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*LEAN UNLOVELY ENGLISH TURNED BACKWARD:
READING “SCYLLA & CHARYBDIS” HERMETICALLY*

The term “coincidence of contraries” borders on being overused in Joyce studies. Referring to it will cause a diversity of scholarly reactions, a feeling of familiarity and instant involvement at best, weariness and boredom at worst. Its omnipresence in critical studies may easily lead to the conclusion that the topic has already been exhaustively dealt with in the over 70 year old printing machine that is the Joyce industry. It is all the more surprising that critical focus has rarely zoomed in on the Hermetic tradition when depicting that most Brunian of concepts. More than Platonic mysticism or modern Theosophy, Hermeticism qualifies as being more readily ‘Joycean’ thanks to its inclusiveness, its affinity for contradiction and its urge to reconcile what has traditionally been dismissed as irreconcilable. Being a philosophical mediation between monotheism and pantheism, Hermeticism¹ treats both material and spiritual realms inclusively and encompasses the main oppositional poles of Joycean aesthetics; those have variously been termed by Joyce as the ‘classical’ and ‘romantic temper’ (in the “James Clarence Mangan” essay), Defoe’s ‘realism’ and Blake’s ‘symbolism’ (in two papers he gave at Trieste University), and, in their philosophically culminating form, Scyllan Aristotelianism and Charybdean Platonism, the equally threatening but indispensable counter-signs between which Stephen’s aesthetic argument has to pass unharmed in “Scylla and Charybdis”. Analyzing Stephen’s argument in more detail, I hope to recover more specific and substantial similarities between his aesthetics and the Hermetic cosmology that the first and most famous tract of the *Corpus Hermeticum*, the “Pimander” depicts (hereafter cited as ‘CH I’).²

¹ The terms ‘Hermetic tradition’ and ‘Hermeticism’ are treated synonymously and refer exclusively to the eighteen tracts of the *Corpus Hermeticum*, a collection of texts written between the first century B.C. and 4th century A.D. that originated in Hellenistic Egypt.

² “Pimander” is English for the Greek Ποιμένας which literally means “the Shepherd of Men”. The Gabler-text refers three times to this Hermetic tract: “AE, pimander, good shepherd of men” (*U*, 3.227-28); “Occult pimander of Hermes Trismegistos.” (*U*, 15.2269); the close proxim-

Hermetic Genesis essentially consists of one archetypal act: the creative 'ensoulment' of Matter (traditionally feminized) by the divine Father-Mind. Both Father-Mind and female Matter exist *apriori*; both poles of this primordial opposition remain un-actualized and within the realm of mere possibility as long as creation, i.e. the 'blending' and unification of both, has not taken place. Creative potential awaiting actualization slumbers in both: the Father-Mind can only grasp his own nature as Demiurge by actively performing the act of creation. The female Matter on the other hand can only access her spiritual element, her own divinity and essential imperishability after having been created by the Father-Mind, in the sense of having been permeated and ordered by the divine spirit. Anticipating the most alchemical of acts, amalgamation with Matter presupposes separation of the Father-Mind; his unified Self splits into three hypostases: 'Logos', 'Demiurge' and 'Archetypal' or 'Heavenly Man'³, each fulfilling the task of uniting with Matter in different macro- and microcosmic dimensions (the Logos in the pre-cosmic (CH I, 1-9), the Demiurge in the macrocosmic-planetary (CH I, 9-12), the Heavenly Man in the microcosmic-mundane realm (CH I, 12-16)).

Two concepts that will prove important for the later discussion are latent here: the doctrine of consubstantiality of God-Father and God-Son and the (not exclusively, but characteristically) Hermetic concept of the 'Unity in Multiplicity': the three hypostases that, when contextualized christologically, function as 'the Sons', the filial aspects of the Father, are only phenomenologically autonomous entities; they are in reality consubstantial aspects of the Father-Mind. Accordingly, the different phases of creation, each presided over by one hypostasis, only seemingly proceed in linear succession within the structural phenomenology of the text; they too form an underlying unity and are recapitulations of one and the same archetypal instant of creation which simultaneously takes place in different ontological dimensions. Thus creation, far from obeying linear teleology, is a cyclical process, both phenomenologically multiple and archetypically unified.

ity of all those references to George Russell (A.E.) may signal a particular importance for "Scylla and Charybdis" that features him as one of its protagonists (he does arguably appear a little bit more occultly in Circe where he comes in the shape of Irish god of the sea Mananaan MacLir.

