses in *Finnegans Wake* is "invercondo" or "indecent". And perhaps with this as an alibi, he moves on quickly to the material level of the word. His own wit identifies a degree of fun in the wordplay, but he piles up examples to emphasise how Joyce pushed his point too far. Joyce's wordplay is for Praz trivial, which might be forgivable except that it is unrelenting in its triviality. His close focus rejects the gestalt interpretations of the book which appeared in what he describes cynically as the "sales pitch" provided by Joyce's circle. So Praz denies the possibility of some unifying intellectual content to the book: that it is for instance a night book, that it retells a myth of riverine civilisation, that it's structure is Viconian. Praz has done his homework, presumably through the Faber reprints of the 'Exagmination...' volume (1936) and Budgen's *Making of 'Ulysses'* (1937). He is hostile to such schemes because of what he sees as their idealism. Praz was hostile in general to idealism and especially to its advocates like Benedetto Croce, with whom he'd had a feud some years before.¹⁸ "Vico" might well have been a red light for Praz since Croce was perhaps the most significant proponent of Vico's writings at the time.

This explains for me the most striking of Praz's images for de-

¹⁸ Wellek, 256-7.

scribing *Finnegans Wake*, which is “quella specie di orario delle ferrovie della Luna” – “this kind of timetable for railways on the moon”, a good line of surrealist poetry, its form in part determined by the restricted position he takes. There is no middle ground in Praz’s approach to the book: he denigrates the text from close-up, and denies any distant readings. There is no acknowledgement that there might be meaning at the level of the sentence, story, character, or theme. Seeing Joyce – mistakenly in my view – in a tradition of nihilism, he denies the possibility of affirmation. He is perhaps too shocked by whatever meanings he manages to gather beyond the harmless wordplay to look any further. His classicism is of a prudish kind.

It is also of the kind which identifies traditions, and great exponents of traditions. Praz is exceptionally erudite, dazzles with allusions to a huge range of writers, and clearly sees Joyce’s connections or at least relations to the traditions they embody: he alludes to futurists, Dante, Shakespeare, Laforgue, Max Ernst, Lewis Carroll, Milton. But in each case, the comparison is negative: Joyce is degenerate alongside them, even when they were limited in the first place. Joyce marks, for Praz, an outer limit of experimentation, a warning sign of where not to go, or the point where you end up if you follow a certain route – what we now call the modernist route – to its inevitable end. He repeats this in a review of English Literature in April 1940, with Italy on the point of joining war: *Finnegans Wake* is “the utterly delinquent liquidation of half a century of symbolist, decadent and futurist experimentation.”¹⁹

Praz sees Joyce in terms of literary history, but not in terms of contemporary history. He is not concerned about whether – or how – the *Wake* speaks to its own time, to what extent it is a “genial proclamation of doom”, as it was for Harry Levin. Relevance is not relevant. And doom – what doom? There may be a doom of culture, but not for European politics. The avoidance of such allusion is one way in which

¹⁹ ‘Clima letterario inglese d’oggi. *Il Popolo di Roma*, 16th April 1940. Reprinted in *Cronache Letterarie Anglosassoni*, II, (Roma: Ed. di Storia e Letteratura, 1951), p. 64.

Praz avoids potential political content. Praz tended to judge style in art, protecting classical values of clarity, beauty, balance, respect for tradition, and detachment. He also reintroduced the term '*horror vacui*' as his way of understanding the clutter of 19th century interiors in the context of 19th century poetry.²⁰ It is assumed that he criticized this principle from a modernist perspective of pure clean lines. And yet he was an avid collector of 19th century antiques and paintings, and his apartment in Rome, now the extraordinary Museo Mario Praz, seems rather to *embody* this aesthetic, than resist it. It is instructive to put this alongside the dense detailed lettristic texture of *Finnegans Wake* for it too, modelled as it is on the intricate illuminations of the Book of Kells, seems to express a *horror vacui*. *Horror vacui* can be expressed, and its muddle neutralised, through an intense patterning and ordering: Praz, presumably thought *Finnegans Wake* was chaotic.

But was Praz's apolitical stance developed out of a cautious desire for self-preservation? He makes an effort to find puns on Italian material and smiles at the operatic allusions in Joyce, but he misses Joyce's allusion to Mussolini and his War in Abyssinia skewered by Joyce in the words "Minuscolini" (226.15) and "his coglional expansion" (488.31). The avoidance of politics can mark a stubborn and righteous refusal to surrender to a dominant discourse which determines 'relevance'. But it can also signal, implicitly or accidentally, an accommodation of those who would prefer the cultural field to be silent about the political. These alternatives leave me with the riddle, relevant to my project about shifting cultural politics around war's declaration: is there a political allegiance in this review, and if so what is it? How far does its lack of political alignment reflect and respect Italian neutrality at the time? Or might the expression of allegiance be unimportant, the goal of a game that only critics play, having even less political impact than the original art works and their critics ever had? To ask the questions is perhaps more important than finding definitive answers. But to pursue the answers one needs to know Praz's relation

²⁰ Praz, 1970, 172.

to fascism. Informally, I have gathered a variety of views about this: that he was in no way a fascist; that he was a kind of fascist; that he was a covert fascist; that he had no politics. It is quite murky, and, in the context of Italian cultural history, it seems controversial, contested. Perhaps it explains why Praz is known for having the ‘malocchio’ or evil eye, so to mention Praz’s name is taboo, its utterance bringing bad luck. The curse reflects there being something anomalous and questionable about the survival of this aesthete into the 1980s. The review itself has nothing explicitly political in it. However, it is perhaps an obscurely coded review, with its allusions to Virgil and Dante – complex figures for Italian national identity, and to futurism, a cultural cornerstone for fascism. ‘Futurism’ is for Praz ‘white magic’ in comparison with Joyce’s ‘black magic’. How might ideas of racial purity enter this colour-coding? Has Joyce corrupted the futurist legacy, or is this its inevitable outgrowth? The review is moreover polylogic, adopting voices and a variety of positions. We could read the code in a number of ways, detect tongue-in-cheek irony, perhaps unintentional ambiguity, a sub-text working in the opposite direction. Praz pulls out the stops for this review – he is clearly in awe of Joyce.

We may return to view things from Phillippe Sollers’ perspective in 1975, as located above, that *Finnegans Wake* is the most formidably anti-fascist book of the inter-war period. The judgment is attractive for those fans of *Finnegans Wake* who happen also to be anti-fascist (presumably a vast majority): it’s excellent branding. And if Sollers is correct, then to attack *Finnegans Wake*, as Praz did, is to contribute to the fascist culture war. There are indeed instances of fascists disliking *Finnegans Wake* – Ezra Pound, for example. And there are few instances of fascists who admired *Finnegans Wake* – though one of the French reviewers, Pelorson, became a collaborator in occupied France.²¹ The binaristic thinking of ‘pro-’ and ‘anti-’, of being with us or against us seems simple and effective. But it also resembles the attitude of Mrs. Mooney in ‘The Boarding House’ in *Dubliners*

²¹ See Giroud, 2000.

who “dealt with moral problems as a cleaver deals with meat”. And that is questionable. Sollers simplifies, but is simplistic. ‘Fascism’ had become easy crude shorthand by the 1970s. But Fascism within Italy in the 1930s had many shades, and it is a totalitarian gesture towards the past not to appreciate its proper nuance. Moreover, if Sollers were right about the anti-fascist qualities of Joyce’s last work, we might have to accept that, as such, it achieved nothing and was hopelessly ineffective.

