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Publication Date

2026

Undergraduate

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES

“THE USYLESSLY UNREADABLE BLUE BOOK OF ECCLES: FROM MUSIC TO
LANGUAGE THROUGH JAMES JOYCE’S *ULYSSES*”

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF ARTS

BY

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20 MARCH 2026

ABSTRACT

“THE USYLESSLY UNREADABLE BLUE BOOK OF ECCLES: FROM MUSIC TO
LANGUAGE THROUGH JAMES JOYCE’S *ULYSSES*”

BY AYANA NIETO

In my reading of *Ulysses* by James Joyce, I argue that the language of the text is an inherently musical one. A novel lauded for its intricate and dense prose, *Ulysses* is a book about Leopold Bloom’s day on June 16, 1904 in the city of Dublin. From the first chapter, the language of the text is not merely literary but contains within it an innate musical essence that is almost at a remove from the printed word. The sonority of the text lays bare the delicate relationship between sound and meaning, language and song, speech and sight. *Ulysses* is itself a composition, a novel that can not only be read, but heard. The tensions between speech and sound are ones that Joyce does not aim to resolve or lessen, but use as he composes a novel that is told equally in prose and song. Between written and spoken language, Joyce’s compositional methods begin to develop an entirely original language.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My deepest thanks to Professor Louise Hornby for all of the advice, time, and conversation invested into the development of this piece, Professor Colleen Jaurretche for introducing and guiding me through the work of James Joyce, and meu Pai, for the *Goldberg Variations*.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Prelude: Wavewhite Wedded Words.....	4
I. What the Thunder Said.....	5
II. In the Beginning was the Word.....	16
III. Upon the Brink of an Abyss, the Melancholy Valley.....	24
IV. The Deep Wood's Woven Shade.....	40
Coda: A Little Night Music.....	50

Prelude: Wavewhite Wedded Words

J.S. Bach's *Goldberg Variations* are among the most recognizable compositions that utilize the form of 'theme and variation'. The opening aria introduces the main theme, beginning with an outline of chordal tones slowly climbing upward in the left hand, notes dancing around the central G in the right. Thirty variations of this theme follow, each subsequent episode preserving the underlying harmonic structure of the first aria as it transforms the theme over and over. Each subsequent variation draws further away from that initial theme, though the undercurrents of the aria are never gone. The variations navigate from "from swerve of shore to bend of bay" (*FW*, 3.1) the distance from the initial aria growing with each new portrayal. The series of variations end the instruction to play the "*Aria da Capo e Fine*" (Bach, 1741), a backward movement to the beginning from the last variation. The final expressive moment returns both listener and performer to where we began, the initial aria is played once more. The *Goldberg Variations* possess an infinite cyclicity, each performance of the piece is the articulation of a singular cycle, continuing long after the pianist arrives at the *fine*.

Ulysses, with each episode providing its own variations on the substructural theme of the *Odyssey*, is the Book of the Day, following Leopold Bloom in his domestic pilgrimage around the city of Dublin from 8:00 in the morning to 2:00 the following morning. Like Bach's variations return to the opening aria, Odysseus returns to Ithaca, and Leopold Bloom finds his way back home in the deep night of June 17, 1904. Like Bach, Joyce carefully crafts each variation to a particular end. My work will focus on Joyce's efforts toward establishing a language that is unique to the novel.

In *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, the protagonist Stephen Dedalus confronts a deep discomfort with the English language, stating, "I have not made or accepted its words"

(*Portrait*, 221). Part of Joyce's efforts in *Ulysses* seem concentrated in both making and accepting these words. The language of *Ulysses* is profoundly musical. From the first chapter, the language of the text is not merely literary but contains within it an innate musical essence that is almost at a remove from the printed word. The sonority of the text lays bare the delicate relationship between sound and meaning, language and song, speech and sight. *Ulysses* is itself a composition, a novel that can not only be read, but heard. The tensions between written language and sound provide a methodology in which Joyce can both "[make] and [accept]" (*Portrait*, 221). It is a tension that Joyce does not aim to resolve or lessen, but perform. Between written and spoken language, Joyce's compositional methods begin to develop an entirely original language.

Like every performance of the *Goldberg Variations* is one manifestation of a continuous cycle of sound and music, so is every reading of *Ulysses* an isolated staging, one performance closer to "that word known to all men" (3.435).