³ The original Greek terms are: Nous, Demiurgos and Anthropos; literally meaning 'Man' in Greek, it does have the meaning of 'Archetypal' or 'Heavenly Man' in the arcane sciences. For continuity's sake I will be using 'Heavenly Man' since Stephen refers to this term in "Scylla and Charybdis" (U, 9.61-62); Gifford and Seidman trace the term back to Powis Houl's *Dictionary of Some Theosophical Terms*, where he mingles Hermetic, Kabbalistic and Christian terminology: "Heavenly man [is] an appellation ... in the Hermetic Schools for the Adam Kadmon; the Son, the Third Person of the Trinity in the Secret Doctrine."

Another specifically arcane understanding of God's nature – one that will prove essential for the discussion of both Stephen's theory and Joyce's aesthetics – elucidates the fact that to create Hermetically means to reconcile the oppositions of interiority and exteriority, potentiality and actuality, the spiritual and the material: while Matter, the material cosmos, mundane nature etc. are female, the allegedly masculine counterpart – Father-Mind, Logos, Demiurge and the Heavenly Man – are androgynous. To unite with female Matter, that is, beyond material Space, thus means to become one with an 'Other' that has already and always been part of the interior Self. Creation in the Without thus becomes an act of externalizing that which has already been united and reconciled in the Within.

Such convergence of oppositional dimensions results in Hermetic Immanentism, the condition of the divine authority being immanently present within everything Material. The consequence is the inseparability of the oppositions of spirit and matter, within (divine spirituality) and without (the material cosmos). As all divine manifestations (Father-Mind, Logos, Demiurge, Heavenly Man) are immanently permeating every aspect of material and mundane creation, so too the female element of the material 'Outside' is an internal component within the androgynous creator's universal personality.

Divisions between unity and multiplicity have already been blurred since one Father-Mind and three hypostases are consubstantially one; during the process of Hermetic creation, in which the hypostases ease themselves into Matter to amalgamate and immanently permeate it, the unity that has been a sole privilege of the Godhead and the multiplicity of forms in the material and mundane world coincide. Equally the Father-Son-dichotomy of Christian doctrine is pried open by the concept of Hermetic Immanentism: while the hypostases have been analogised with the consubstantial filial offspring of the Father-Mind, those hypostases have themselves entered into a consubstantial engagement with the material world: the Hermetic 'Son'-aspect is therefore expanded not merely to accommodate a divine individual, but the entirety of the created material world.

As a first step towards a Hermetic reading of "Scylla and Charybdis", I will start from the end, the last paragraphs of Stephen's argument and then move backwards to its beginning during the later analysis. It is between the lines of his last spoken words (U, 9.997-1052) that Stephen arrives at a very Hermetic state of reconciled opposition.

The Hermetic divine creation is essentially an externalizing act whereby the interior potentiality of the Creator is actualized in the outside world by his spirit unifying with the material cosmos. This understanding lies at