I want to give Praz the benefit of the doubt: he bravely committed himself to art and seems to have followed the logic of the aestheticist’s position. This justifies the separation of the artistic from the political on certain firm and not unreasonable grounds: the artwork’s meaning is contingent; what little power it may have – through its reception – is hardly relevant to actual politics, which unfold in a different administrative regime. This might all seem irresponsible to the ideological critic of culture, and it might underestimate the power of art to shape discourse, which resists dominant discourse. But in his focus on art, Praz is protecting certain forms of life and expression. He might have been wrong about *Finnegans Wake*, but it’s childish to point a finger at someone and say that therefore, they’re sympathetic to fascism. The protection of the aesthetic is a huge responsibility. *Finnegans Wake* might appear retrospectively as profoundly anti-fascist, but at the time it was not yet sufficiently iconic for it to be enlisted in one cause or another: its capacity to be interpreted politically was limited by its status as an enigma. This uncertainty makes the critical positioning around this time of cultural stagnation and political upheaval, all the more interesting. These arguments about politics and culture keep returning, they go round and round, and are unresolved in the end. They are perhaps a form of play, and to be defended as play: “We may as well play as not”, even if, after all, “The ogre will come in any case.”

Appendix

“Ultima Joyce”

Ultima Joyce, as we say *ultima Thule*, a literary Finisterre, beyond which nothing remains but the immaculate Arctic spaces of the blank page. *Finnegans Wake* (London, 1939), of more than six hundred pages blamelessly printed, which I borrowed from a friend who in turn had received it as a gift from the author himself, and who had not even had the strength to cut its pages, will remain, surely will remain in literary histories, as the extreme example of something, as the ultimate stage of a movement which in its first youthful steps was called ‘futurist’.

The naïve *chimismi lirici* of a quarter of a century ago, the verbal white magic, so transparent, of our avant-garde writers, what cheerful and mild things they seem to be next to this shady black magic, this sinister art of Joycean equivocation, whose meaning, when it is glimpsed, is for most of the time shameless!

This artist, who once was great, has been ruminating, for seventeen years, on this enormous cryptogram, and may truly be said to have touched bottom, or rather, in the English fashion, to have touched Bottom, to have brought to the sublime, by persisting in verbal witchcraft, the art of the bloomer that Bottom in *Midsummer Night’s Dream* is revealed to possess in its raw, primitive state.

To get hold of the wrong end of the stick for more than six hundred dense pages, this is what Joyce has proposed to himself, and because he has not taken his proposition as a joke, but as the occupation worthy of a poet, as a message capable of being communicated to men, then it is incontestable that a place in Dante’s Inferno awaits him, for having abused art - God’s nephew.

An abuse, on the other hand, for which he is the first to pay the price; the superb tower that Joyce has striven to build for years and years, is literally a Babel, the incomprehensible Babel, to whose lingo God brought confusion: *Work in Progress*, as he called this work during its gestation, now reveals itself, complete (but how can it be considered complete when the last word is an article, *the*, not followed by any punctuation, but by the white space of an un-limited potential ex-

pansion?), is no more nor less than a paradigm for the confusion of tongues.

They want the subject of this book to be the night of man, that one of the “most beautiful” parts depicts the myth of river civilization, the name of Giambattista Vico is whispered as the thinker who provides the philosophical substrate for the work: all are rumors circulated in part by Joyce himself, in part by his immediate circle in the form of an impressive sales pitch.

But let’s content ourselves by examining from out of the book not the hypothetical projections onto the astral plane, but the verbal cell, the word, the phrase. I have said that, after all, the author of *Finnegans Wake* is a brother, though infinitely more complex, of Bottom. In this way, if you like, Joyce can be brought alongside Shakespeare, the Shakespeare of equivocations and word plays, which is certainly not the best part of him.

Except that where Bottom spoke out of a pretentious ignorance, Joyce speaks as an amateur philologist, one for whom the knowledge of many languages has made his head spin, so that, rather than applying himself to try to decipher Etruscan, he began himself to create a new indecipherable Etruscan.

So, let’s take a minimal verbal cell of this cryptogram, and let’s choose an Italian phrase, since, among the many languages that contribute to the creation of this sort of lunar railway timetable that is *Finnegans Wake*, there is Italian too. Simple examples: *La Colunnia è un Vermicelli*; *Ragazza Ladra*. We remember that Joyce for a time was devoted to *bel canto*, and we smile.

A bit more complex: *MortadartHELLA*. The word, which recalls, in the first instance, “mortadella”, contains not donkey meat, but no less than two literary works, the *Morte d’Arthur* and the Ossianic *Darthula*. One does not struggle to recognize, in this cynegetic and sylvan group of words: *Mesdaims*, *Marmouselles*, *Mescerfs!* *Silvapais!*, and beyond the deers, stags, marmosets (from the French *marmouset*, “grotesque figure”), and a town made out of wood (a quasi-*Silvaplana*), we see a banal: *Mesdames*, *Mesdemoiselles*, *Messieurs*, *s’il vous plait*.

And there is a lot of fun to be had writing *Libelulous! Inzanzarity!* which stuffs the Italian word *libellule* ["dragonflies"] and *zanzare* ["mosquitoes"] into the two English words: libellous ("defamatory", a word whose etymology is shared with "dragonfly": the Latin *libellum*) and insincerity; or calling *teargarten* the German *Tiergarten* (as if it were: "garden of tears"); or disguising under *Marmarazalles from Marmeniere* the *Mademoiselle of Armentières* – that popular song from the other war; or, through a sound-association between *baby* and *Babylon*, converting into nursery rhyme the famous Psalm 136 or putting in the mouth of a harlot this semi-Spanish corruption of *pulvis et umbra sumus* ["we are dust and shadows"]: *pelves ad hombres sumus*; or reading in *haphazard* ("randomly") two names of London department stores, Hope Brothers and Harrods, to make, *hopeharrods*.

All this, taken individually, can be amusing, as it can be amusing to find in Laforgue a sporadic *sangsuelle*, or *violupté*, just as the daring and erudite *collages* of Max Ernst are amusing, but, like any good game, it aims to last for just a short time, whereas here it goes on relentlessly for more than six hundred pages. I cannot say that I read these six hundred pages with the same interest with which I have read the humorous *Hunting of the Snark*, the incomparable nonsense poem by Lewis Carroll, for the simple reason that *Finnegans Wake* is, on the whole, unreadable.

Although reading the book has been useful for something, if not to me, then to my wife, for while I was reading aloud a certain passage, hearing the words *apple harlottes*, she emitted a scream: "My pudding!" and had to run to the kitchen, where not exactly an apple charlotte (deformed by Joyce by contaminating it with "harlot", "whore"), but a similar kind of dessert had been cooking for too long.

