POLYMORPHIC JOYCE

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AN ARGUMENT FOR CHARACTEROLOGY IN THE WAKE'S "OLD I.2": HCE'S 'CENTRALITY' AND THE "EVERYMAN" ARCHETYPE.

In the following essay, I will be using Characterological literary theory (and a genetic *Wake* outline) to discuss pre-archetypal characterisation in *Finnegans Wake*. For my main presentation, I will analyse HCE's character in I.2 on micro and macro levels. The micro level is a close study of the *Wake* characters as individuals or realistic people. In contrast, the macro level is a reading of characters as universal avatar figures. Archetypal character was developed by Joyce in *Finnegans Wake* post-1923, largely during the dual composition of Books I and III. However, In I.2 (written in winter 1923) only a trace of macro-level characterisation is detectable. (In *Finnegans Wake* archetypes generally require a macro-reading). Prior to the development of archetypal figures in 1924, character in *Finnegans Wake* has a strong micro-level component. Archetypal critics (such as Joseph Campbell) look for mythical narrative patterns or themes and motifs within literature. They use modernist archetype theory, which is associated with the fields of anthropology and psychoanalysis. The literary *tradition* of archetype, which originates in Greek theatre and the writing of Theophrastus, is different since modernist archetype theory is scientific not artistic in nature. Sir James Frazer's *The Golden Bough* (1890) surveys primitive culture finding that savage man lived in a society built on magic and superstition. The archetypes listed in *The Golden Bough* are 'taboos' (social prohibitions) which were universal amongst primitive tribes. Joyce's employment of the archetype is scientific and modernist. For example, Marvin Magalaner in *Myth and Literature* argues that Carl Jung's 'collective unconscious' and introvert/extravert theories in *Psychological Types* (1911) structure character within *Finnegans Wake*:

> The contents of this collective unconscious [Jung] calls "archetypes", ancient and primordial images impressed upon the minds of early men. When these archetypes become conscious and are converted into traditional formulae, the result is a myth, a conscious form, handed on relatively unchanged over long

centuries. What interested Joyce in all this was the fact the dreams were a primary means of bringing to the surface mythical archetypes or patterns. Keeping in mind the Viconian idea of the recurrence of the hero type, and the concept of cyclical history, Joyce saw with what ease the psychoanalytic idea of myth could be accommodated to the larger myth of man.[1]

Archetypal criticism facilitates a macro reading of the novel. (*Finnegans Wake* is written in both macro and micro styles). Magalaner demonstrates how history is a theoretical concern for archetypal critics. Anthropological primitivism and myth are associated with the 'hero' archetype, personified as HCE in *Finnegans Wake*. *A Skeleton Key to Finnegans Wake* (1947) by Joseph Campbell and Henry Morton Robinson states that the novel is 'a prodigious, multifaceted monomyth, not only the *cauchemar* of a Dublin citizen but the dreamlike saga of guilt-stained, evolving humanity'[2]. (In fact, Campbell uses 'monomyth' (taken from FW 581.24) in *The Hero With a Thousand Faces* to coin 'The Hero's Journey', an archetypal mythical pattern which characters such as Odysseus collectively follow). HCE's original crime in Phoenix Park, (wherein he is said to have exposed himself to two young girls), is often elevated from a micro to macro level by the manifestation of the first sinner Adam (FW 021.6), for example. HCE's Adam avatar transforms the Phoenix Park into the Garden of Eden. Chapters written post 1926, wherein Joyce layers character with multiple parallel identities (I.1, I.6 and all of Book II), are especially suited for archetypal critical theory.

However, in early drafts of *Finnegans Wake* (composed in 1923) Joyce does not employ archetypal characters. *Ulysses*-like character parallels, such as Bloom representing a modern day Odysseus, are not part of the initial construction either. The Homeric schema in *Ulysses* is not replicated by Joyce in *Finnegans Wake*. Rather, character was initially singular in the vignettes "Roderick O'Connor" (FW 380.7-382) and "Tristan and Isolde"/"Mamalujo" (FW 383-399). It was not until the composition of "Here Comes Everybody" (FW 030.01-034-29) and "The Ballad of Persse O'Reilly" (FW 044.22-047) that Joyce devised the character Humphrey Chimpden Earwicker, whom he titled 'HCE' in his notebooks from VI.B.2 – VI.B.11: 'HCE drunk' (VI.B.2.16a). In I.2 HCE is nevertheless a char-

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[1] Marvin Magalaner, "Myth of Man: Joyce's *Finnegans Wake*", *Myth and Literature: Contemporary Theory and Practice*, edited by John B. Vickery, (University of Nebraska Press: Lincoln, 1966) 206-7.