the core of Stephen's argumentative finale (in the diagrammatical depiction of the retrospective reading that begins on the right hand side, those paragraphs are tagged *Conclusion 1* and *Conclusion 2*, see Appendix). Aesthetically he depicts his own version of artistic amalgamation of spiritual interiority and empirical exteriority, creative potential and outward actualization: Shakespeare, worldly paradigm of the artist-archetype, "found in the world without as actual what was in his world within as possible." (*U*, 9.1041-42) Hermetic Immanentism, the completed artefact of accomplished creation, makes Godhead and Matter one; every elemental particle of Nature is immanently charged with the immortalizing spirit of the Divine. Consequently, the myriad life forms within the phenomenological realm, multiple, seemingly distinct and antithetical, are encircled by the Creator's spiritual presence and contained within his personality. Stephen's take on the artistic and all-too-human (he is speaking of 'our') personality works accordingly: "We walk through ourselves, meeting robbers, ghosts, giants, old men, young men, wives, widows, brothers-in-love, but always meeting ourselves." (*U*, 9.1044-46) The texture of the Creator's world is inhabited by an antagonistic and contradictory multitude of personages, identities and underlying psychological currents; he manifests as "the lover of an ideal or a perversion" (*U*, 9.1022), the one who "acts and is acted on" (*U*, 9.1021-22); "the hornmad Iago" is the external materialization of Shakespeare "ceaselessly willing that the Moor *in him* shall suffer" (*U*, 9.1023-24; my emphasis); "all in all" (*U*, 1018-19), the artist is, like the Hermetic Godhead who immanently fills his material creation, "in infinite variety everywhere in the world he has created" (*U*, 9.1012-13). His phenomenological identities comprise "ostler and butcher ... bawd and cuckold" (*U*, 9.1030), but Stephen's argument moves beyond the visible plane of materialized contradiction to "the economy of heaven" (*U*, 9.1051), approaching the "glorified man" and the gender of Hermetic divine creativity in the shape of "an androgynous angel, being a wife unto himself." (*U*, 9.1052)

Stephen's final argumentative movement is regressive as well as ascending: he starts his conclusion with Shakespeare's very empirical return, well documented with biographical reference: the bard "returns after a life of absence to that spot of earth where he was born" (*U*, 1030-31), Stratford-upon-Avon. However, his returning journey goes far beyond Stratford, his destination is a metaphysical psychological state of unity and reconciliation. Not only does this parallel movement of earthly and heavenly return echo the most popular of Hermetic axioms, the correspondence of 'Above' and

'Below'; more generally Stephen performs the spiritual and psychological goal after which all arcane doctrines aspire: the regressive return of the soul to the original state of primordial unity.⁴

Adopting this moment of 'return' to archetypal origin I will propose a retrospective, 'backward' reading (pun surely not intended) of "Scylla and Charybdis". The sovereignty of the reconciliatory spirit that permeates the final paragraph of Stephen's argument may come as a surprise; it does conclude an argument which was riddled with ambivalence and self-contradiction, where any instance of harmony proved ephemeral and heralded another onset of psychological sundering and separation. What Stephen has traumatically 'fallen' from is the Female and, Hermetically and mythically extended, the material, ephemeral, corporeal mode of being. The reason of course is his mother's death and his "agenbite of inwit" (*U*, 9.809) it enkindled within him. The most appropriate psychological state for an godlike artist, demiurgic androgyny, has been disrupted and must be reclaimed by Stephen. His argument, cloaked in Shakespearean biography and aesthetics, is a psychological journey back to an artistically and demiurgically archetypal state of reconciled opposition. Similarly to the Hermetic account of the Godhead's creative intermingling with Matter, Stephen's journey doesn't obey teleological linearity. Reading backwards will hopefully prove that instead of a linear progression, Stephen's argument vacillates between contradictory dispositions, and structurally re-cycles themes and motives; his re-adaptation is constantly interspersed with the element of transformation and re-shaping: it is a permanent retrospective re-arrangement of basic themes and motives. In the spirit of Hermetic cosmogony, where creational completion and archetypal origin, sundering and reconciliation, multiplicity and unity, never end to coincide in the spiritual interior of the creator, reading Stephen's theory both retrospectively and cyclically will reveal that all stages of his argument, even the ones that seemingly express bitter sundering, are subtly flavored with that

⁴ For a thorough discussion of that occult concept cf. Enrico Terrinoni's pioneer study on Joyce and the occult tradition, *Occult Joyce: The Hidden in Ulysses*. (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007), 33-37; for the analogous mythical concept of the *regressus ad uterum* cf. Mircea Eliade, *Myth and Reality*. (trans. Willard R. Trask, New York: Harper & Row, 1963): Eliade describes the mythical *regressus ad uterum* as "the return to the origin, [which] prepares a new birth, but the new birth is not a repetition of the first, physical birth. There is properly speaking a mystical rebirth, spiritual in nature" (81). A theoretical concept which does not only suit Stephen's spiritual return to demiurgic androgyny, but more properly Bloom's symbolic return to the womb at the end of his day in "Ithaca", where he metamorphosizes into "the childman weary, the manchild in the womb." (*U*, 17.2317-18)

taste of reconciliation that Stephen appears to cook up almost *ex nihilo* in the final paragraph of his argument. (The attached diagram depicts the cross-connections that bind distinct passages together, see *Appendix*)