And people have thought of Rabelais, whom one of our eminent philologists would believe is immortal for his contribution to language, but not for his art, as art and poetry should form a "delicacy of feeling", and of such a soggy thing, well really, no trace can be found in Rabelais, nor for that matter in Joyce; and as for the contribution to language, it is very doubtful whether that blend of erudite and dialectal elements which Rabelais attained has been attained by Joyce, at

that level that is infinitely more abstruse and abundant in claims to musicality.

And one might even recall Milton, for Joyce, coming to lose his sight like the poet of *Paradise Lost*, in a similar fashion came to concentrate on pure sound, has become more and more oriented towards an auricular exclusivism. These were the sounds that delighted the ear of Milton:

By knights of Logres, or of Lyones,
Lancelot, or Pelleas, or Pellenore...

And Joyce (to choose one example out of thousands):

Hear, O hear, Iseult la belle! Tristan, sad hero, hear! The Lambeg drum, the Lambog reed, the Lumbag fiferer, the Limibig brazenaze.

What can a well-tuned set of syllables not achieve if uttered by a musical voice –whatever the chord of syllables may be. Perhaps *Finnegans Wake* is nothing but a run-on lullaby with which this restless man, whose eyes are almost sealed to the world, soothes his own loneliness.

1939

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BOOK REVIEWS

Muriel Drazien, *Lacan Lettore di Joyce*
(Roma: Portaparole – 2016, pp.141, €16.00)

One might reword the title of this book *Drazien reads Lacan*. Trained by Lacan in Paris, the author and psychoanalyst, Muriel Drazien has dedicated much of her life to transferring Lacan's approach to Italy – and in turn, training analysts in the way she was trained by him.

The book addresses several questions: How is it possible to 'transmit' psychoanalysis? What does it mean to become a psychoanalyst? What exactly is exchanged during analysis? Without having experience of such an exchange can one become a psychoanalyst? Through the very distinct practice of analysis we learn that we are not, as we might think, in control of what we say but rather that we are divided – since in speaking we are subject to language. Rather than hidden in a hypothetical depth, our unconscious has a language-like structure and resides within our words – a central concept taught by Lacan. It is up to us to grasp our divided subject from what is said unwittingly, in the interval between enunciation and what is enunciated, beyond all sense and signification, always tending towards other meanings and significations. That this is a limitless quest is illustrated by how academics continue their seemingly unending search for new meanings in Joyce's *Finnegans Wake*. From the very beginning Lacan warned against understanding too soon: against losing ourselves in the labyrinth of meaning, the broken record of signification, or in endless *metonymia*. How then does analysis function?

This is exactly what interested Lacan when he rediscovered Joyce – as is adeptly and wittily uncovered here in Drazien's book. Up until the very end of his seminars Lacan kept questioning the unconscious and the ways in which a subject of analysis invents a means to bind together the three dimensions of the analytic experience: the *Real*, the *Symbolic* and the *Imaginary*. The initials here are RSI, read in French as *heresy*, with Lacan equivocally toying with himself as a heretic, just as Joyce had done. As the years passed Lacan became increasingly intent on grasping

the equivocal within the work of analysis – starting from the simplest signifier, not purely for the pleasure of “en-joy-ance”, but in order to produce out of the void generated by the signifier effects within our subjective divide.

This makes psychoanalysis unique with respect to other practices that have become effective due to the power of suggestion afforded by language. It is no coincidence that Freud soon abandoned the technique of suggestion.

Once Lacan became interested in Joyce he made a point of showing how the signifier as it emerges from a letter, or from sound, results in emptying all sense. Observe how Lacan writes *symptom*: symptom with an *h* added to indicate clinical consequences. Furthermore, the game he plays with *sintho-madaquin*, alludes to one of Joyce’s favourite philosophers, St Thomas Aquinas – from whom he understood the *epifanal* phenomenon; the spiritual epiphany, sudden apparitions: for Joyce a revelation and confirmation of his literary vocation. How do these *epiphanies* relate to Joyce’s language? In Seminar XXIII Lacan comments:

Reading Joyce’s work, and even more so reading his commentators, we are astonished by the number of enigmas they contain. These commentators are people interested exclusively in resolving enigmas, in wondering why Joyce wrote something where he did ... exactly like in my stories of *osbjet*, *mensionge*, *dit-mension* and so on, but I have my reasons, I want to say something, yes, equivocal, while with Joyce one doesn’t understand it at all.

Several questions arose here for Lacan: Can the equivocal be grasped from Joyce’s writing? What function did writing fulfil for Joyce? What place did his art occupy within him? Lacan says that Joyce’s effort to eliminate all meaning, to disrupt and destroy the English language in his writing – in the attempt to found a new language – was in fact his *mission* to redeem his weak father as well as his nation, Ireland.

Doing without a father and then creating one’s own name surely has its implications. When a son accepts a weak father, *transmission* can confer a symbolic debt. This debt might be traced to the illustrative anecdote – presented here in Drazien’s book – in which Joyce’s father goes to

the bank to take out a new mortgage every time a new child of his is born. Here we have an inversion of transmission, with respect to a symbolic debt between father and son. How then is symbolic debt revealed by Joyce?

Does being an exile from his nation create a further exile, that from language – one being increasingly felt in Joyce’s work, one wrecking the English language? The exile so indispensable for Joyce – from *Ulysses* to the play *Exiles* – is that of the artist. Joyce’s demolition of language leads Lacan to declare that he is “unsubscribed to the unconscious”, thus accounting for the difficulty faced by readers trying to grasp something that is not correlated to meaning or the *imaginary*. What kind of relationship did Joyce have with language, or as Lacan puts it with *lélangues*? – either with his native language or others, particularly with his most cherished Italian?

It is hard to ignore that prior to the start of his seminar *Le Sinthome* Lacan had recently witnessed a psychiatric patient suffering from so called “forced words” – during the weekly “presentation of a patient” that took place in *Sainte-Anne* hospital in Paris under Dr. Marcel Czermak. That patient was convinced that everyone knew what he was thinking, down to his most intimate thoughts, and considered himself a telepathic emitter. Lacan noted that Joyce considered his own daughter Lucia telepathic – but as a receiver, rather than an emitter, of secrets: those of others she subsequently shared with him. Is Joyce defending Lucia when he attributes her with something like the extension of his own symptoms? What would such defence reveal about the role and function of Joyce, the father?

In this seminar Lacan asks, “[H]ow come not everyone is aware that the words on which we depend are in some way imposed? ... the real problem is rather how come a normal man doesn’t realize that words are parasites, plastered on, a kind of cancer that attacks the human being?” If it is possible to gather the wish to destroy the language from Joyce’s work, should we not then ask how many words were imposed upon him as artist?

A final question to lay before the reader concerns the symptomatic desire that Joyce had for Nora. What kind of relationship was there between Nora and Jim – as she called him? Lacan describes Nora as snugly

fitting Jim like a turned out glove, a perfect fit. How do we decipher such a strange relationship, and what was Nora's part in Joyce's *symptom* as a writer (with Lacan's additional *h* to differentiate this new concept from traditional symptoms)?

All the above questions are explored by Muriel Drazien in her book – which strives both to do justice to Lacan's thought, and to demonstrate its clinical importance.

