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THE JOYS OF EXILE**

*Edited by  
Franca Ruggieri*

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“CYCLOPS” AS A HOLOGRAM OF EXILE

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As Richard Ellmann wrote in his preface to the corrected 1986 edition of *Ulysses*, “Joyce’s theme in *Ulysses* was simple. He invoked the most elaborate means to present it” (*U ix*). Nowhere is this more evident than in Episode 12, which employs the technique Joyce called Gigantism to parody various pompous, sensational, sentimental and otherwise fustian literary styles, from a child’s primer to the King James Bible, in order to illustrate the monstrosities that had driven him to self-exile. One of the effects of Joyce’s exile was the ability to train his vision with laser focus on the place from which he had been forced, portraying in cruelly precise detail the Ireland he left permanently in 1912. From the temporal, spatial, and cultural distance he had achieved by the time of writing *Ulysses*, James Joyce created a three-dimensional picture inferring not only his own exile but that of individuals and groups, from Dante to people in his own time. In addition to its celebrated documentation of myopia and unidimensionality, the Cyclops episode is in itself a stereoscopic artefact that Joyce created of news items and historical details that comprise a hologram of exile.

Joyce had finally completed “Sirens” in June 1919, after an incapacitating bout of eye inflammation. Harriet Shaw Weaver expressed reservations about Joyce’s departure from the technique of previous episodes that focused on Bloom’s wanderings, considering the episode a weakening of style. Joyce responded: “In the compass of one day to compress all these wanderings and clothe them in the form of this day

is for me only possible by such variation which I beg you to believe is not capricious [...] The elements will fuse only after a prolonged existence together” (Ellmann 1966: 128). Joyce similarly remarked to Ezra Pound that “the ingredients will not fuse until they have reached a certain temperature” (Ellmann 1982: 416). Later episodes were created like candles, dipped in layer after layer of Joyce's experiences and readings. As Phillip Herring notes, “like a patient scholar [Joyce] researched his subjects thoroughly, if sometimes credulously, making notes that suggested hitherto unforeseen possibilities for his art, trusting to genius for transforming trivia into the sublime” (Herring 1977: 4).

Like the Aeolus episode, “Cyclops” is characterized by newspaper conventions and references. Joyce’s conviction that “a writer should never write about the extraordinary. That is for the journalist” (Barnes 1922: 253) does not prevent him from creating of the journalism of his day a composite that structures the twelfth episode. Margot Backus has shown in a recent study that Joyce was singularly influenced by the scandal journalism that emerged in Britain and America during the late 1800s: “in his most famous published works, scandal recurs ... most significantly as a subterranean organizing principle unifying and hierarchizing a wide array of disparate image patterns” (Backus 2013: 5). Even more than “Aeolus,” “Cyclops” relies on journalism for both its form and subject matter, specifically the sensational journalism of such publications as *The National Police Gazette*, *Tit-Bits*, and *Photo-Bits*, a soft-core pornographic weekly billed in its heading as “Up to date, Bright, Sketchy, Smart, Witty, Pictorial, Pithy, Original, Spicy.”<sup>1</sup>

Although he is present in the earliest manuscripts of “Cyclops,” Stephen Dedalus is pointedly expunged from the final version. His original role in the episode was to participate in the anti-Semitic mockery of Bloom; it is Stephen who answers the question “Why can [a Jew] not love his country?” with “when he’s quite sure which country it is”

<sup>1</sup> See Elizabetta d’Erme, “Bloom, the Dandy, the Nymph, and the Old Hag: *Tit-Bits* and *Photo-Bits*, Reflections of the Victorian Press in James Joyce’s *Ulysses*” in *Publishing in Joyce’s Ulysses: Newspapers, Advertising, and Printing*, ed. William S. Brockman, et al. (Leiden: Brill Rodopi, 2018) pp. 25-46.