I. What the Thunder Said

The seventh episode of *Ulysses*, later named "Aeolus" in the Linati schema, is the first concrete visual example of Joyce's increasingly esoteric experimentation with the function of language within the novel and its narration. Through a satirical portrayal of the chaotic machinery, collaborative efforts, and weaving paths of our characters within the Dublin printing office for the *Freeman's Journal*, Joyce completely upends the structure of language that had been established during the previous six episodes. "Aeolus" is the first distinct point in *Ulysses* where the language of the novel visually changes and is a catalyzing point from which the language of the text will continue to change, evolve, and be renewed. The nature of the

headlines, which visually dominate the episode, has been extensively explored and commented on by numerous literary critics and scholars. Many conclusions trend toward the idea that the headlines are provided in the narratorial voice of what David Hayman considered to be the elusive, ever-present Arranger (Somer, 65), whose efforts in providing such subtitles are “arbitrary and capricious” (Lawrence, 389), but the possible understandings of these capitalized sections are extensive. Each headline, beginning with the well-known “IN THE HEART OF THE HIBERNIAN METROPOLIS”, situates the action taking place, imitating, mimicking, and poking fun at the protagonists and their aims. But aside from noting the tone in which these are presented, a structural significance seems to come to the forefront of the novel. Karen R. Lawrence notes that these headings appear to contribute to a system of classification previously absent from the novel. By the time we arrive at “Aeolus”, Joyce has clearly established the arrhythmic, aqueous ebb and flow of ‘stream of consciousness’ that has dominated the initial episodes of the novel. In “Aeolus,” the focus shifts toward the shaping of the linguistic fundamentals Joyce has established, whose origins he will later explain. The shaping of language, that is, the establishment of the form of language within the novel, occurs primarily through the methodology first named in “Hades”: retrospective arrangement, both physically and rhetorically. At this point in the novel, Joyce has moved beyond simply shaping language on the page. The act is no longer a solely visual one, whether the visual aspect is Bloom’s observations of the typesetter’s manual practice or the reader looking at words on a page. Rather than the phrases existing on the page as a dramatization of his prior efforts in previous episodes, Joyce is attempting to do something entirely original with language by focusing on the *sound* it produces. When looking at the capitalized phrases in the episode and their general effect on both the reader

and the narration, the focus is not only what they look like but what noise the words make on the page and how they can be heard.

The language of the novel is initially presented as a fairly straightforward narrative series of events and thoughts. The first major disruptions take place in “Proteus” as Joyce fully leans into the possibilities of untranslated and unsimplified inner monologue. This form of narration continues; we only switch characters, and though we don’t exit Bloom’s consciousness for the next several episodes, “Aeolus” presents a stark difference in narrative style and prosaic experimentation. The episode, which takes place in the busy rush of the Freeman Journal’s newsroom where Bloom works as an ad canvasser, is where Joyce begins to distinctly shape the language of *Ulysses* by experimenting not only with the narration and perspective, but with the structure of the text itself. The stream of consciousness has been settled on the back burner in favor of a new experimental technique, and now Joyce creates a new physical structure of language for the reader. The narrative continues throughout “Aeolus” but is interrupted and broken apart by each printed headline. While we still remain within the internal monologues of our protagonists, Bloom and Dedalus, their respective melodies are rather overtly overshadowed by the capitalized, cymbal strikes of each distinct header.

Though these lyric interruptions serve many ends, I will first focus on the immediate effect, the stark visual shock of the header. The attention of the reader is diverted away from the social slight Bloom has suffered at the end of “Hades” and toward the unexpected onslaught of capitalized sentences throughout the page. The emphasis shifts to the physical shapes on the page. As in “Nestor”, when Stephen is distracted by the movement of “symbols... in grave morrice” (2.155) and notes their physical shapes, the lines, the “caps of squares and cubes” (2.156), so is the reader distracted by this visual change. The actual addition of these headlines

was done retrospectively, after the first publication in the *Little Review*. Joyce performed this adjustment while writing the episodes, and the headlines were surely shaped with the rest of the novel's events in mind (Lawrence, 390). As the experimentation of the episodes following "Aeolus" had been completed, the need for a starting point for these increasingly exaggerated changes in form must have become evident in retrospect. Unlike the linguistic experimentations and developments of episodes such as "Scylla and Charybdis" or "Wandering Rocks" whose inventive practices are primarily found within the reading of the material itself, "Aeolus" achieves a distinctly visual success, paralleled only by *Circe* or *Ithaca*, though the former's visual uniqueness is only unique in the context of the novel and the latter's lacks the marked presence of capital letters, relying more heavily on the subtle and insistent question mark.