Gabriela Alarcon

Enrico Frattaroli, *Envoy verso : in : attraverso : da : Giacomo Joyce. Studi irlandesi. A Journal of Irish Studies* n. 5-2015, suppl. 2, (Firenze: Firenze University Press – pp. 139)

Ever since its first publication in 1968, the text known as *Giacomo Joyce* has baffled critics no less than the huge novels universally considered as the most complex and cryptic works in the Joyce canon. As Paola Pugliatti reminds us in an illuminating essay, scholars have used many different labels in their attempts to pin down its manifold aspects: “prose sketches”, “visual poem”, “vignettes”, “collection of impressions and moods”, “love poem”, “sketchbook”, “interior dialogue”, “interior monologue”, “epiphanic narration.”¹ It is no surprise, therefore, that this multifaceted text has caught the attention of such a versatile artist as Enrico Frattaroli, independent author of theatrical, acoustic and audiovisual works, as well as the singular piece of criticism *Envoy verso : in : attraverso : da : Giacomo Joyce*.

Just as *Giacomo Joyce* is a work that crosses traditional generic boundaries, *Envoy*—as Donatella Pallotti remarks in the Postface—is at the same time an essay, an artist's memoir, the story of Frattaroli's different approaches to Joyce's text over many years and through different ar-

¹ P. Pugliatti, “Nookshotten: the Text Known as *Giacomo Joyce*”, in F. Ruggieri (ed.), *Classic Joyce: Papers from the XVI International James Joyce Symposium, Rome 14-20 June 1998*, Rome, Bulzoni, p. 293.

tistic media, and a commentary on his own Italian translation of the English original. The best way to refer to *Envoy*, therefore, is probably as an *excursus*, a designation which fails to identify its genre, but which undoubtedly has the undisputed merit of being proposed by the author himself. Even more interestingly, in *Envoy* Frattaroli often describes what he is writing as a “path”, or a process of progressive investigation of, and acquaintance with, Joyce’s literary text in order to achieve something different: his own response as an artist to an enigmatic piece of writing.

Frattaroli, then, briefly plays the part of the literary critic when he discusses, for instance, the particular nature of *Giacomo Joyce* as “a discrete set of micro-narrations” (“un insieme discreto di micro-narrazioni”, 63), and changes Giorgio Melchiori’s definition of it as “epiphanic narration” (“narrazione epifanica”²) into what he perceives as the more appropriate denomination of “epiphanic system” (“sistema epifanico”, 64), or flux and constellation at the same time, where the discrete set of single epiphanies is transformed into an epiphanic flow. According to Frattaroli, the writing of the different sections which make up *Giacomo Joyce* can undoubtedly be seen as epiphanic, but the piece, with its peculiar graphic layout alternating text and blank spaces of varying lengths, transcends the fleeting nature of the epiphany and moves forward in the direction of the stream of consciousness of subsequent works, thus anticipating the writing of *Ulysses*. Furthermore, in *Giacomo Joyce* the author performs for the first time what Frattaroli calls a “mise en scène of writing” (“messinscena della scrittura”, 64) and creates something unique on a visual level, which *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* will be able to produce only by means of words. By eliminating the figure of the narrator, *Giacomo Joyce*—the first authentic Joycean stream of consciousness in Frattaroli’s view—foregrounds the visual aspect of writing, or substitutes the narration of something with *that something itself*, which the reader perceives in an unmediated and immediate way.

As he states in the first section of the book, entitled “In statu quo ante”, Frattaroli’s interest in *Giacomo Joyce* was stirred by Fabio Maestri’s invitation, in the Spring of 1996, to collaborate on a musical adapta-

² G. Melchiori, *James Joyce: il mestiere dello scrittore*, Torino, Einaudi, 1994, p. 55.

tion of Joyce's text; furthermore, this must be seen in the context of an enduring passion for the literary production of the Irish author, as his theatrical works on the Ulysean stream of consciousness *Mr Bloom* (1984), *Mr Bloom/ALP* (1984) and *fluidofiume* (1988-1989) also demonstrate. The original plan was abandoned, but at the same time represented the beginning of a growing interest in the text accompanied by a thorough search for various approaches to it, for example, in the form of a study of its graphic aspects presented at the XVI International James Joyce Symposium held in Rome in June 1998,³ or in the form of audiovisual works. As Frattaroli clearly specifies, however, his fascination for *Giacomo Joyce* has always been that of an artist (not of a scholar) who starts from an analysis of the materiality of the text in order to transpose it into something of a different nature. *Envoy*, therefore, must be seen in the context of its author's diverse approaches to Joyce's works and, at the same time, as an original contribution to Joyce studies, expanding the confines of the traditional critical essay. To this aim, Frattaroli starts with an analysis of both the merits and the drawbacks of various editions of *Giacomo Joyce* published to date, which he evaluates on the basis of what he considers as its distinctive extraordinary features, namely the layout, the alternation of text and blank spaces of varying proportions, the position of the single words on the page, its material appearance of loose sheets rather than a book, and ultimately its resistance to being transformed into a typewritten text. As a true artist, Frattaroli decides to work on a facsimile of the original, to give utmost importance to the visual and physical experience of approaching the text exactly as Joyce did. As readers, we are invited to share this experience with the author, who includes in *Envoy* both the photostatic copies of the handwritten pages published as an appendix to the first edition by Richard Ellmann for the Viking Press (1968), and his own Italian translation of the text.

In the second section, entitled ““Unde derivatur?””, Frattaroli explores the consequences of a possible alteration of the delicate balance between Joyce's words and the void in which they appear, represented by

³ E. Frattaroli, “The Proteiform Graph Itself Is a Polyhedron of Scripture”, in F. Ruggieri (ed.), *Classic Joyce: Papers from the XVI International James Joyce Symposium, Rome 14-20 June 1998*, Rome, Bulzoni, pp. 303-317.

the blank page. In doing so, he highlights once again the importance of a visual approach to *Giacomo Joyce* that should maintain the original proportions between the blocks of written text and the blank spaces, by illustrating his own typographical experiments with a typewritten version of Joyce's work in Word format. He thus shows the procedures through which he obtained a condensed version of the text ("*Giacomo Joyce condensato*") by reducing to a minimum of one line jump the blanks which separate the fifty sections, as well as an expanded version ("*Giacomo Joyce espanso*") by stretching the same blanks to the maximum, that is to say, by placing each section at the centre of one single page. Both versions, Frattaroli notes, obviously alter the text considerably. On the one hand, this seems to confirm its uniqueness and peculiarity, and on the other it shows the utter impossibility to have a typewritten equivalent of the handwritten original. In another type of manipulation, Frattaroli puts together the photostatic copies of the handwritten pages both vertically—thus obtaining a *rotulus* which he calls "*Nacheinander*", because it reproduces the temporal dimension of writing—and horizontally—thus producing a *volumen* that he names *Nebeneinander*, as it recreates our spatial perception of the words on the page. This experiment allows him to demonstrate, once again, that despite his use of a facsimile, our experience of the final product differs significantly from that of the original.