(Herring 1977: 152). As Michael Groden observes, “It is hard to imagine how Joyce at this stage envisaged the rest of the book, including ... how he planned to reconcile Stephen’s character here with the young man who, in “Nestor,” resisted Garrett Deasy’s anti-Semitic stereotyping of Jews” (Groden 2007: 220). In the final version of “Cyclops,” Stephen’s presence may be suggested by the naming of Saint Stephen Protomartyr, but this only highlights the absurdity of a principal ascetic of the Church appearing in this episode. In “Cyclops” the reader is not given the option of an existentialist interpretation invited by episodes in which Stephen is present; carnivalesque defilement and degradation provide a more suitable context for the ritual exclusion with which the episode is infused.

Since the publication of Frank Budgen’s *The Making of Ulysses* in 1934, the narrator of “Cyclops” has been identified with the *Iliad*’s Thersites, a deformed and impudent Greek who verbalizes unspoken truths interspersed with grotesque caricatures of friends and foes alike. Joyce’s narrator is a prurient Dublin gossip and petty instigator (Ellmann 1972: 110); like Thersites in Shakespeare’s *Troilus and Cressida*, on whom Joyce modelled him specifically (Ellmann 1982: 459n), he celebrates conflict and lechery, reflecting on the various failures and sexual embarrassments of the other pub-goers while cadging pints. Replete with references to execution, torture, smug egotism, false heroism and trivial antagonism, “Cyclops” exposes both the excess and inanity of such genres as Irish heroic legend, current-events journalism, medieval romance, and sacred narrative. Joyce’s notes on “Cyclops” in the British Museum describe it as “Exaggeration of things previously given: Superlatives” (Herring 1972: 19).

Budgen recalls Joyce asking him of “Cyclops” in 1918, “Does this episode strike you as futuristic?” Budgen responded,

Rather cubist than Futurist...Every event is a many-sided object. You first state one view of it and then you draw it from another angle on another scale, and both aspects lie side by side in the same picture.” (Budgen 1961: 153)



As Budgen notes, “The multiplicity of technical devices is proof that Joyce subscribed to no limiting aesthetic creed” (153). James Joyce was an early adopter of technology; just as he admired the ideas of Futurism and was fascinated by recorded sound and film,<sup>2</sup> he understood that an image could not only be cubist in an artistic rendering but photographically precise, dimensionally complete, and scalable. In this way, he intuited the sense of a hologram, a three-dimensional recording of a light field focused on a particular object. Although holograms would not be described as scientific phenomena until the early 1960s, once they were they appeared very similar to Joyce’s holistic descriptions constructed of precisely focused perspectives. “Cyclops” features as its imagistic centerpiece one such verbal hologram, of an American spectacle lynching. This might seem irrelevant to Irish culture and politics, but in light of Joyce’s attention to race and nation, as well as genetic criticism of *Ulysses*, it is both the symbolic shorthand and somatic artefact of the episode’s meaning. “Cyclops” shows that the ultimate result of nationalism and identity politics is monstrosity, the ceding of humanity in the self as it is denied in the Other.

When the Citizen holds forth, a little over halfway through the episode, on Irish industries and resources destroyed by the English: “We had our trade with Spain and the French and with the Flemings before those mongrels were pupped,”<sup>3</sup> John Wyse Nolan assuages his rancor by offering another round of drinks. He has to call the barman by name in order to get his attention, though, because Terry Ryan is “Hanging over the bloody paper with Alf looking for spicy bits instead of attending to the general public.” One of the pictures the narrator spots is of a butting match, “one chap going for the other like a bull at a gate.” The other features the caption *Black Beast Burned in Omaha, Ga.* with an illustration that the narrator describes as “A lot of Deadwood Dicks

<sup>2</sup> See Patrick Casey, *Life Among the Machines: James Joyce’s Ulysses and Early Twentieth-Century Technology* (PhD thesis, Western Ontario University, 2011) pp. 28-9.