[2] Joseph Campbell and Henry Morton Robinson, *A Skeleton Key to* Finnegans Wake, (The Viking Press: New York, 1944), 3.

acter in creative development. Archetypal macro-readings do not work in I.2 because HCE is simply a man. There are few HCE avatars in I.2 perhaps because Joyce had yet to formulate sigla as a composition aid. The notebooks VI.B.11, VI.B.6, VI.B.1 and VI.B.14 show Joyce's workings on a shorthand notation, (defined as 'sigla' by Roland McHugh), wherein he assigned a capital letter to each character sourced from the English, Greek and the Masonic alphabets. This occurred in one intensive stage of writing in late 1923/early 1924. The character of HCE is singular for most of I.2 calling for a micro (rather than macro) reading of the novel. Therefore characterology, and associative narratology, arms us with the literary theory for the task of studying character in I.2. Comparatively few literary critics use characterological terms and theory in practice. Jonathan Culler observes in *Story and Discourse*: 'It is remarkable how little has been said about the theory of character in literary history and criticism'[3] and Alex Woloch in *The One Vs. The Many* calls characterisation the 'bête noire of narratology [...]'[4]. Notably, characterology (the theory of literary character) is not employed by the Joycean critics who have published books on character. The following lists the names and methodologies of such texts: James H Maddox's *Joyce's Ulysses and the Assault upon Character* (Neo-Aristotelian), David Wright's *Characters of Joyce* (Biographical), Paul Schwaber's *The Cast of Characters: A Reading of Ulysses* (Biographical), John Gordon's *Finnegans Wake: A Plot Summary* ('Realist' reading), Adaline Glasheen's *A Third Census of Finnegans Wake* (Structuralist), Roland McHugh's *The Sigla of Finnegans Wake* (Structuralist and genetic), Michael Begnal's *Narrator and Character in Finnegans Wake* (Post-structuralist) and Finn Fordham's *Lots of Fun at Finnegans Wake: Unravelling Universals* (Genetic). However, without characterology Joycean character cannot be analysed theoretically. This critical neglect has had its consequences; for example, no conventional term for Wakean character exists within criticism. Margot Norris in *The Decentered Universe of Finnegans Wake* uses the word 'figures'[5] whereas Roland McHugh in *The Sigla of Finnegans Wake* inverts the concept of 'fluid composites'[6].

[3] Seymour Chatman, *Story and Discourse*, (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1975), 107.

[4] Alex Woloch, *The One Vs. The Many: Minor Characters and the Space of the Protagonist in the Novel*, (Princeton University Press: Princeton and Oxford, 2003), 14.

[5] Margot Norris, *The Decentered Universe of* Finnegans Wake, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1976), 97.

[6] Roland McHugh, *The Sigla of* Finnegans Wake. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1976), 10.

An important characterology term, coined by Alex Woloch, is the *character-space*. This is the "charged encounter between an individual human personality and a determined space and position within the narrative as a whole"[7]. A *character-space* is positioned on what is called the *character-hierarchy*. This hierarchy charts the importance of characters in a novel. In *Finnegans Wake* this chart is constantly re-written. There are two figurative *sets* of character in the novel. The members of the so-called 'Doodles Family' (HCE, ALP, Shaun, Shem and Issy) are ranked in the top half of the hierarchy. The minor characters (Mamalujo, the Maggies, the Twelve, Kate and Sackerson) are ranked in the lower half of the character hierarchy.