Such graphic experiments became the starting point for all of Frattaroli's other investigations or projects concerning *Giacomo Joyce*, such as the diagrams he produced in 1997 in an attempt to create a visual representation of an essentially visual text; his own interpretation of the relationship between written words and blank spaces in terms of fuzzy logic, or of artificial neural networks; or the plan (then abandoned) of a theatrical work based on Joyce's text based on the manuscript turned into images and sounds, as Frattaroli explains in the section entitled "My voice, dying in the echoes of its words". It seems particularly interesting that all these ventures, regardless of their achievements, must be seen—as the author explains—as instruments for the reading, analysis, interpretation and reimagination of the original text, or a necessary step in his own exploration of *Giacomo Joyce*, with its distinctive alternation of words and non-words. In this perspective, the manuscript becomes the matrix/source/model/structure of any other vocal, visual, musical and theatrical reelaboration of it.

In the last section of *Envoy*, “Sliding – space – ages – foliage of stars”, Frattaroli further illustrates the manifold domains and media through which the influence of *Giacomo Joyce* has made itself felt on his own imagination and career as an artist: plastic installations with audio-live interventions, such as *Mandala bianco: scrittura come perturbazione del vuoto* (2001), or his “crumpled books”, conceived as transformations of readable books into material objects which can only be observed. All of these “products” derive from his personal conception of Joyce’s text as a force field, in which the blank spaces represent the void, and writing a perturbation of it.

Envoy, therefore, retraces and tells the story of its author’s fascination for *Giacomo Joyce*, and at the same time self-reflexively comments on such a personal and intellectual growth. The basic idea, again, is that of the infinite reverberations of an elusive literary work on the heterogeneous production of an eclectic artist. All of this enormously enriches our experience, as both readers and spectators, of the process at the core of artistic creation (whether literary, plastic, or audio-visual): the transformation, *by a commodius vicus of recirculation*, of something into something new.

Annalisa Federici

James Joyce, *Best-Loved Joyce* (edited by Jamie O’Connell).
(Dublin: The O’Brien Press – 2017, pp. 128, €12.99)
Anthony J. Jordan, *James Joyce Unplugged*.
(Dublin: Westport Books – 2017, pp. 204, \$9.76 kindle)

In the congestion—predicted by Joyce himself—of Joycean criticism, there are publications that are meant to make the difference and add interesting insights to the ongoing debate, while others are less ambitious, in a way, but still make Joyce’s work more accessible to new readers. Two recently published books belong to the list of such less ambitious contributions: *Best-Loved Joyce*, edited by Jamie O’Connell and *James Joyce Unplugged* by Anthony J. Jordan.

Bob Joyce—the writer’s grand-nephew—acknowledges the difficulty of approaching Joyce’s writing in his short prefatory note to *Best-Loved Joyce*, and explains that O’Connell’s selection of quotations from the major works must be viewed as a presentation of “the writer at his most accessible” (8). Bob Joyce defines this book as an inspiration or a motivation for new readers who will find the writer “unexpectedly” charming and fascinating. It is clear that the selection is meant as an introduction to Joyce’s writing and an attempt to encourage an instinctive and non-academic approach to the writer’s works. *Best-Loved Joyce* groups together short passages from Joyce’s masterpieces in nine sections labelled according theme: ‘Truth’, ‘Love and Romance’, ‘Family and Domestic Life’, ‘Art, Literature and Music’, ‘Living’, ‘Desire and Sex’, ‘Religion and Sin’, ‘History, Politics and Ireland’, ‘Morality and Time’. All sections are introduced by an illustration by Emma Byrne, who describes her work as an attempt to match the texts with “sketchy and almost ‘dirty’” images of places in Dublin—a combination defined as “landscape typographic painting” (127). The word that best describes O’Connell’s intention is ‘accessibility’. This collection of excerpts, in fact, proves that Joyce can be entertainingly read by a wide audience and that a purely emotional, non-specialist approach to the Irish writer is possible.

O’Connell’s project shares the same concerns expressed by “Joycean democrats” such as Declan Kiberd, who remarks that “a book [*Ulysses*] which set out to celebrate the common man and woman endured the sad fate of never being read by many of them”. Kiberd poses a crucial question: “Why has it [*Ulysses*] been called unreadable by the ordinary people for which it was intended?”¹ Much more recently, Margot Norris reminds us that Joyce is now popular not only among academics but also among ordinary readers—suffice to mention the many *Ulysses* reading groups that have sprung in different countries in the last few decades.² In

¹ Declan Kiberd, *Ulysses and Us: the Art of Everyday Living*, London: Faber & Faber, 2009, p. 7 and p. 30.

² Margot Norris, *The Value of James Joyce*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016. The first chapter of this book is significantly titled: “Introduction: democratic and cosmopolitan Joyce.”

Italy, following in Kiberd's footsteps, Enrico Terrinoni produced a brilliant new "democratic" translation of Joyce's *romanzaccione*,³ an attempt at renegotiating the idea of a novel too often considered as the privileged reserve of a snobbish and intellectual elite. Terrinoni argues that this might have been an involuntary—or sometimes a deliberate—consequence of critics and academics who have rendered the book—that certainly requires attention and commitment—more difficult than it is. Once more, O'Connell's position seems to be less ambitious and more popular. While Kiberd, Norris and Terrinoni's work, built as they are upon solid scholarly foundations, intend to "democratize" Joyce's novel, O'Connell aims to produce "the writer at his most accessible".

Anthony Jordan's *James Joyce Unplugged* is a basic biography. While providing a short account of Joyce's life, the book aims to highlight two aspects that are closely interrelated. The first is Joyce's relationship with Arthur Griffith, founder of Sinn Féin, for whose newspaper—the *United Irishman*—Joyce contributed a number of articles; moreover, during his lifelong exile, Joyce constantly read Griffith's *Sinn Féin*, using it as a main source of information on Irish affairs. True, a different composition of anecdotes changes our understanding of the material we have and may suggest a different perspective; yet putting together anecdotes from the epistolary relationship between Joyce and Griffith—and taking account of their encounters—does not add excessively to what is already known. Furthermore, Jordan had already investigated this relationship in his biography of Arthur Griffith, titled *Arthur Griffith with James Joyce & WB Yeats – Liberating Ireland*. In both biographical works the author claims that while Griffith tried to liberate Ireland politically and economically, the two artists—namely Yeats and Joyce—tried to liberate Ireland spiritually and artistically.