The first instance of physical shaping in "Aeolus" occurs between the reader and the physical aspects of the page itself, namely the onslaught of capitalized letters; the printing process that Bloom observes throughout the episode has taken place on the pages of the book itself and is how the visual effect occurs. Within the narrative, the practice of organizing letters into words as physical shapes becomes actualized. In this instance, I do not mean the role of the author who arranges letters, then words, then phrases to create meaning, but the literal formation of shape. By "AND IT WAS THE FEAST OF THE PASSOVER" (7.203), Stephen's dancing letters find themselves distributed and prepared for printing the news of June 16, 1904. As Bloom watches a typesetter arranging his letters in the frame to be printed, he notes that the job requires that the typesetter "[r]ead it backward first" (7.205). The work of the typesetter, quickly placing the letters into the machine in reverse order, is the most direct instance of the retrospective methodology being physicalized. The shaping of language (backwards) is now a physical practice, overseen and mastered by the crafty, knowing hands of the typesetter, who

Bloom watches as he aptly notes that the job “[m]ust require some practice”(7.205). Following the Bloomian train of logic as we move from the tactile back toward the visual, we arrive at his memory of his father's Haggadah book. As Hebrew is a language which is read from right to left, the focus here once again revolves around this culturally ‘backward’ practice (in a strictly directional sense). However, the importance of observing an act from either a temporal or cultural distance returns. Though the perspective here isn’t necessarily that of retrospect, the physical aspects of reading the Hebrew language are— Bloom recalls his father “reading backwards”(7.207) to him. Of course, this method of reading is only reversed from the Western perspective in which the literate individual reads from left to right but the orientation of the English letters (which are objectively backwards) connect us to the Hebrew reading practice (which is subjectively backwards). The directional reading conventions of the Hebrew language are paralleled in the physical placement of the letters into the typecase, from where the letters form printed language and words. The nature of retrospective arrangement is that it initially seems contradictory, just like the typesetter’s letters appear to be backwards. But like the letters, once printed, read, and reflected upon, all is in the correct order.

Whereas the retrospective organization of language becomes a physicalized practice through the typesetter’s hands and the physicalization of sound, it also serves a rhetorical purpose. The physical aspects of the text have a value of their own, but the physicality itself also contributes to the rhetorical shape Joyce gives the language. Rhetoric is listed in the Linati Schema as the art of the episode. As the episode takes place within the busy newsroom of the Freeman’s Journal, it becomes immediately apparent that the nature of collecting, reporting, and disseminating the news of the day will be the primary subject at hand. As aforementioned, the most immediate instance of parody is with the accented phrases, but Joyce also takes great pains

to focus on the substance of the writings themselves. The focus is not merely on the physical presence of the headers, though their visibility is quite ineluctable, but on their narrative contributions throughout the development of the episode. With rhetoric as the art of this episode, the meaning of the headline is also brought into question. While the generally accepted takeaway is that the capitalized sections of text are parodic representations of newspaper headlines, there are a few different interpretations that seem noteworthy. Stephen Donovan observes that a number of these headlines fail to perform the task of the newspaper headline, both in form and in function. Several headlines include unusual punctuation (“O, HARP EOLIAN!” (7.370)) , and most fail to accurately summarize the events of the following paragraph, which resumes the narration, often focusing on a tiny, random detail and amplifying it (“CLEVER, VERY” (7.673)). In these instances, as Donovan notes, if these sections are intended to parody the style of newspaper headlines, then it is worth noting that they “should be so untypical of actual newspaper headlines” (Donovan, 520). Representationally, the fragments of capitalized text could be demonstrative of any number of things: captions on a photo or work of art, scene titles in a film, or an “anonymous, collective discourse”(Lawrence, 394).

Understanding the headlines as the generalized perspective the reader is left with *after* reading the passage might further indicate a level of layering within Joyce’s own rhetoric in the episode. “EXIT BLOOM” (7.429), for example, might be immediately read as a stage direction in a play or, at this point in the episode, as an anticipation for what will follow in the subsequent paragraphs, but the effect of the title is not evident until after its corresponding section has been read. But in any case, these headlines, captions, or reactions serve to isolate each passage. The headlines are a demonstration of the impact that the form of language has on its function. The visual aspects, the capitalization, the space between each subcategory, the punctuation, the

imitation of a newspaper, all create visual interruptions— small lexical fences around each separate moment. Because of the visual presentation of the headline, we understand each small passage to carry its own minutiae. This response mimics the relationship between a public audience and a newspaper insofar as the effect on a general audience of a text such as the newspaper (or a novel) creates a judgement or impression that is reflected back on the work after it is read. This effect takes place immediately after reading the paired headline and section, which changes the reader's perception of the headline, it takes place at the end of the episode, which has altered the reader's overall perception of the new form, and it must face yet another shift at the end of the novel. The judgement of the reader, both of the *Freeman Journal* in 1904 Dublin and of *Ulysses* itself, is constantly being reflected back on the work after it is read.