E.M Forster's *Aspects of the Novel* (1927) coins the terms "round" and "flat" character as follows:

> Flat characters were called 'humours' in the seventeenth century, and are sometimes called types and sometimes caricatures. In their purest form, they are constructed round a single idea or quality; when there is more than one factor in them, we get the beginning of the curve towards the round'.[8]

"Flat" character is a useful blanket term defining a particular style of character writing. Associative terms are 'stereotype' and 'stock' characterisation[9]. They are generally minor characters and they inhabit a low position on the character hierarchy. The 'stock' or 'sketch' genre is parodied in *Ulysses*, with added modernist complications. Joyce writes in the literary genre of character writing and 'sketches' occasionally in *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* (this mode was contributed to by Geoffrey Chaucer, Thomas Overbury, Ben Jonson, Joseph Addison, Daniel Defoe, Charles Dickens and William Thackeray). However, he usually experiments with the medium beyond its traditional limits. For example, Zoe Higgins in "Circe" is a 'stage-whore' in so far and she mainly fulfils a necessary *role* within the brothel. Zoe's language consists of smutty repartee and clichéd proverbs, which stylistically sets the scene. Her earthy humour is repetitive, and feels almost scripted:

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[7] Woloch, 14.

[8] E.M. Forster, *Aspects of the Novel*, edited by Oliver Stallybrass, (Great Britain: Penguin Books, 1974), 73.

[9] 'Abstract' characterisation is another.

ZOE: Honest? Till the next time. (*She sneers*) Suppose you got up the wrong side of the bed or came too quick with your best girl. (407.1970-1972)

BLOOM: (Smiles, nods slowly) More, houri, more.

ZOE: And more's mother? (408.1989-1990)

ZOE: What the eye can't see the heart can't grieve for. (408.1999)

But Zoe's personality is not 'flat' or purely exterior. We are informed of Zoe's background, and her English nationality which adds considerable depth to her character. Zoe states that she is from 'Hog's Norton where the pigs plays the organs' (408.1983) and that she is 'Yorkshire born' (408.1983-4). What led to Zoe's present circumstances, i.e. an English woman in Dublin fallen into prostitution? Zoe announces that she is far from home (like Bloom-Odysseus) and that she is a non-native, which subtly brings a degree of interiority to her character. Zoe's home county is not merely a hallucinogenic styled allusion to "My Girl's a Yorkshire Girl", in other words. Secondly, Zoe acts as Bloom's guide in "Circe" like Virgil in *The Inferno*. She brings him, unhindered by fantastical apparitions, initially into Bella Cohen's brothel, where Bloom meets Stephen:

BLOOM: (*He stands aside at the threshold.*) After you is good manners.

ZOE: Ladies first, gentleman after. ([...] *She turns and, holding out her hands, draws him over.*) (409.2028-2032)

Virgil is similarly immune to the tortures of Hell while leading Dante. Whereas "Circe" is a psychological Hell for Bloom and Stephen, full of horrors from which they cannot escape. Zoe is therefore a fixed point of Realism in "Circe". She lights a cigarette at the gasjet for instance, despite Mhananann Mac Lir's terrifying prior appearance:

MHANANANN MAC LIR: I am the light of the homestead, I am the dreamery, creamery butter. [...]

THE GASJET: Pooah! Pfuiiiiii!

(*Zoe runs to the chandelier and, crooking her leg, adjusts the mantle.*)

ZOE: Who has a fag as I'm here? (416.2275-2284)

Zoe's isolation from the supernatural creates a fusion of opposites (between Realism and the fantastical) in "Circe". Her actions in the brothel are un-exceptional. She flirts idly with Lynch and Stephen and she lights a cigarette on the gasjet. Like Virgil leading Dante to a new circle in Hell, Zoe indicates Bella Cohen's room to Bloom, instantly dispelling Simon Dedalus's manifestation as a Cardinal to his son:

THE DOORHANDLE: Theeee.
ZOE: The devil is in that door. (428.2694-96)

Characterology is useful when applied to HCE in I.2 of *Finnegans Wake*, fixing definitions onto his identity and theoretical interaction with the narrative. However, *Finnegans Wake* destabilises traditional modes of literary character with its simultaneous macro- and micro-levels of reading. The micro level is the narrative base of I.2, the first draft layer composed, wherein the first protagonist of *Finnegans Wake*, Humphrey Chimpden Earwicker, is introduced through various media, public rumour, books (FW 036.12 'Sayings Attributive of H.C. Earwicker) and song (FW 044.22: 'The Ballad of Persse O'Reilly'). The macro-level of I.2 relates to two important passages, when HCE is associated with the universal figure of the Everyman.