<sup>3</sup> This Homeric reference is present in the earliest notes for “Cyclops,” as are the Citizen’s lists of Irish products and trading partners (See Herring, *Joyce’s Notes and Early Drafts for “Ulysses.”*).

in slouch hats and they firing at a Sambo strung up in a tree with his tongue out and a bonfire under him. Gob, they ought to drown him in the sea after and electrocute and crucify him to make sure of their job" (*U* 12, 269). The narrator is irritated not only that Terry's attention is focused somewhere other than drink orders, but that its object is a scene of unedifying excess.

Joyce's earliest note sheets and drafts of "Cyclops" include each element that appears in the final version of this scene: the "smutty Yankee pictures," the butting match, the ordering of Allsop, the Keogh-Bennett match, the "trick of the loop" referencing Bloom's impotence that ultimately came to describe Mrs. Norman Tupper's tryst with Officer Taylor (Herring 1977: 141-162). But only in the final version, published in *The Little Review* in November 1919, does the "Deadwood Dicks" reference appear (Grodén 2007). "Deadwood Dick" is a dime-novel character from South Dakota created by the popular nineteenth-century American novelist Edward Lytton Wheeler (Gifford 1988: 357), a figure later personified by Nat Love, an African American cowboy and former slave who published an autobiography in 1907 titled *Life and Adventures of Nat Love, Better Known in the Cattle Country as "Deadwood Dick," by Himself; a True History of Slavery Days, Life on the Great Cattle Ranges and on the Plains of the "Wild and Woolly" West, Based on Facts, and Personal Experiences of the Author*.

The narrator's coarse description of a spectacle murder comprises Joyce's most precise reference in *Ulysses* to the lynching epidemic that characterized the United States, particularly the American South, between 1880 and 1941. There are less direct references to this geographic region in *Ulysses*, such as the indolence and sensuality of Episode 5, as well as the hypnotic effect of religious ritual described throughout this episode. Gerty McDowell's Victorian ideal of virginity in Episode 13 as well her consummation with Mr. Bloom incorporates the feminine modesty and robust sexuality required of the Southern belle. The appearance of the evangelical preacher Alexander J. Dowie in the "Lestrygonians", "Oxen of the Sun", "Circe", and "Ithaca" episodes suggests American Pentecostal and evangelical sermons; Dowie's rhetorical style at the end of "Oxen of the Sun" is as Gifford suggests reminiscent

of the “raft passage” in Mark Twain’s *Life on the Mississippi* (Gifford 1988: 449). The Christy minstrels Tom and Sam Bohee in “Circe” are products of Southern Jim Crow culture mass-produced for worldwide consumption. As Vincent Cheng has shown, these racist caricatures were many Irish people’s sole knowledge of African American culture (Cheng 1995: 174-5).

The ritual torture and murder of Black Americans considered disobedient and fractious pervaded the South in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, extending across America after the end of World War I. Called “lynching” after the Virginia judge Captain William Lynch, who in 1780 fined and imprisoned Tories without authority, the practice reached epidemic proportions in the early 1880s and lasted until America’s entry into World War II in 1941; it continued intermittently into the late 1960s.

Jon Suggs has noted that the lynchers Joyce invokes “are types of the citizen himself sighted on the American horizon ... the brutality of the American West displaced to the Jim Crow South” (Suggs 1973: 344). Noted for their extravagant sadism and excess, lynchings were carried out by anonymous mobs ostensibly for the purpose of keeping down race riots and punishing crimes committed by Blacks, the most common allegation being sexual assaults on white women. But as anti-lynching crusader Ida B. Wells wrote in 1895, “With the Southern white man, any alliance existing between a white woman and a colored man is a sufficient foundation for the charge of rape. The Southern white man says that it is impossible for a voluntary alliance to exist between a white woman and a colored man, and therefore, the fact of an alliance is a proof of force” (Wells 2004: 679). The rationale of protecting white womanhood was itself a foundation for what has been called the “folk pornography” of the South, which provided the prurient attraction of lynchings and their attendant stories, many of which were reported in the *National Police Gazette* (Dray 2002: 4). As these became increasingly prevalent from 1900 to 1920, “to kill the victim was not enough; the execution became public theater, a participatory ritual of torture and death, a voyeuristic spectacle” prolonged, in one case for seven hours, for the benefit of the crowd, who often took special excursion trains and

sent notes to school to excuse their children for the event (Litwack 2000: 15-16). The victim's eyes and genitals were often removed before the actual killing occurred. After the victim was dead, his body would typically be riddled with bullets, dismembered and its charred remains distributed to the crowd, appearing later as watch-chain ornaments and other fetishes (Dray 2002: 5).