With his biography, Jordan advocates a second, more contentious issue relating to the previous one: to present Joyce's political position as that of a staunch republican. However, critics have discussed Joyce's supposed nationalism and/or his internationalism since Joyce's first and glorious biographies, among which, Herbert Gorman's and Richard Ellmann's. A short revealing passage from Gorman's *James Joyce: a De-*

³ James Joyce, *Ulisse*, Roma: Newton Compton 2012.

definitive Biography, mentions both Griffith's movement and Joyce's declaration that he was a nationalist—a declaration that is not particularly straightforward as it contains a crucial distinction:

Here was Joyce prophesying either that the infant movement of Arthur Griffith would conquer or British imperialism would devour the country. And here it may be pointed out that Joyce, if anything, was *an Irish Nationalist at heart*, especially if a lifelong and so far successful battle against English ideas merits that title. 'if the Irish programme did not insist on the Irish language,' he declared to his brother, 'I suppose I could call myself a nationalist.' [...] He was as precise and consistent as ever in intimating that he could not offer even lip service to any shift in Irish culture that would cut that country off from the great stream of European civilization.⁴

Rebutting a review of Joyce's biography—written by Peter Costello⁵—Jordan blames those “Joyceans [who] are so enamoured with ‘reading’ and interpreting Joyce's fiction that they have lost sight of much of the reality of his life.”⁶ Perhaps Jordan's reply is a little off the mark here, as he might have alluded to the fact that—and explained why—of the various post-Ellmann Joyce biographers, the vast majority are independent scholars or full-time writers/journalists, and not academics.⁷ In the end, rather than an attempt to put forth innovative readings, this is a short, readable, non-academic and easily accessible biography. The very structure of the book—divided into sixteen chapters, some of which are subdivided into sections useful for pinpointing interesting issues that merit particular attention—is the tell-tale sign of the primary function of such a text: helping the common reader to approach Joyce's life. After all, to be

⁴ Herbert Gorman, *James Joyce: a Definitive Biography*, John Lane, 1941, p.60. Italics mine.

⁵ In *The Irish Catholic*, 15th June 2017.

⁶ In *The Irish Catholic*: <http://www.irishcatholic.ie/article/james-joyce-and-irish-nationalism>

⁷ Cf. John McCourt, *Questioni Biografiche. Le Tante Vite di Yeats e Joyce*. Roma, Bulzoni, 2009.

original after the many biographies written in these decades is no easy task,⁸ and originality is not necessarily the main aim of all publications in this area. *James Joyce Unplugged* can thus be taken as an entertaining, well-written educational book.

Both *Best-Loved Joyce* and *James Joyce Unplugged* witness a constant modern concern to “democratize” Joyce, to the point of popularizing the Irish writer. Both books evidently address a general, non-specialist reader; while *Best-Loved Joyce* is intended as an emotional encouragement for would-be readers, *James Joyce Unplugged* can be seen as an accessible, entertaining, introductory biography. They are the products of the vast growing ‘Joyce Industry’ and are essential samplers for potential amateurs who have been reluctant to approach a complex author. So far...

Fabio Luppi

⁸ Cf. John McCourt, *Questioni Biografiche. Le Tante Vite di Yeats e Joyce* (cit.). McCourt also refers to a possible source of unpublished material—the James Joyce Estate—and to the subsequent dangers of being sued for the unauthorized use of unpublished and even published material, for defamation, invasion of privacy, transcription of conversations, and breach of contract. Investigating such material can be problematic.

Geert Lernout, *Cain: but are you able? The Bible, Byron and Joyce*
(Rome: Bulzoni 2015 – pp. 145, €10.00)

Many of Joyce's works are books of siblings, starting from his first short story, "The Sisters", right down to *Stephen Hero*, where we have the two brothers Stephen and Maurice. Then in *Ulysses* we encounter some imperfect brotherly couples. This is the case of Parnell and Stoker, where only the less important one features, but he is obviously a shadow of the more prominent one. The mentions of John Howard and Sir Thornley, in fact, stand no doubt for an awareness of their better-known brothers.

And yet it is in *Finnegans Wake* that this theory of siblings comes to the fore, in the characters of Shem and Shaun, of course, but also with Mutt and Jute, Butt and Taff, and so on. They are, to be sure, just examples of brotherly couples, which in the *Wake* often include also a female element—see Tristopher and Hilary—or an animal one—see the Ondt and the Gracehoper, or even the Mookse and the Gripes. The presence of such couples in Joyce's fiction is deeply motivated by the fact that in his life brothers, and sisters, played quite an important role, Stannie just being the paramount example.

References to the Biblical epithet that Cain gave to Abel before God, *My brother's keeper*, and which became also the title of Stanislaus's memoir, is referred to in the *Wake* many times. We have it in *bloater's kipper* (FW 316.5), but also more or less transfigured in FW 422.14 and FW 443.4, as well as in many other less well-known places. This is because the story of Cain and Abel is clearly one of the most revealing refrains in the book, and it is quite similar to another *Wake* plot, the foundational myth of ancient Rome—Romulus and Remus being nothing but a secularized replica of the old theme of the fraternal rivalry from Genesis.

Lernout's work does not speak of the Roman successors of the sons of Adam and Eve, but sheds light on how the story of Cain and his mysterious slaying of his brother came to infiltrate the *Wake*, a novel which has rightly been described as a rewriting of Genesis. The book makes critical use of a large bulk of sources in Biblical, Joycean and literary scholarship. Perhaps the most relevant debt is to genetic studies, as the author—especially in chapter four—is keen to provide many revela-

tory insights on the ways in which the story of Cain ends up in the *Wake* through its direct and indirect appearance in the notebooks and in the first draft version.

However, this is not a book for genetic scholars only. It is meant to connect whatever knowledge we can draw from a close study of pre-publication materials and of Joyce's sources, to the bigger picture of his *oeuvre* and also his biography. The filter through which Joyce seems to reread the obscure vicissitudes that led to Abel's death in the Bible is Lord Byron, an old acquaintance of the young Dublin author.

Byron features early in *A Portrait*, where Stephen is ready to be insulted and beaten to defend his fondness for him and his poetry. We also have him massively in *Ulysses*, as Fritz Senn was able to point out quite convincingly in a conference held in Rome many years ago entitled *Romantic Joyce*—the proceedings are now published in volume 8 of the journal *Joyce Studies in Italy*. And of course, we have him in *Finnegans Wake*, where we also encounter a vast array of quotations from his poems.

Lernout is quite convincing in demonstrating not just the general importance of Byron in the *Wake*, but the very fact that it was probably his poetic rewriting of the story of *Cain* in one of his less successful plays—a rewriting considered quite heretical and subversive at the time of its publication—which inspired Joyce's revisiting of the *non-serviam* theme.

The book begins with an analysis of the Cain and Abel Biblical story, and through a very useful survey of the various translations of the Bible, it introduces the reader to the crucial question of how it is possible to interpret Cain's act. Biblical interpretation being itself an old-age discipline, and translation being a mode of interpretation in the first place, it is not surprising that the motivation which drove the first assassin to commit the first murder can be read in many different ways. The Bible is, in fact, quite reticent as to the reason for Cain's decision to kill his brother; even more importantly, God's warning that he should not be punished for his deed is not fully explained. This inevitably creates the conditions for much speculation, also in literary terms. Byron's reading of the whole story, and for instance his much-debated distinction between Lucifer and the snake—the former therefore not being too involved in the tempting of Eve—proved quite influential at the time. The book's second chapter is a useful exploration of the ways in which the Bible was read before him.

After Byron, revisionist attitudes in the interpretation of the Scripture became more and more frequent, especially with the advent of Modernism. The author rightly points out how even Byron's most provocative rendering of the frictions between Cain and God, had become quite innocuous by the time scholars and theologians had started to question in depth, for example, the historical plausibility of the Biblical accounts. Interestingly, such critical positions found little space in Catholic circles, where even at the very beginning of the twentieth century, people involved in the modernist movement were utterly marginalized.