In I.2 of *Finnegans Wake*, HCE has a 'centrality' within the text. If a 'character-space' is the driving force behind every action in a text it is considered centralised in the narrative. Elizabeth Bennet has centrality in *Pride and Prejudice*, for instance. HCE is a traditional literary protagonist in I.2, theoretically speaking. The mystery of Earwicker's identity drives the narration of I.2. The narrator is impatient in his attempt tell the tale of his origin. The first line demonstrates the single-minded objective of the chapter:

Now [...] concerning the genesis of Harold or Humphrey Chimpden's occupational agnomen we are back in the presurnames prodromarith period, of course just when enos chalked halltraps) and discarding once for all those theories from older sources which would link him back with such pivotal ancestors as the Glues, the Gravys, the Northeasts, the Ankers [...]. (*FW* 030.1-11)

The interest in Earwicker is the key to his centrality. The narrator of I.2 collects rumours about HCE's identity, defending the controversial figure when possible. The story is illogical and highly anachronistic while humorously emulating the unreliability of gossip and slander. I.2 was initially

written in two sections, the first vignette adopting the name "Here Comes Everybody"[10] (*FW* 30-34.29). HCE is traced as an Earwigger (or a man who catches earwigs) in "Here Comes Everybody". He is a serf living in England. A 'sailor king' (*FW* 031.11), subsequently identified as William the Conqueror (FW 031.14), crosses a field to enquire as to why HCE has a flowerpot held in the air via a stick: 'On his majesty, who [...] had been meaning to enquire what, in effect, had caused yon causeway to be thus potholed, asking substitutionally to be put wise as to whether pater noster and silver doctors were not more fancied bait for lobstertrapping [...]' (*FW* 031.3-8). Earwicker's centrality in the narrative brings forth the king to him, an unlikely occurrence in reality. According to Adaline Glasheen, this passage parodies heraldic fiction, wherein kings have banal conversations with lowly serfs.[11] William the Conqueror is a flat caricature of an English king in I.2. In I.2, HCE's dialogue with him: 'Naw, yer madders, aw war just a cotchin on thon bluggy earwuggers'. (FW 031.10-11) is more or less in English, implying that William I is conversing with him in the language. However, this does not make sense since he was a French king. Following this, William I speaks with 'Michael, etheling lord of Leix and Offaly and the jubilee mayor of Drogheda' (FW 031.18-19) about HCE. William I invaded England in 1066 but held no dominion in Ireland, so this is puzzling. In fact, Henry II was the first English king to invade Ireland in 1169. Time is therefore corrupted in the story and the characters are subject to serious anachronism. HCE is appointed English viceroy by William I: 'his viceregal booth' (FW 032.36) where he is equally loathed and adored. HCE is in 19th Century Ireland here, because of the plays and operas which he views at the king's treat house (FW 032.20):

> '[...] in a command performance by special request with the courteous permission for pious purposes, the homedromed and enliventh performance of the problem passion play of the millentury, running strong since creation, *A Royal Divorce*, then near the approach towards the summit of its climax, with ambitious interval band selections from *The Bo'Girl* and *The Lily* on all horserie show command nights from his viceregal booth [...]'. (FW 032.31-36)

[10] Bill Cadbury, "The March of a Maker: Chapters I.2-4", *How Joyce Wrote* Finnegans Wake*, edited by Luca Crispi and Sam Slote, University of Wisconsin Press: USA, 2007), 67.

[11] Adaline Glasheen, *Third Census of* Finnegans Wake, (University of California Press: Berkeley, 1977), xxx.