Stephen and the “Pimander”, more specifically the Heavenly Man’s demiurgic undertaking (*CH I*, 12-16), share two crucial symbols of reconciliation, the ‘Shadow’ and the ‘Image’. Re-enacting the vital process of separation as pre-stage to unification, the Heavenly Man, who approaches material nature for the sake of creation, finds his identity separated into the duality of his image (reflected in the waters) and shadow (cast upon the earth) (*CH I*, 14). Having entered into the material world below, both image and shadow anticipate the dawning unity of the androgynous Heavenly Man and female Nature, yet spiritless and therefore dark, chaotic and ruled by processes of decay and transience. The final unity is achieved by the Heavenly Man’s voluntary descent into the realm of Matter; the divine imperative of creation and self-actualization in the mundane world is thereby fulfilled. Actualization of intrinsic potential and Self-completion work reciprocally: attributes of the material world, such as discontinuity, flux and mortality have now been enveloped by the Heavenly Man’s spirit and rendered inert; in turn, Nature, now an ‘ensouled’ organism, has a share in the divine potencies of immortality and constant regeneration. This Hermetic account frees the ‘fall’ into materiality from the Biblical stigma of ‘original sin’ by making it essential for God’s self-understanding as creating authority. Additionally, the Heavenly Man’s descent introduces for the first time the emotive element into the equation: the love for his image on the face of the earth prompts the Heavenly Man to fall into creation (*CH I*, 14; the descent into Nature is portrayed as two lovers uniting, anticipating the alchemical sacred marriage). Two instances illustrate the characteristic crux of Hermetic creation, i.e. the fact that God creates by externally uniting with something Antithetical that has been part of his interior Self all along. As hermaphrodite, the Heavenly Man’s creative unification with female Nature is the act of becoming One in the Without with what has *apriori* been part of his spiritual Self Within; the concepts of ‘image’ and ‘shadow’ convey the same meaning: what the Heavenly Man unites with in the substantially Other is a double projection of his own interior Self.

Stephen’s argument is itself a double projection, being both an aesthetic theory and a quasi-psychoanalytical self-reflection that uses Shakespeare’s work and biography to serve his own ends. What Stephen aims at with his argument, read as a self-reflexive meditation, is to psychologically reunite with everything the ‘Female’ signifies for him (personally his

mother and her death; theoretically and conceptually the entire corporeal and material aspect of the human condition). Demiurgic identity, for both Stephen and Joyce, necessarily entails an androgynous personality. What Shakespeare accomplishes in that “economy of heaven”, where the Hermetic Heavenly Man also resides, is what Stephen must re-establish within himself, in order to actualize an interiorly slumbering potential that will enable him to create. The creative descent of the Heavenly Man into nature with the medial assistance of ‘image’ and ‘shadow’ points a way back for Stephen to rid himself of his “remorse of conscience” (*U*, 9.809-10), to rehabilitate the Female and Material from the stigma of ephemerality and decay and accomplish psychological androgyny. It is only then that Stephen can have a try at a demiurgic descent into Matter that may ultimately lead to his possible world within materializing in an actual (written) world without.

The ‘shadow’-motive signifies both antagonism and reconciliation (a result of Joyce’s programmatic, idiosyncratic pluralization of symbolic meaning). Reading backwards connects two passages that illuminate those conflicting but complementary aspects of the ‘shadow’: the later passage (*Shadow 1* in the diagram) associates the shadow with Shakespeare’s traumatic experience of being cuckolded by his wife Anne Hathaway, whose adultery is linked to the Biblical fall: “But it was the original sin that darkened his understanding, weakened his will and left in him a strong inclination to evil.” (*U*, 9.1006-7) The origin of the artist’s paralyzing stigma is therefore located in Stratford, which, as a geographical symbol, serves the Scyllan and Aristotelian authority; it stands for the hard facts of the mundane biographical life of the artist. Accordingly, London (the geographical opposition to Stratford in the schemata) is the symbolic district of Charybdean and Platonic spirituality, imagination, the artistic transformation of personal experience in the act of creation.⁵ This transforming process is depicted in an earlier passage (*Shadow 2*); a subtle hint at this earlier passage is scattered among the later *Shadow 1*-paragraph, thus connecting the two: Stephen records how “the note of banishment”, Shakespeare’s traumatic confrontation with adultery,