The ascendance of lynch law in America was contemporaneous with Joyce's own lifespan. The early 1880s saw a gutting by the Supreme Court of the Reconstruction Amendments that formed the basis of new citizenship rights for Black Americans (Dray 2002: 53). Without the incentive to preserve the physical well-being of Black people, since they were no longer slaves, Southern whites began killing them wholesale, justifying the murders as fitting punishment for the "vicious and beast-like predators" Blacks were portrayed to be in the racist literature of the day (Vinekas 1999: 535). Lynch law peaked in terms of both numbers and violent spectacle in what is called the "Red Summer" of 1919 (Litwack 2000: 32), an epithet provided by the African American poet and NAACP president James Weldon Johnson for the systemic mob violence from May to late September 1919, in part as a result of Jim Crow laws in the American South being challenged by decorated African American soldiers returning from The Great War.

The London *Times* had reported the lynching of Blacks in America as early as 1853.<sup>4</sup> When Ida B. Wells toured Britain in 1893 and 1894, an Anti-Lynching Committee headed by the Duke of Argyll was formed in London, the publications and petitions of which brought the issue to the attention of the British public and international press. The instance to which Joyce refers in "Cyclops" is in fact an amalgam of as

<sup>4</sup> The *London Times* Digital Archive, 1785-1985. Gale Research/CENGAGE, Thomson Gale Databases, 2007. The *Times* of August 27, 1851 comments on the lawlessness of lynching, noting the "remarkable movement of opinion, in virtue of which what was once a barbarous process of vengeance or violence has been transformed into a recognized operation of popular justice. 'Lynching,' as most readers know, was the term applied in some back States of America to the infliction of capital punishments at the will of the mob. This expedient has been so far naturalized as to supersede for the moment the ordinary administration of the law."

many as seven different incidents: in 1863 in New York City; 1899 in Georgia; in February 1904 in Mississippi; in March 1904 in Arkansas; another in Georgia in July 1904; the others within a year and a half of each other in May 1918 (Georgia) and September 1919 (Nebraska), as Joyce was drafting the final manuscripts of “Cyclops” in Zurich (Crispi 2004: 4). The 1863 lynching was reported in *The Illustrated London News*; the Arkansas Massacre of 1904 was reported in the *London Times* in an article that noted eleven of the thirteen blacks killed were innocent of the charges of assault on a white man, but were mown down by the “insane fury of the mob.”<sup>5</sup> Joyce’s immediate reference is to the lynching of William Brown in Omaha, Nebraska on 28 September 1919, but his description clearly infers additional incidents of racist terrorism.

John Simpson points out in *James Joyce Online Notes* that in the 1893 story of Mrs. Norman Tupper, the misbehaving society belle from the *National Police Gazette*, Joyce has his narrator describe a drawing of the article and its caption rather than quoting from the article itself. Such is the case with this reference. The *Illustrated London News* of 1863 supplied Joyce’s visual: a line drawing by Joel Tyler Headley<sup>6</sup> depicting a lynching during the New York draft riots of the American Civil War. The *London Times*’s report on the William Brown lynching made what Don Gifford calls an “unaccountable substitution” of Georgia for Nebraska as the state in which the infamous lynching had occurred (Gifford 1988: 357). In the Nebraska murder, the victim William Brown had been accused, as most male lynching victims were, of molesting a young white woman. As James Allen comments,

When Omaha Mayor Edward P. Smith appeared to plead for calm, he was kidnapped by the mob, hung to a trolley pole, and nearly killed before police were able to cut him down. The rampaging mob

<sup>5</sup> *London Times*, Tuesday, 29 March, 1904, 3. *The Times Digital Archive*.