Balfe's *The Bohemian Girl* (1843) and Julius Benedict's The Lily of Kil-larney (1862) are both nineteenth century operatic works. The story is huge-ly inaccurate. But Joyce is not writing a chronological narrative. HCE exists outside of time since he is the subject of rumour. Hence, he maintains con-stant narrative centrality. HCE's character-space is capable of repositioning itself in different time periods since the reader of *Finnegans Wake* is conscious of the gossip medium's unreliability. The second section of I.2 (*FW* 034.30-47) does not tell us the tale of a different HCE. Instead, it is a different story about his origin from an alternate source. HCE has multiple tales and rumours written or spoken about him so like a mythical figure there is no definitive telling of his tale. In part two of I.2, there is not a crisis in relation to the identity of the protagonist nor is there any narrative instability:

> One happygogusty Ides-of-April morning (the anniversary, as it fell out, of his first assumption of his mirthday suit and rights in appurtenance to the confusioning of human races) ages and ages after the alleged misdemeanour [...] [HCE] met a cad with a pipe. (*FW* 035.2-11)

HCE misinterprets a question asked by the Cad in the Phoenix Park: 'Guinness thaw tool in jew me dinner ouzel fin?' (*FW* 035.15-16) which is Irish for 'How are you today my fair gentleman?' (*Conas ta tu indui mo dhuine uasal fionne?*[12]) HCE, thinking that he is being sexually proposi-tioned (or indeed is in danger of being robbed), takes out a gun and has a fight with the Cad. This story is circulated by a range of gossips before being published in a text called 'the Sayings Attributive of H.C Earwicker' (FW 036.12) by Noah Webster, the editor of the first American English Dictionary. HCE subsequently defends his name in public, demonstrating that he is an interior character with intense feelings and emotions. He claims that he won the fight 'straight' (FW 036.21 but then he adds: 'there is not one tittle of truth, allow me to tell you, in that purest of fibfib fabrications' (FW 036.35-36). But what does HCE deny in this final statement? We, as readers, can only guess. Joyce makes us willing participants in the spread of public rumour about HCE. Is HCE the one being accused of homosexual activity in Phoenix Park and not the Cad, say? HCE's character is simulta-neously British and Irish during the public denial of the rumours: 'to make my hoath to my sinnfinners' (*FW* 036.26) and 'my British to my backbone

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[12] Roland McHugh, *Annotations to* Finnegans Wake, third edition, (John Hopkins Uni-versity Press: Baltimore, 2006), 35.

tongue' (*FW* 036.32). Political opposition is not the reason for the dislike of HCE's dislike here since he is an amalgamation of nationalities. In I.2, rumours about HCE are spread by hypocritical characters. Treacle Tom is a heavy drinker, gambler and sexual pervert: '[Tom] was, in fact, in the habit of frequenting common lodginghouses where he slept in a nude state, hail-fellow with meth, in strange men's cots [...].' (FW 039.30-33). Hosty, the 'beachbusker' (FW 040.21) who composes 'The Ballad of Perrse O'Reilly' suffers from mental illness, and has spent much of his life in St. Patrick's Duns (FW 040.45) as well as other hospitals.

I will now discuss macro-level character relating to HCE in I.2. Earwicker's nickname/acronym 'Here Comes Everybody' is present in the earliest of I.2 drafts, which suggests that Joyce viewed his protagonist as a universal figure quite close to his conception. The several passages linking HCE with Everyman forecast the post-sigla construction network of avatars. However, in I.2 HCE's association with Everyman creates a characterogical paradox. In "Here Comes Everybody" the narrator informs us of Humphrey Chimpden Earwicker's public nicknames, following his elevation to viceroy in Ireland by William the Conqueror:

[...] a pleasant turn of the populace which gave him [...] the nickname Here Comes Everybody. An imposing everybody he always indeed looked, constantly the same as and equal to himself and magnificently well worthy of any and all such universalisation [...]. (FW 032.19-21)

HCE is known by this name by the Irish natives who like him. His detractors call him 'Dook Umphrey' (FW 032.15). HCE is a 'man of the people' according to his nickname. But can a rich English viceroy really have an affinity with the Irish native? This is a question fit for a micro-reading. The name 'Here Comes Everybody' in *Finnegans Wake* primarily identifies HCE with the 'abstract' character of Everyman, the eponymous protagonist of a fifteenth century English morality play. Everyman is defined in characterology as an *abstract* character since he stands for something rather than having an inward identity. He is a protagonist *without* a portrait or personality. In the play, Everyman's single-minded theological questioning serves to 'flatten' his character, evident in the following extract when he talks to Death, the Grim Reaper:

Everyman. Death, If I should this pilgrimage take,
And my reckoning surely make,

Show me, for saint charity,
Should I not come again shortly?[13]

Everyman is populated by characters who are personifications of Christian values, such as FELLOWSHIP, and KNOWLEDGE. Everyman meets them on his journey to heaven. They are 'types' similar in abstraction to himself. The stylistic aim of Everyman's author was to create in a character the universal representation of a sinner seeking absolution or forgiveness from God. The audience of a medieval morality play took his story as pure religious allegory. A macro-reading presents HCE here as an abstract symbol of suffering man, moving through life to death. A second such instance of abstraction occurs in "The Ballad of Perrse O'Reilly" when Hosty sings:

We had chaw chaw chops, chairs, chewing gum, the chicken-pox and china chambers
Universally provided by this soffsoaping salesman. (*FW* 045.34-36)

The 'soffsoaping' or soft-soaping salesman is Leopold Bloom from *Ulysses*. Bloom's purchase of lemon soap in "Lotus Eaters" is the key to this reference. The word 'universally' indicates that it is *Bloom's* identity as Everyman which is being referenced, not HCE's. In "Ithaca" the following description occurs:

What universal binomial denominations would be his as entity and nonentity?
Assumed by any or known to none. Everyman or Noman. (598.2006-8)

Bloom is stated to be an amalgamation of Everyman and Odysseus, 'Noman' is the name Odysseus uses to disguise himself in the Cyclops's lair. In *Finnegans Wake*, these *Everyman* references create the first abstract presentation of HCE, and hence facilitate a macro-reading of the novel. However, Characterogical disorder now occurs between micro- and macro-readings of HCE, which questions whether he can be given any fixed definition. The Characterogical definitions of HCE become polar opposites theoretically; a traditional literary protagonist with an interior personality versus an abstract archetypal figure (Everyman). This creates a paradox, if

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[13] *Everyman*, edited by A.C Crawley, fourth edition, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1968), 5.

the critic reads I.2 on its own. But a complete study of *Finnegans Wake* indicates this as an example of an archetype, which Joyce would later employ throughout. It is difficult to do a macro-reading of I.2 since Everyman is disconnected from the narrative content. HCE is Humphrey Chimpden Earwicker throughout so all rumours circulate around this identity. Clearly, Joyce begins to conceptualise a universal element to HCE's character in I.2. However, this is tentatively done, and under-developed in comparison with later chapters. *Characterology* is capable of encapsulating character from a fixed micro- or macro-reading perspective in *Finnegans Wake*. However, the theory finds paradoxes if both are analysed simultaneously. Therefore, if we use characterology to study Joyce we must become aware of its limitations. The major difficulty is Woloch's definition of the character space. In I.2, HCE's character-space is singular from a micro-perspective and he retains his narrative centrality and top position in the character hierarchy. However, in a macro-reading his character space is multiplied since Everyman is an abstract figure who represents all of mankind. The terminology is difficult to use here since it is not theoretically possible for a character to possess more than one character-space. Similarly, does HCE maintain his narrative centrality when he is Everyman? How can an abstract figure who is 'everybody' at a macro-level be the main protagonist of the text?

In I.2, HCE is unmasked in his nom de plume, not obscured by layer upon layer of character avatars. Characterology reveals HCE to be an experimental figure, clearly in transition between micro- and macrocosmic identifications. However, in comparison to the rest of *Finnegans Wake,* HCE is at his most traditional and simplistic. I.2 is the time-stamp wherein the basics of HCE and his crime in the park are detailed. Since I.2 was not rewritten once Joyce developed archetypal characterisation (like "Roderick O'Connor" (II.3), "Tristan and Isolde" and "Mamalujo" (II.4)[14]), it seems that Joyce wished for it to remain in this micro-level state to ease his readers into HCE's tale. This is perhaps why I.2 was *Finnegans Wake*'s first chapter prior to the composition of I.1 in October 1926, when the conceptual mid-sentence 'beginning' of the novel was established.

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[14] Cadbury E.M., *How Joyce Wrote* Finnegans Wake, ed. by L.Crispi and S. Slote, Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, p.487.

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