The physical and rhetorical aspects of this episode's structure don't exist separately. Neither can fully exist independently from the other, just as the rhetorical strategies the newsmakers choose to employ will shape public perceptions. Joyce uses chiasmus to describe the "GENTLEMEN OF THE PRESS" (7.20) as "grossbooted draymen... on the brewery float. On the brewery float... grossbooted draymen"(7.21-23). As the attention shifts toward the visual change within the sentence, Lawrence notes that "chiasmus shifts...attention from the meaning of a sentence to its shape on the page"(Lawrence, 397), explaining that the physical aspects of this text are alterable— the print can be changed. In the geographical context of the newsroom, what is printed does change every day, but the events it describes can only exist within that singular moment in time. The meanings or interpretations of the headlines throughout the episode function similarly— That which it is imitating can only happen once, but the perception of the headline itself is constantly changing. Rather than strictly focusing on the 'live' image that the sentences depict, the attention of the reader is drawn towards the shapes of the words

themselves, recognizing these words and the physical shapes they make. The individual components of letters, spaces, and lines that form them also impact how these lines are read and understood. A similar concept is demonstrated in one of Bloom's many imaginative digressions in the newsroom shortly following his observation of the typesetter's backwards organization when he thinks, "The angel of death kills the butcher and he kills the ox and the dog kills the cat... Justice it means but it's everybody eating everyone else"(7.212-214). Stephen, at the end of "Proteus", undergoes a very similar thought process. As he prepares to leave the beach and his aesthetic ruminations come to a close (at least for us), he thinks "God becomes man becomes fish becomes barnacle good becomes featherbed mountain" (3.477-478). Both trains of thought present a series of items one after the other in a rapid succession, and both imply some kind of transformation in between each. Bloom's rumination is much more grounded than Stephen's. Bloom's focus is on death and the pointlessness of continued cycles of violence; his list appears to present a hierarchy based on power or strength, which begins with "the angel of death" and ends with "the cat". Stephen's, however, is less of a decreasing hierarchy and presents a more cyclical pattern. His verb, "becomes", suggests something equally transformational but presents a series of shifts rather than demotions. The parallel imaginations of Bloom and Stephen once again approach but don't intersect, demonstrating that the shape of language extends beyond similar physical structures and patterns but depends on *who* is thinking.

However, a crucial point of understanding remains somewhat obfuscated. As Lawrence and Donovan have suggested, it is difficult to decisively sort these phrases into distinct visual categories. They do not act or look like newspaper headlines, they often fail to succinctly describe (even satirically) the action that takes place when the narrative resumes, the inconsistent tone and punctuation of each distinct phrase is not aligned with the typical visual structure of a

newspaper headline, and even when we attempt to understand them as rhetorical responses or impressions an audience might walk away from a newspaper with, there are a good number of headlines that fail to suggest any kind of response. It seems then that, visually speaking, there is no definite category through which these phrases can be understood or even sorted. Considering that Joyce's aims in shaping language are foregrounded amidst an attempt to create a work that is truly original and that he is heavily concerned with the effects and the nature of that which is visible to the observer, it follows that the headlines are primarily visual. However, language is not only read and *Ulysses* cuts no corners in exploring the number of ways in which we interact with and use language, and audible language is no exception.

In "Aeolus," Joyce moves away from the visual anchors provided in prior episodes, like "Proteus". In the third episode, walking blindly down Sandymount Strand, Stephen's own thoughts are communicated through visual language— the focus is etymological, there is a crucial attention given to the spelling of sound or the shape of a word that describes a sound. He describes the noise of the sea, "seesoo, hrss, rsseiiss, ooos" (3.457), the lingering "s" sound blending the other sounds together, stringing them along. In this instance, the sounds on the page are onomatopoeic; Joyce, through Stephen, is attempting to directly translate the sounds he is hearing into a visual method of understanding. The noise of the waves becomes visualized through letters in the most literal way possible. In "Proteus," Stephen's thought process is anchored through sight or a lack thereof, but the manner in which we read the episode is completely dependent on the attention to the spelling of words on the page. Even the inventive, original words aim to produce a visual effect; The "shellcocoacoloured" (3.327) seashells littering the beach carry a description meant to evoke a visual image of the item being described. The gravity of the episode circles around Aristotle's theories of sight, the supposedly

“ineluctable modality of the visible”, to Stephen, the set of aesthetic theories around that which can be seen. And though “Aeolus” has some preoccupation with the implications of sight, its focus quickly and subtly becomes the world of sound. Since we have established that the title of ‘headline’ does not neatly suit these sporadic, sudden moments of unexpected capitalization, I offer the term “accented phrase”. An accent, musically speaking, serves to denote a moment of sonorous distinction in the same way that the capitalization and spacing of each phrase makes it stand out amidst the ongoing narrative, and as each phrase presents an interruption that aspires toward an aural happening, these ‘headlines’ become accented phrases.