<sup>6</sup> *The Illustrated London News*, vol. 43, no. 1216, (August 8, 1863), 129. Reprinted in Joel Tyler Headley, *Pen and Pencil Sketches of the Great Riots. An illustrated history of the Railroad and other great American Riots* (New York: Treat, 1882), 228.

set the courthouse prison on fire and seized Brown. He was hung from a lamppost, mutilated, and his body riddled with bullets, then burned. Four other people were killed and fifty wounded before troops were able to restore order (Allen 2000: 201).

But the *Times* mistaking Georgia as the location of the William Brown murder is not exactly unaccountable. From 1882 to 1968, the Tuskegee University Lynching Archives record 531 lynchings in Georgia alone, 492 being murders of Black Americans. In 1899 near Macon, Georgia, Sam Hose was castrated, doused with kerosene, then burned alive. The *National Police Gazette*, Joyce's source for Mrs. Norman Tupper's affair, ran a two-page illustration of this lynching taken from eyewitness accounts (Arnold 2010: 113). In July 1904, a mob took over the town of Statesboro, Georgia for the sole purpose of burning two men, Paul Reed and Will Cato, who had been convicted of murdering a white family. The story of Mary Turner, who was murdered in a May 1918 lynch-mob rampage along with twelve others in Valdosta, Georgia, made international headlines and was discussed in Congress as a singularly barbaric killing (Meyers 2006: 214). As described in the NAACP's report *Thirty Years of Lynchings in the United States, 1889-1918*, Turner's husband Hayes was murdered by a mob looking for the killer of a local white farmer. When they could not lay hands on the primary suspect, the mob exacted revenge on Hayes, who was known to have disliked the farmer. Infuriated by her husband's death, Turner, who was eight months pregnant, vowed to seek justice. The sheriff in Valdosta arrested her, then gave her up to a mob that took her away into the woods to a place called Folsom's Bridge. "There, before a crowd that included women and children, Mary was stripped, hung upside down by the ankles, soaked with gasoline and oil from the mob's automobiles, and roasted to death" (Dray 2002: 246). After she was dead a white man opened her abdomen with a butcher's knife; her infant fell to the ground and cried briefly, whereupon a member of the mob crushed the baby's head beneath his heel. Then the mob fired hundreds of bullets into Turner's corpse (Meyers: 2006). The NAACP's representative Walter

White, who went to Georgia to investigate the case, was taken to the site of the lynching by a local white man. "Turner and her infant had been buried directly beneath the tree on which she died, and someone had set up an empty whiskey bottle with a half-smoked cigar in its neck as a 'tombstone'" (Dray 2002: 246).

No direct references to lynching appear in any of the early note sheets or manuscripts for "Cyclops." Early drafts do include expressions of outrage at the barbarity of the Robert Emmet execution by the F.O.T.E.I. foreign delegates called to witness, as well as the anonymity of the mob.<sup>7</sup> The August, 1915 lynching of Leo Frank, a white Jewish man, in Marietta, Georgia for the alleged murder of a thirteen-year-old girl has been suggested as the most obvious source of the "Black Beast" reference, but this assumption is incorrect for two reasons. First, since the Frank lynching occurred four years before Joyce began work on "Cyclops," it does not make sense that Joyce's preliminary notes and drafts, in which the anti-Semitic baiting of Leopold Bloom figures prominently, make no reference to this or any other lynching. Second, and perhaps more importantly, Frank was a white man. His murder was conducted by twenty-five men who simply hanged him from a tree outside Atlanta after allowing him to pray. They did not strip, mutilate, dismember, castrate, burn, or riddle him with bullets. Since "Cyclops" is informed by carnivalesque excess, there is little to suggest that the "Black Beast" story was influenced by the Leo Frank case.