⁵ I have here adapted Robert Kellogg’s understanding of Stratford and London: “Stratford and London stand in Stephen’s imagination for ideas that can be at times paraphrased rather neatly as ‘the facts of life’ and ‘the fictions of the imagination’.” He understands Shakespeare’s experiences in London as “a recapitulation of the Stratford cycle of seduction, impotence and betrayal ... a spiritual and psychological experience of ‘real life’.” (“Scylla and Charybdis”, in *James Joyce’s Ulysses*. Eds. Clive Hart and David Hayman. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974, 170)

“doubles itself in the middle of his life, reflects itself in another, repeats itself, protasis, epitasis, catastasis, catastrophe” (*U*, 9.1002-4). This repetition of experience Stephen garnishes with dramatic critical terms; he thereby hints at two things. Firstly, the repetition is essentially an artistic and aesthetic re-enactment. Shakespeare imaginatively adapts and transforms the material that personal experience provides him. Secondly, the doubling and reflecting of this overshadowing experience is an internal, psychological one. Reading “another”, the objective canvas of the reflection, abstractly as “an Other”, the Antithetical opposing the Self, we may approach the earlier passage (*Shadow 2*) for a Hermetic contextualization:

The dark lady of the Sonnets reflects within the artist’s work the image of reality’s adulteress, Anne Hathaway, and thus becomes “a darker shadow of the first” (*U*, 9.462-63). As part of the artist’s tenebrous interiority, the shadow is “darkening [Shakespeare’s] own understanding of himself.” (*U*, 9.462-64) Kicking off the process of transformation, the “two rages” – again, the affective undertow serves as the stage of the drama – “commingle in a whirlpool” (*U*, 9.464). (The reference to the Charybdean whirlpool identifies the upcoming passage as being both of Platonic and mystical origin as well as ‘commingling’, reconciliatory and unifying in nature). Anticipating Stephen’s final paragraph, where the artist “returned to that spot of earth where he was born” (*U*, 9.1030-31) only to progress into the “economy of heaven” (*U*, 9.1051) and creative androgyny, the artist here “goes back” in order to “[pass] into eternity” (*U*, 9.474-77); this parallelism implies that a similar instant of reconciliation is at hand; in this case, it is the interior unification of the Artist-Self and his ‘shadow’. For Shakespeare, the ‘shadow’ conglomerates the paralyzing experience of being the victim of an older, sexually more experienced and (most importantly) adulterous wife. Psychologically internalizing this trauma into his Self-understanding, Shakespeare becomes both “Ravisher and ravished”, culprit and victim (*U*, 9.472). Thus transforming “loss” into “gain” (*U*, 9.476), the shadow is internally reconciled in what has been completed to form the artist’s “undiminished personality” (*U*, 9.477), since “*he* is a ghost, a shadow now” (*U*, 9.478-79; my emphasis). The artist’s completed personality works synonymously with the artist’s ability to create Hermetically, i.e. to become an immanent presence within the materiality of his work, be heard as “the sea’s voice” (*U*, 9.479), and thus having been ‘upgraded’ from the created Filial to the creative Paternal, to “him who is the substance of his own shadow, the son consubstantial with the Father.” (*U*, 9.480-81)

For both Stephen and Hermeticism, the consubstantial fusion with his own shadow initiates the artist and Heavenly Man into the sacred circle

of divine creatorship, a degree that culminates in an immanent bond between Creator and creation. Keeping in mind that the shadow is feminized throughout Stephen's argument, the amalgamation with it in this self-completing instant foreshadows, as early as half-way through the theory, his argumentative finale and the "androgynous angel" the artist's undiminished personality ultimately becomes.