Giambattista Vico suggests that it is the terrible thunderstrike, reverberating through the Earth,
 “bababadalgharaghtakamminarronkonnbronntqnnerronnntuonnthunntrovarrhounawnskawntoohooordenenthurnuk!” (*Finnegans Wake*, 3.1), that inspires the first primitive thinkers into creating language, understanding the thunder as a cry from the heavens that had to be understood. Like Vico’s thunder, and the later actualized thunder which will rouse Molly Bloom from her sleep, these accented phrases, echoing the deep rumble of the timpanum from the back corner of the orchestral stage, create moments of audible disruption around which the language of the episode is shaped. Though I have established how *distinct* the style of the episode is, the experimental nature of the novel is already made abundantly clear within the first few episodes. In truth, by the time we’ve reached “Aeolus,” it is clear that the language of the novel will not be that of traditional literary practices.

In Viconian fashion, Joyce seems to begin to suggest sound as the originating point of the language in “Aeolus”. The multitudinous minute musicalities of the printing press, clicking and clacking nonstop, are the processes by which the rhetoric of the newspaper is created; sound is

critical to the existence of language and thus crucial to the manner in which it becomes organized or categorized. If we understand the headline to be partially representative of a generalized public reaction, a “collective discourse” (Lawrence, 394), as Lawrence puts it, then the musicality of these accented phrases can be considered similarly. If the flowing narration, which is constantly moving and changing from both perspective and form, is like a melodic line of music, then the nature of these accented phrases carries within them the same qualities as the percussive elements of an orchestra– the thunderous bass drum or the sudden crash of cymbals. Their immediacy and non-conformity with the rest of the narrative flow has the same aural effect when read as that of cymbals; standing out against the narration in a sudden hit of sound. The nature of musical percussive practices themselves are distinctly physical– quick, strong crashes of a mallet against the tightened head of the bass drum, or the sound of one heavy bronze cymbal dashing down against the rim of the other; these are the instruments that require the most dramatic action. These accented phrases seem to echo Vico’s strain of primitivist thinking, in shape and in sound. If we follow the line of thinking that these accents are not intended to evoke an imitative parody of newspaper headlines but meant to imitate and physicalize the sound of cymbals crashing or drums rolling, then aurally, there is much in common with the Viconian thunder that resulted in the creation of language. As Vico puts it, “Jupiter, the first god of the so-called greater clans, was trying to speak to them through the... crashing of his thunder” (Vico, 146). Thunder, in Vico’s description, is a distinctly communicative practice. He explains that this thunder can only be understood by the primitive people who first bore witness to its magnanimity and force. Though Vico describes these peoples as presenting a complete lack of rational thought, he suggests that they instead turned to their wondrous and unlimited imaginations, which were grounded in the sensory experiences of the body and that these

sensations, feelings, and experiences could only understand the thunder as God's attempt at communication. In our current times, in the period Vico would describe as the "age of men" (Vico, 22), rationality prevents an understanding of this physically based system of belief. In many ways, this current age of man can no longer understand the physicality of primitive thought processes— we have lost the connection to the corporeal substance of reality in our preoccupation with the intellectual, the rational, the mind. Joyce is keenly aware of this educational and historical gap, the gap of understanding between the civilizations which could understand Jove and civilization now. The modes of communication and language have shifted a long way from the peoples who "believed that Jupiter commanded by signs, that these signs were *physical* words" (Vico, 147; emphasis mine), but these accented phrases do just that. It is the historical moment in which Joyce returns to the primitiveness of physical sound, an originating point of language, and invokes Vico's theory onto the page in and throughout the entirety of "Aeolus", the roar of thunder echoing behind each accented phrase.