Joyce's interest in Byron's *Cain* seems to stem from a contradictory dichotomy. He appears to be divided between the legacy of his religious upbringing, with a deep influence of the ideological agenda of the Jesuits, and the heretical strain which always attracted him. Lernout rightly traces in the notebooks the development of Joyce's position as regards the implications of the first murder and the motivations of the first assassin, as well as in many of his sources—foremost among them Thomas Josephus Lamy's introduction to the Genesis, but also Frazer's discussions on ultimogeniture.

The book ends with an interesting incursion into Joyce's frustrated attempt to convince composer George Antheil to write an opera based on Byron's play *Cain*. The author reminds us that when Joyce was asked to rewrite parts of the libretto, he kindly turned down the offer, having imagined himself just having the role of a "cut and paste man"—so great was his respect for the Romantic poet. Joyce wanted the opera to be composed so that his friend, the now almost forgotten Irish tenor John Sullivan, might sing in it. He ardently sponsored Sullivan, but sadly seemed to be one of his relatively few admirers.

Lernout's book is a fine example of honest and scrupulous scholarship. It combines incredibly specialized knowledge, such as the insight offered by genetic criticism, with ways of reading Joyce's works that do not aim at being definitive, but "simply" authoritative and reliable, though ineluctably plural. It is exactly when these two trends in Joyce studies meet halfway without being confined to a necessarily limitative horizon, that Joycean exegesis is at its best.

Enrico Terrinoni

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James Joyce, *Pomi un penny l'uno / Poesie una pena l'una*

(edited by Francesca Romana Paci)

(Torino: Nuova Trauben - 2016, pp. 66, €12.00)

James Clarence Mangan, *Il mio cuore è un monaco*

(edited by Francesca Romana Paci)

(Torino: Trauben - 2014, pp. 230, €20.00)

Notoriously, Joyce's poetic works have not attracted the same critical attention as his more experimental prose. And yet, when he had to give advice to his Czech translators on how to translate *Work in Progress*, after telling them that theirs was an impossible task, he added: "[i]t is possible to make it into poetry – poeticize it with the greatest poetic freedom that you can give it. *Work in Progress* is not written in English or French or Czech or Irish. Anna Livia does not speak any of these languages, she speaks the speech of a river... I do not want to be translated, I have to remain as I am, only explained in your language. I am giving you every possible freedom in the transformation of words."¹

The term poetry is for Joyce to be taken literally in its original Greek sense of “making, shaping”, not *ex nihilo* but starting from an inspiring principle. And it can be argued that his works all belong to *genus* poetry, insofar as they are indeed “poetic creations”. Hence, the importance of his poetry should never be underestimated, just like the comicality of *Exiles*, a text often taken to be a diluted boring version of Ibsen, but which at a second look contains, starting from the male characters' names (Dick and Hand: what's in a name?) many interesting comic allusions which touch on one of his favorite themes: sexuality.

Joyce's first published work is a collection of poems which combines the ethereal and the romantic with the obscurely scatological, starting with its title (what's in a title?). But *Chamber Music* is also, or rather mainly, an allusion to music, and it was Ellmann before many others who suggested that the main obsession of Joyce's writings was the aspiration

¹ Quoted from the literary quarterly *Granta*. The English translation of this interview is available at <https://granta.com/the-game-of-evenings/>

one, he did create music: in *Ulysses* and in the *Wake*, and also in his poetry. His musical ear was probably an ideal counterpart to his eyesight problems, and he even famously admitted that after writing a certain episode of *Ulysses*, he was not able to listen to music anymore. A lover of Elizabethan songs as well as of opera and operetta, music accompanied him throughout his life, and it can be said to be the very essence of his poetical works.

A new Italian version of *Pomes Penyeach* translated and edited by Francesca Romana Paci seems to stem from this very awareness. The thirteen poems—published in Paris in 1927 while most of Joyce's time was in fact devoted to the composition of *Work in Progress*—were significantly put to music by a number of composers. In Italy they have been presented in many different translations, among which one can list those of Camerino, Rossi, Sanesi and more recently Natali. This new edition avails itself to an incredibly rich apparatus of annotations, which explain the poems one by one and at the same time shed light on the translation process and on the choices made by the translator.

The afterword is just as crucial, and it is here that the choice of the title is accounted for. It is a new title indeed, and a dual one. The second part reveals the very interpretive principle adopted by the translator, that is, the desire to stress and highlight the anguish, the pain which the editor and translator links to the vicissitudes of Lucia—who even worked on producing elaborate illuminations inspired by her father's work. In late years Joyce increasingly devoted more and more of his own time and money to Lucia and her problems, and this also notoriously caused further frictions in the precarious balance of the household. But the poems included in the short collection also speak of other pains and sorrows, namely those connected to Joyce and Nora's own past, especially *She Weeps Over Ragoon*, without which much of the arcane sense of the final short story of *Dubliners* would be perhaps lost on us.

With her new translation, Paci shows an awareness of such existential echoes as well as a sensitivity to the musical ones, with Bellini and Verdi at the forefront; but her translative style is also much informed by another type of awareness, that of Symons's aestheticism and Pound's imagism, as the Italian versions manage to combine philological accuracy with a desire to reproduce the interplay of their own poetics, and indeed of their influence, in Joyce's ineffable compositions.

Another major poetic influence on Joyce was that of James Clarence Mangan. Italian readers are aware of his role thanks to the various editions of Joyce's critical writings which place Mangan at the very centre of Joyce's early poetic impulses. And yet, now that a good selection of his most well-known poems (again translated by Paci) is available, it is easier to appraise the *fil rouge* which links the two Irish authors.

In the text of an Italian lecture he was supposed to give in Trieste in 1907, Joyce makes use of an anecdote by Irish revolutionary John Mitchel according to whom, in the beautiful library of Trinity College, Mangan appeared as a "thin little man with the waxen countenance and the pale hair, who was sitting on the top of a ladder with his legs crossed, deciphering a huge, dusty volume in the dim light" (OCPW: 127). There he "passed his days in study and became a competent linguist. He knew well the Italian, Spanish, French and German languages and literatures, as well as those of England and Ireland, and it appears that he had some knowledge of oriental languages, probably some Sanskrit and Arabic. From time to time he emerged from that studious quiet to contribute some poems to the revolutionary newspaper" (ibid.). Joyce's account of the life and writings of this pre-Victorian Irish poet has at times the romanticizing touch of an exile speaking of his beloved abandoned country, and it is indeed of some notice that his way of presenting Mangan might have in turn influenced subsequent critical approaches to him and his works in the light of a somewhat heroic shadow.

Mangan's works appeared in a myriad of different publications, and even the tracing of them would prove complex without critical editions to collect and connect them. Mangan's poetical output is, to be sure, as elusive as his own life, and a number of questions about him remain unanswered, though not unexplored. How could he know so many languages without having traveled the world, and more importantly, having almost always lived in poverty? He was of course a regular in the magnificent library of Trinity College, but did he have books in his personal library? These are some of the questions the vast critical apparatus of the Italian edition of Mangan's poetry tries to give an answer to in order to build a reliable artistic and existential portrait of the great artist.