The 'image' works accordingly to reconcile the ephemeral discontinuity of the outside material world with the imperishability of the creator's interior spirituality. It is the cathartic and complementary antithesis to the traumatic context of the shadow and is biographically identified by Stephen as the birth of Shakespeare's granddaughter, introduced as the instant "when ... the shadow lifts" (*U*, 9.402; *Image 1* in the diagram) and the moment of regeneration, when something that "was lost is given back to him: his daughter's child" (*U*, 9.422). Hermetically, this material external image transfers into the artist's interior constitution to form a part of his psychological Self: "Will he not see reborn in her ... another image?" (*U*, 9.427-28; *Image 2*), Stephen asks rhetorically. In one of the critically more explosive passages of *Ulysses*, Stephen introduces with his self-affirmation, "Love, yes" (*U*, 9.429), the driving emotive force behind the imagistic reconciliation. This presents a curious similarity to the "Pimander", where love as the emotional urge for unification with the antithetical Other is first introduced in the Heavenly Man's descent and his fall into his own image reflected in the outer material world. Shakespeare actively reconciles with the female aspect in his psychological world within by loving his granddaughter in the material world without. However, further similarities between Heavenly Man and artist abound: the former's unification with his own image is a necessary pretext to a specific form of creation, i.e. the ordering and immortalizing of chaotic and ephemeral materiality in the spatially outward realm according to the laws of the divine spirit, residing in the Demiurge's spiritual interior; equally, Stephen's Shakespeare projects his image of the Self into the substantially Other to reconcile inner and outer realities of being with his spiritual image serving as ordering benchmark: "His own image to a man with that queer thing genius is the standard of all experience", both "material", the outer, and "moral", the inner realities of being. (*U*, 9.432-33; *Image 2*)

'Image'- and 'shadow'-passages complement each other; each represents one aspect of the twofold process of internally re-integrating the Antithetical and Other (see diagram). The *Conclusion 2*-passage with its paradigmatic depiction of the artistic synthesis of the spiritual "world within as possible" and the material "world without as actual" is already immanently present in those earlier passages, fanned out into multiple but complementary facets.

Another cluster of multiple ramifications of the 'image'-leitmotiv joins in to complete artistic reconciliation. Stephen approaches his mother's death by picking out an analogous stroke of fate in Shakespeare's life, the death of his son Hamnet. Paradigmatically for both Joycean and Hermetic mindset, the biographical, the material and mundane align with the metaphysical. The familiar opposition of perishable corporeality and imperishable spirit is enacted and reconciled once more.

Adapting a Russellian term, Stephen interrelates the artist with the mythical earth-mother Dana: "as we, or mother Dana, weave and unweave our bodies, so does the artist weave und unweave his image" (*U*, 9.377-78). With the later *Image 2*-passage in mind, the artist's self-identification with the Material, Transient and Female does not come as a particular surprise. Important here is the connection between the traditionally feminized qualities of corporeality and discontinuity on the one hand and the divine and spiritual potencies of transformation and regeneration on the other; transience and imperishability converge, and Stephen expresses this converging dichotomy in his opposition of "the image of the unliving son" and "the ghost of the unquiet father." (*U*, 9.380-81; *Image 3*) Three passages, two earlier and one later in the episode, branch out from here (*Image 4*, *Allfather* and *Image 5*):

The earlier *Image 4*-passage depicts the immortalizing transition from biographical material and personal experiences of death and mortality into the texture of accomplished creation. Shakespeare, having become "the ghost ... who has studied *Hamlet* all the years of his life" (*U*, 9.165-67), speaks within the play to Hamlet, his imaginative creation and as such "the son of his soul" (*U*, 9.171), through which the image of the unliving son, "the son of his body, Hamnet Shakespeare" (*U*, 9.172), looks forth. The corporeal son may have died; but the psychologically completed artist has internalized within that fading image of the world without. His creative faculty, that "intense instant of imagination" (*U*, 9.381; *Image 3*), turns the son of his body into the son of his soul and thus transforms the materially ephemeral into spiritual imperishable life: "Hamnet Shakespeare ... has died in Stratford that his namesake may life forever" (*U*, 9.172-73; *Image 4*). Hermetic mechanisms are again at work here: to self-actualize for the Heavenly Man means to unite with everything that his image, projected into the material landscape, signifies, i.e. the transient, perishable and mortal. To spiritually pervade the material and mundane means to infuse the unlasting corporeal with immortal spiritual life.