II. In the Beginning was the Word

The birth of the language of *Ulysses* is delayed until the fourteenth episode, "Oxen of the Sun". The shape of language takes chronological precedence over its birth; the artifice comes before the moment of creation or nascence. Through a series of thirty-two parodies, Joyce imitates, replicates, and satirizes the many linguistic styles of the English language, demonstrating its historical development over the course of many centuries until he finally arrives at the modern, disorienting speech of Dublin drunks. Each different style is intended to showcase the linguistic specificities of different time periods, beginning with the four beat rhythmic structure of Aelfric and the earliest Anglo-saxon poets, "Before born babe bliss had" (14.60). The task of the episode is not only to replicate, but to demonstrate a clear lineage or

heredity from one form to another. By aggrandizing the written quirks and intricacies of English Past the text evolves past merely producing a comedic effect. But the imitative style of “Oxen of the Sun” is not strictly that of parody. As Susan Bazargan observes, when passages from the episode are compared to their supposed original sources, such as *Everyman* or the psalms of *Job*, the effect produced is not one of ridicule or hilarity, but the transformation of a pre-existing text into the narrative and situational context of the novel. Joyce is expanding upon an existing *vera narratio*—Vico’s concept of a true narration, an archetypal story or myth that is fundamentally the same but whose manner of articulation and communication has been subject to change. The narrative methodology shifts to an invocation of previous texts that must take their imitative techniques to the most extreme measure so as to be recognized as a summoning of historic precedent. Because of this, there is a sort of undeniable hilarity— for any of these imitations to be recognized as such, and for the original text they are imitating to be obvious, the extremity by which they are replicated is so exaggerated that the essence of parody remains. Simultaneously, by using this technique which so clearly establishes the linearity and traceable genealogy of language, the structure of “Oxen” becomes gestational, the movement of language through time runs parallel to the development of the embryo within “woman’s womb” (14.292) to a point of nascent maturity, creating “the rebirth of something new at the moment of repetition”(Bazargan, 272).

“Deshil Holles Eamus,” the episode begins, repeated thrice. Beginning with the Gaelic of Ireland, “great sweet mother” (1.80), the native language of the land the maternity ward is in, “[d]eshil” serves as a locative, meaning “clockwise, sunwise” (Gifford, 408). At 10:00 P.M., Bloom finds himself in the maternity ward awaiting news on the state of Mina Purefoy, who has been struggling through labor for three entire days. The time of the novel is moving constantly

forward; it crawls through each hour of the day, landing us in “Oxen” and the next word of the phrase, “Holles”. Holles is the name of the maternity hospital, an English *name* rather than an English word. And the final word, the Latin verb “Eamus”, meaning “we go”. Translated into simple English, we get something along the lines of “sunwise toward Holles Street Maternity Hospital we go”. Yet this phrase, in its multilingual construction and repetition, stands out beyond a simple description of the movement of the medical students toward a room in this hospital. In this instance of linguistic pre-nativity, before Joyce has fully initiated his exploration into the history of the English language and before Mina Purefoy’s labor ends, the repetition suggests something ritualistic or incantatory. Each of the languages present indicate a time before the establishment of the English language, that is to say, Gaelic was the language of the Irish prior to the British colonization of the island and the language which commences this ritual of fecundity. The English within the phrase is limited to a name, the man after whom the maternity ward has been named, not meant to indicate a linguistic significance, but to name the place of action, perhaps representative of the imposition of “Anglophone names” (King, 354) onto an Irish scene. The Latin verb is the conclusive component. Latin, as a linguistic point of origin for the literary works of the Catholic Church, the mother of the Romance languages, and the substructure on which the English alphabet is based, is invoked in this three-word phrase before the exploration of English can begin. Like the retrogressive analysis which dominates “Aeolus”, the initial ritual of this episode is focused on a time before English, the Gaelic of pre-colonized Ireland, from which our characters find themselves so disconnected, the integration of English names onto Irish locations, and the maternal Latin which gives the phrase movement. This phrase and the subsequent paragraph foregrounds the moment of pre-nativity– “bright one, light one” (14.2) invokes the Sun as a source of fertility and links the Homeric precedent of the

episode, Helios, into the chant. Like the baby on which all the cast awaits, the primary narrative style of the episode is quickly approaching but has not arrived yet and the “quickenings” (14.2) language focused on “wombfruit” (14.2) which ends with the exclamation “Hoopsa boyaboy hoopsa!” (14.6) While the final phrase bears a significant aural and visual similarity to “hope it’s a boy”, and may indeed be anticipating such a hope which will be demonstrated by the medical students later, the repeated phrases, compounded words, and combination of languages creates the effect of something ritualistic, perhaps a series of prayers uttered either by or for Mrs. Purefoy. In this initial paragraph, Joyce performs a ritual that will invoke various forms of the English language forward from history and situates the historical structure of the episode against this embryonic maturation of language.