Joyce wrote the first drafts of "Cyclops" in June and July, 1919 (Crispi 2004: 4). Just as he knew of the Omaha lynching from the London *Times*, he would also have heard of the Georgia rampages, as the 1904 story was also covered extensively by the British press. Omaha is an unincorporated town in southwest Georgia, about three hours' drive from Valdosta today; the *Times* may have made its mistake due to the

<sup>7</sup> See Phillip F. Herring, *Joyce's Ulysses Notesheets in the British Museum* (Charlottesville: Univ. Press of Virginia, 1972) and *Joyce's Notes and Early Drafts for Ulysses: Selections From the Buffalo Collection* (Charlottesville: Univ. Press of Virginia, 1977) as well as Michael Groden's "Joyce at Work on 'Cyclops': Toward a Biography of *Ulysses*," *JJQ* 44 no. 2 (Winter 2007), 217-245.

chronological proximity of the Nebraska-Georgia murders and the geographical proximity of the Georgia towns. In any case, Joyce used the paper's error to the benefit of *Ulysses*. As Declan Kiberd has pointed out, "It is his very openness to serendipity which allows Joyce to renew his styles and themes with each succeeding episode" (Kiberd 2009).

Viewed directly, Joyce's reference is to a single event: the lynching of Will Brown in Nebraska in September 1919 that received coverage in the London *Times*, which incorrectly reported the state as Georgia. But seen through the spectrum of affiliations that this reference infers, it is a verbal hologram, a three-dimensional portrait of exile. What Budgen identified in the episode was perhaps less a work of cubism than holography. Fritz Senn has pointed out that all blindness in Episode 12 is metaphorical; similarly, each degree of perspective or parallax in the hologram corresponds figuratively to a particular event from the contemporary news items gleaned during Joyce's composition of the episode, as well as during the time in which it is set.

In the kingdom of the one-eyed, the person with multi-dimensional vision is nothing but a nuisance, like the prisoner released from Plato's cave who goes up into the light and returns without his sight. Thus "Cyclops" critiques unidimensionality as it eulogizes those exiled by the ignorant. Joyce began writing the earliest drafts of the episode in mid-June 1919, when reports of the Red Summer of lynching in America were beginning to filter into news reports in Europe, added to the already prolific reports of the spectacle murders of African Americans that began around the turn of the century. Joyce created of this information a verbal hologram exhibiting temporal and spatial parallax, formed in the cave of the cyclops to illuminate the truth of the writer's own social displacement and resulting self-exile. Two decades later, Joyce would revisit this subject in *Finnegans Wake*, as the anti-hero HCE returns from exile and is let into his old home by Sackerson, in "the Wake's prototypical encounter" (Gordon 1986: 116). The original draft of this scene identifies Sackerson with the Anglo-Saxon constable Sigurdson, who guards the "dark twin" Shem and is detailed to "save him from lynch law & mob mauling" (Fordham 2007: 43). HCE crosses the threshold "imagined as the 'fire defenses' of a caveman's cave



because Sackerson is a ‘fire-tending brute’” modeled on American lynchers as well as Homer’s Cyclops (Gordon 1986: 116).

Joyce created multidimensionality from myopia using a verbal hologram of exile: passing the laser focus of his perception over the ultimate social paralysis of lynch law, articulating the ascendancy of displacement over victimhood. The rest of “Cyclops” is devoted to capturing the proliferation of exile as a labile and dynamic inference, similarly whole in the accuracy of its representation. Each dimension of exile is preserved intact by the outcast’s observation in order to be contemplated, its benefits and detriments weighed, its true identity and logical outcomes revealed. The final decision is not to flee but to transcend the system of ritually enforced paralysis via self-exile, while asserting the sovereignty of one’s identity in the holistic representation of that which would deny it.

Although he never set foot in the United States, James Joyce was by received information familiar with its particular brand of ceremonially-enforced social exile exemplified by lynching, so similar in its effects to that of his own culture. As American lynching culture was the ultimate result of being in exile from one’s own country, Joyce took a newspaper’s mistake and made of it a three-dimensional portrait of exclusion. As the most violent lynchings occurred in Joyce’s middle life, so does his portrait of bigotry and ignorance feature in its structure and at its core this hologram of exile.

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