The image of the son that Shakespeare creatively immortalizes is still a singular and individual one in this passage; however, the artist's close prox-

imity to the divine Demiurge in Stephen's (and Joyce's) aesthetics serves to universalize both Son and Father in an explicitly arcane way, if disparate passages are connected accordingly; for in the later *Image 5*-passage, Shakespeare ceases to be "the father of his own son merely", and, having actualized as creator, therefore "being no more a son", becomes "the father of all his race" (*U*, 9.867-69). Consciously or by coincidence, Stephen here refers back to an earlier passage: among a plethora of arcane terms and concepts that pass through his mind, two terms are of special importance: "Allfather, the heavenly man" (*U*, 9.61-62; *Allfather*). Contextualized Hermetically, the artist casts off mere biographical subjectivity and expands into an all-embracing paternal authority. Equally, the 'Son' surrenders all individual particularity, turns from Word to World, and encompasses the entire creation, which the Creator immanently permeates. Within the personality of that "father of all his race", phenomenological multitudes are unified, but not abolished; his universal nature accords with the Hermetic Unity in Multiplicity: "Rutlandbaconsouthamptonshakespeare" (*U*, 9.866). The artist's personality as a unified conglomerate of antithetical identities, a point Stephen saves for his argumentative finale to address explicitly, is here already contained in embryonic form (thus connecting the passages *Allfather* and *Image 5* with *Conclusion 1*).

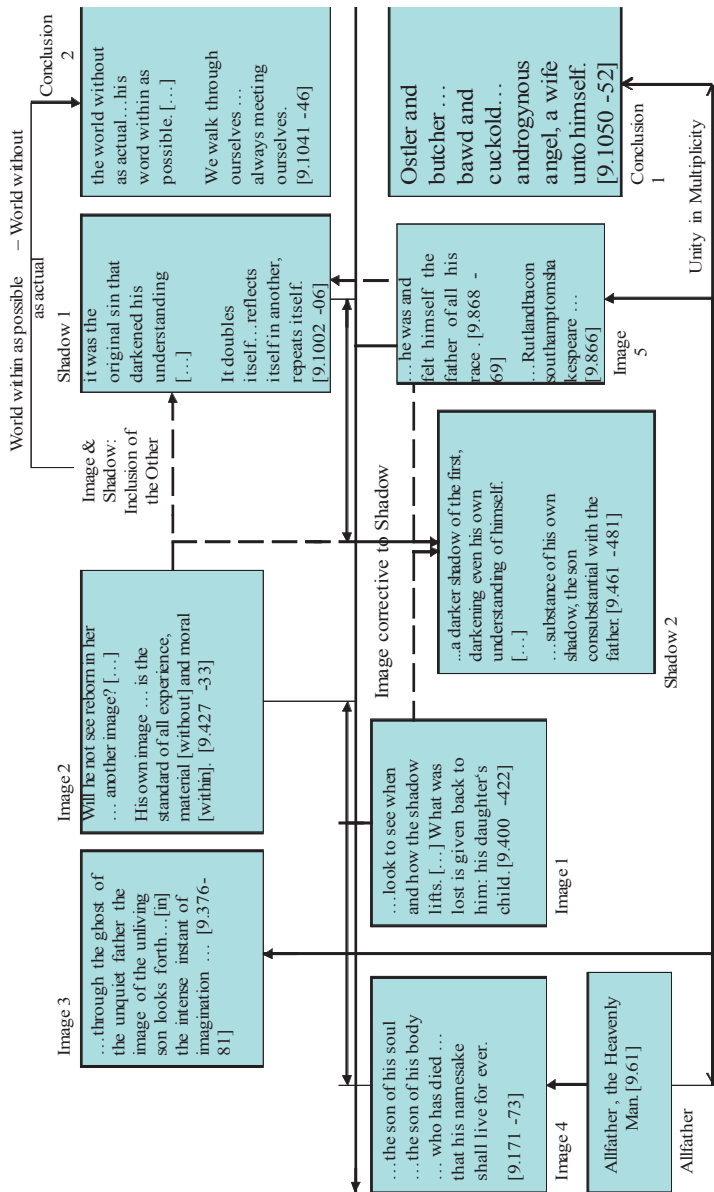
Stephen's documentation of Shakespeare's paternal development seems contradictory: he first declares Shakespeare the father of his bodily son, who is then imaginatively turned into the son of his soul, only to be completely abandoned in the presence of an allfatherly Creator who can call an entire race his offspring. A Hermetic context, however, provides his argumentative movements with structured cohesion: Stephen moves from the Particular to the Universal, taking one reconciliatory step at a time. To achieve demiurgic androgyny, with Heavenly Man as the final stage, Stephen must confront the personal and the bodily, his mother's death and his paralyzing guilt. He must internalize the mortality of the human condition those experiences signify before any actual creation can externalize on paper. 'Shadow' and 'Image' are two symbolic mediums that promise reconciliation and self-completion. Stephen is thus performing the Hermetic steps of the Heavenly Man's descending creation in reverse, but in Shakespearean order: internalization of the personally traumatic and empirically experienced is followed by imaginative transformation within the psyche of the artist; psychological self-completion is then the springboard to stop being 'merely' caught up in the particularity of biography and individuality and start uncovering universals in the actual act of creation and within one's own Self.