As linguistic history and birth run alongside one another throughout the episode, the uterus, the symbol listed in the Linati Schema, belongs to Mina Purefoy— though it is important to note that her experience is communicated to the drunken brigade, we never hear from Mrs. Purefoy directly, only of her. The episode is driven by the news of her labor, three days of intense pain that seem to be nearing the end, which has reached Bloom, who, entering the maternity ward in hopes of hearing about the delivery of her child, finds a group made up of medical students and Dubliners, including Stephen Dedalus and Buck Mulligan. The absence of Mina Purefoy from an episode that revolves around the experience of her birth is emphasized by the medical workers around her, who “begged [the group]... to leave their wassailing for there was above one quick with child” (14.168), the majority of the attention, aside from Bloom’s (who “was minded of his good lady Marion” (14.266), remains diverted until the announcement that “she had given birth to a bouncing boy” (14.823), after which “the delegation...[breaks] out at

once into a strife of tongues” (14.953). The focus of the group of men can only be recaptured at the announcement that Mina Purefoy has birthed an heir.

If we redirect our own attention away from the baby and toward the mother, we find that she, too, has a place of marked distinction amidst the extensive histories and archetypal roles that have been shaping the episode. Mina Purefoy’s role as the laboring mother falls in line with an ancient and extensive genealogy dating back many literary millennia to the first mother, Eve “our grandam” (14.298), then Mary, “our mighty mother” (14.296), and she is far from the first maternal figure within the narrative itself. The very first episode, heavily coloured by Stephen’s grief at the loss of his own mother, focuses outward onto the Irish Sea, the symbol of the nation’s “great sweet mother” (1.80). From the first episode, there is a strong conflation between the individual role of a mother toward a child and the broader, conceptual role of a mother to a culture or a people. The idea of a ‘mother tongue’ or language, or a lack thereof, is present within “Telemachus” in the figure of the milkwoman who laments that she cannot speak Irish— a regret that can only be amplified by Haines’ performance of the language. The fertility of language that is so exaggeratedly demonstrated in “Oxen” with all of its variations and parodies and imitations and rituals is markedly absent in the previous episodes. While the Irish Sea, a mother in and of itself, does not immediately conjure images of sterility and stasis, the memory it gives way to, of Stephen’s dying mother “crying in her wretched bed” (1.252), is surely antithetical to the experience of Mina Purefoy who has successfully given birth to her son, though she too spends a good deal of the episode miserable and in bed.

In a similar vein of infertile association, Bloom, who has come across a Zionist poster advertising the sale of land in Palestine in “Calypso”, considers the absence of any tenable opportunity or life in “the grey sunken cunt of the world” (4.227) that the advertisement is

supposedly attempting to revive through colonial efforts. Bloom maintains this sense of sterility throughout the “Oxen” episode and stands out in direct contrast to Mina Purefoy, both as the only father in the room and as a father who “had of his body no manchild for an heir” (14.271). Bloom’s focus remains centered on his lack of a son, the very thing on which the narrative of this episode is founded. Mina Purefoy, in her labor and successful delivery of a son, is the first moment of creation that takes place within the narrative. Her role as mother, compared and likened to Eve and Mary, echoes Stephen’s earlier sentiments that “[f]atherhood, in the sense of conscious begetting, is unknown to man... *Amor matris*...may be the only true thing in life.” (9.837-843) While the narration itself is heavily invested in the importance of original sources and foundational points of language, the contents of the narration have been driven away from the producer and instead toward the product. As aforementioned, the “learningknight[s]” (14.125) are desanctifying the process of birth in their conversations concerning contraception and the ways in which they have “murdered [their] goods with whores” (14.276) just as Odysseus’ men disregard the sacredness of the cattle and regard them only as food. Bloom, however, like Odysseus, refrains from participating in the desecration of maternity. Just as the narration is a varied manifestation of pre-existing narrative archetypes, so is Bloom a variation of his literary ancestor Odysseus. But in this episode, the historical literary parallels extend to Mina Purefoy as well, who performs the function of Mary, Eve, and the physicalization of the conceptual cultural mother, uniting her children through language and location rather than through blood. Joyce cements these literary and historical associations with the line, “In woman’s womb word is made flesh” (14.292). Though this is directly referencing Mary’s immaculate conception, Joyce actualizes this concept through the style of the episode. The birth and development of the English language run parallel to the physical act of birth. With Mina

Purefoy's physical labor, Joyce is demonstrating the evolution and development of language, demonstrating the fertility of language itself.