The book includes about fifty poems, and each of them is densely annotated in the appendix. The aim, however, is not just to shed light on Mangan, but also to reconstruct the cultural, historical, political and lin-

guistic context he inhabited. In the first half of the nineteenth century Ireland was a hybrid laboratory in which colonial policies were tested. The final years of Mangan's life are those of the Great Famine, an event which literally put an end to an age-old culture in which the Gaelic matrix was, if not always prominent, at least quite well represented. English policies of linguistic and cultural assimilation would utterly change the face of Ireland and the inner soul of her population, without quenching, however, their thirst for emancipation and difference.

Mangan lived through the age of O'Connell's monster-meetings for Catholic emancipation, and saw around him, and interpreted foreseeing in them, to some extent, all the seeds of the future revolts. And yet he was mainly a literary person, feverishly working on his own writings and scattering them all in a mosaic of publications which faithfully seems to mirror his fragmented self. No wonder that such a myriad-minded man appealed to the young James Joyce.

The Italian edition edited by Paci also explores his activity as a translator, and the very role that translation plays in his own works. The portrait we get is no longer that of a subversive republican, or of just an ill and feeble collaborator to many obscure journals. This book has the merit of returning to us a poet whose imagination might be said to have the Blakean touch: a prophet almost, and a man obsessed with the performative as well as the creative value of the instability of the language. This very quality of Mangan's writing is well grasped in the Italian translations of his poems, aware as they are of the influence of Coleridge and Blake, but also of the use that later poets would make of his own aesthetic and visionary intuitions. The lyrical plurilingual magic of Mangan's poetry reverberates in the Italian translation and helps to create fruitful connections with Joyce's own poetic mission, always progressive in its inspiration, and never reducible to past formulae.

The poetic in Joyce is reflected, and perhaps foreseen, in the poetry of Mangan in the deep awareness that any use of the language is, at its core, also a form of translation, for translation is, as Umberto Eco argued long ago, always "a species of the *genus* interpretation".

Enrico Terrinoni

CONTRIBUTORS

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Fabio Luppi is adjunct professor at the Università degli Studi Guglielmo Marconi. He obtained his PhD in Comparative Literature at Università Roma Tre (2008) and won a short fellowship at the Folger Shakespeare Library (2014). Au-

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Ennio Ravasio lives in Bergamo, where he works as a music teacher. Currently, he is finalizing the translation and revision in English of a volume that he published in 2013: *Il Padre di Bloom e il Figlio di Dedalus. La funzione del pensiero tomista, aristotelico e presocratico nell'Ulisse di Joyce* (Tricase, Youcanprint). In February 2016 he presented a paper at the IX JJIF Conference in Rome, entitled: "'Scylla and Charybdis', a Metaphor of *Ulysses* itself."

Simone Reborà (Tortona, Italy, 1981) graduated in Electronic Engineering (Polytechnic University of Torino) and Modern Philology (University of Firenze), and completed a PhD in Foreign Literatures and Literature Studies (University of Verona) in June 2016, with a thesis on Italian literary historiography in foreign countries. Currently, he is a DAAD research fellow at the Göttingen Centre for Digital Humanities (University of Göttingen). His essays have appeared in books edited by Anna Dolfi and Stefano Calabrese, and in journals such as *Antologia Vieusseux*, *Between* and *Modern Language Notes* (January 2017). In 2015, he published the monograph *Claudio Magris*.

Fritz Senn has a worldwide reputation as a Joyce expert. He was President of the International James Joyce Foundation and co-editor of the Frankfurt Joyce Edition. Since 1985 he has been director of the James Joyce Foundation, Zürich. He

has received numerous awards and honours for his work. He is honorary trustee of the International James Joyce Foundation and of The James Joyce Italian Foundation. Main publications on Joyce are: *Joyce's Dislocations. Essays on Reading as Translation* (1983); *Nichts gegen Joyce: Joyce versus Nothing* (1983); *Inductive Scrutinies: Focus on Joyce*, (1995); *Nicht nur Nichts gegen Joyce* (1999); *Ulyssean Close-ups - PBJ 2* (2007); *Joycean Murmoirs: Fritz Senn on James Joyce* (2007).

Katherine Smith is an instructor at Radford University where she teaches sections of freshman level composition, oral communication, and literature. After completing a thesis on spinsterhood and marriage in James Joyce's *Dubliners*, Smith graduated from Radford University in the Spring of 2015 with a Masters of Arts in English. Smith also holds a BA in English from Bridgewater College, as well as a valid teaching certificate for the state of Virginia. Smith is currently working toward completing a second MA in the field of Disability Studies. Smith's research interests include Disability Studies, specifically disability in family relationships and literature, Young Adult Literature, Irish Literature, Pedagogy, and Popular Culture.

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JOYCE STUDIES IN ITALY

STYLESHEET

The text should be written in Times New Roman (font 12 for the main text with 1 and half line spacing, font 11 for quotations (single line spacing), font 10 for footnotes which should, in any case, be kept short and to a minimum).

Text should be justified to the left.

Length of articles: a maximum of 5,000 words, including notes.

Quotations:

Short quotations, in the body of the text.

Long quotations should be presented like a normal paragraph, but preceded and followed by a line jump.

Any elisions or cuts made within the quotations should be indicated by [...].

Referencing:

Most referencing should be done within the body of the text with the author-date-page system:

(Costello 2004: 43)

Where necessary use footnotes rather than endnotes. Footnotes should be numbered consecutively. A note number should be placed before any punctuation or quotation mark.

A list of *Works Cited* should be placed in Times New Roman (12) at the end of the text

e.g.

Works cited:

Ó Faoláin, Seán (1948). *The Short Story*, London: Collins.

Costello, Peter (2004). "James Joyce and the remaking of Modern Ireland", *Studies*, Vol. 38. No. 370: 125-138.

References to works by Joyce should use the following conventions and abbreviations:

CP Joyce, James. *Collected Poems*. New York: Viking Press, 1957.

- D* Joyce, James. *Dubliners*. Authoritative Text, Contexts, Criticism, edited by Margot Norris, text edited by Hans Walter Gabler with Walter Hettche, New York: WW Norton and Company 2006.
- E* Joyce, James. *Exiles*. New York: Penguin, 1973.
- FW* Joyce, James. *Finnegans Wake*. New York: Viking Press, 1939; London: Faber and Faber, 1939. These two editions have identical pagination.
- GJ* Joyce, James. *Giacomo Joyce*, ed. Richard Ellmann. New York: Viking Press, 1968.
- JJI* Ellmann, Richard. *James Joyce*. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1959.
- JJII* Ellmann, Richard. *James Joyce*. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1982.
- JJA* *The James Joyce Archive*, ed. Michael Groden, et al. New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1977-79. See last two pages of the JJQ for guide.
- Letters I, II, III* Joyce, James. *Letters of James Joyce*. Vol. I, ed. Stuart Gilbert. New York: Viking Press, 1957; reissued with corrections 1966. Vols. II and III, ed. Richard Ellmann. New York: Viking Press, 1966.
- OCPW* Joyce, James. *Occasional, Critical, and Political Writing*, ed. Kevin Barry. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- P* Joyce, James. *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. Authoritative Text, Contexts, Criticism, edited by Joh Paul Riquelme, text edited by Hans Walter Gabler with Walter Hettche, New York: WW Norton and Company 2007.
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