The analysis and schematization presented here is, like all hermeneutical activity, the superimposition of an artificial order upon the text. It

may have something in common in programmatic terms with Stephen's aesthetic theory which is itself an escapist artifact; Stephen circumnavigates a direct confrontation with personal trauma and psychological reality, maneuvering on theologocophilological grounds he feels safer and securer on. The question of whether or not Joyce read and used the "Pimander" or anything else of the *Corpus Hermeticum* during his composition of *Ulysses* is something a Genetic analysis is most likely to illuminate. However, his aesthetics show an early fascination with anything Mystical, Occult and Hermetic (the 'Portrait'-Essay and *Stephen Hero* are both saturated in arcane thought; as is *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, although through irony it successfully distorts any trace of idealistic earnestness). Apart from the natural fascination of a self-declared apostate with any doctrine that has been hallmarked by the stigma of heresy, it is the inclusive, contradictory and reconciliatory nature of all Hermetic thought that makes it one the most worthwhile occult sciences to approach from a Joycean perspective. Indeed, Joyce famously allowed the *modus operandi* of the Hermetic tradition, the 'coincidence of contraries', to enter into the sacrosanct territory of his personal beliefs: "I would not pay overmuch attention to these theories, beyond using them for all they are worth, but they have gradually forced themselves upon me through circumstances of my own life." (*LI*, 241) For a long time, critics have taken Joyce's wording "for all they are worth" to mean "for parodistic and ironic purposes" and not much more. Robert Newman, one of the happy few who has extensively discussed Joyce's indebtedness to Hermetic thought, has brilliantly captured this critical misconception by stating: "To accept unquestionably James Joyce's mockery of occult practices and of those associated with them in *Ulysses* is to be caught in yet another of the traps that this consummate trickster sets for his readers."⁶

⁶ Robert D. Newman, "Transformatio Coniunctionis: Alchemy in *Ulysses*." *Joyce's Ulysses: The Larger Perspective*. Eds. Robert D. Newman and Weldon Thornton. Newark: University of Delaware Press; London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1987, 168. The original Greek terms are: *Nous Demiurgos* and *Anthropos*; literally meaning 'Man' in Greek, it does have the meaning of 'Archetypal' or 'Heavenly Man' in the arcane sciences. For continuity's sake I will be using 'Heavenly Man' since Stephen refers to this term in "Scylla and Charybdis" (*U*, 9.61-62); Gifford and Seidman trace the term back to Powis Houlst's *Dictionary of Some Theosophical Terms*, where he mingles Hermetic, Kabbalistic and Christian terminology: "Heavenly man [is] an appellation ... in the Hermetic Schools for the Adam Kadmon; the Son, the Third Person of the Trinity in the Secret Doctrine." (quoted in Gifford and Seidman, *'Ulysses' Annotated: Notes For James Joyce's Ulysses*. Revised and expanded edition. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989)

Appendix: “Lean Unlovely English Turned Backward”: Reading “Scylla and Charybdis” Hermetically



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