As Mina Purefoy's labor concludes, the narration begins to heavily drive at the role that language has been playing throughout the episode. With the physical representation of gestation and birth within the episode having completed her contributions to the narrative, the focus shifts toward direct manifestations of the *vera narratio*. In a pivotal passage that greatly assists the tonal shift while reintroducing the archetypal narratives which conflate the strike of thunder and the formation of language, Joyce writes, "But as before the lightning the serried stormclouds, heavy with preponderant excess of moisture... compass earth and sky in one vast slumber...till in an instant a flash rives their centres and with the reverberation of the thunder the cloudburst pours its torrent, so and not otherwise was the transformation, violent and instantaneous, upon the utterance of the word." This summoning of thunder integrates yet another Viconian manifestation in the midst of this episode. The atmospheric conditions at 10:00PM on June 16, 1904, "heavy with preponderant excess of moisture" (14.1384), even correspond with the environmental circumstances that Vico had imagined were necessary for such a violent, reverberative thunderclap to ring out for the first time after the unforgettable punishment of the flood. As Vico relates the percussive phenomena, it takes two centuries of waiting for "the moisture of the universal flood to dry out" (Vico, 146) before the language-birthing thunderclap can be wielded by Jove. However, Joyce inverts Vico's historiography by reversing the causational relationship between language and thunder, that is to say, it is "upon the utterance of the word" (14.1390) that "with the reverberation of the thunder" (14.1389) the rain begins. In the *New Science*, Vico further explains that the fear born from the thunder moves the nomadic founders of ancient civilizations away from his bestial migratory patterns and into the connubial

safety of his cave, thus creating "carnal union...in fear of some divinity (Vico, 208). But in "Oxen", following the underlying structure of ritual or incantation, it is language, namely Stephen's exclamation of "Burke's!" (14.1391) that shifts atmospheric conditions and moves the group from inside the cave of conjugal consequences of Denzille and Holles and out onto the night street of Dublin toward the Red-Light District, where a "union modestly consummated" (Vico, 208) is as far from the mind as possible. Following Stephen's translocational announcement, the language of the episode begins to rapidly deteriorate. We continue to move backwards from Vico's chronological development of language, a "retrogressive metamorphosis" (14.390), as the linguistic imitations continue to move forward through time toward the twentieth century in their own independent progressive evolution. As the language of the episode becomes more modern and less intelligible, Joyce seems to return to the Viconian idea of *vera narratio* to hold things together. In *The Odyssey*, the punishment Odysseus' men face for the slaughter of the sun-god's cattle was the deliverance of death by "Zeus...with a lightning bolt and thunder" (Homer, XII.448). And while the outcry of "Burke's!" may not be the moment that introduces death to the episode, it does initiate the breakdown of the dutifully established linguistic style. Though it narratively emulates Viconian thunder, the language that follows begins to fall apart, rather than come together. In Dante Alighieri's *De Vulgari Eloquentia* (*On Vernacular Eloquence*) his focus on the mythic Tower of Babel includes the recounting of a conclusive misfortune not too dissimilar from that of Odysseus' men, that the construction of the tower was interrupted and definitively ended when "[the contributors] were all struck by a great blow from heaven" (Alighieri, VII.6) which results in their "[being] split up into groups speaking different languages" (Alighieri, VII.6). As the departure from the maternity ward begins, the communication between the brigade becomes unintelligible and the drunken, slurred, messy

speech becomes comparable to the “confusion of languages” (Alighieri, VIII.1) in the aftermath of Babel. As we lapse in and out of Stephen’s stream of inebriate consciousness, German, French, Latin, Spanish, Greek, and incoherent babbling are incorporated into an already puzzling narrative style. Even the English that concludes the episode crosses the Atlantic and reaches American shores, beginning to imitate (or predict?) the excessive theatricality of the Southern Roadshow Preacher. There is no longer a clear distinction between one imitative style and the next. Unlike the greater portion of the episode that demonstrated a clear divide in time period and style, this final amalgam is a mixture of cultures, languages, and sounds. While the final stretch of the episode is not particularly punitive in character, it maintains the pattern in which a strike of thunder causes a great linguistic change while staying within the tradition of the book of *The Odyssey* that outlines the episode.

III. Upon the Brink of an Abyss, The Melancholy Valley

Canto IV of Dante’s *Inferno* begins with “[a] heavy clap of thunder!” (*Inf.* IV,1) a final striking sound that shocks the Pilgrim out of sleep before he descends into Limbo. In his *Nueve Ensayos Dantescos* [Nine Dantean Essays] Jorge Luis Borge translates the concept of the uncanny as “those places or things which vaguely inspire horror” (Borges, 23). Employed to describe the dreamlike bleakness of Limbo, the uncanny to Borges and for my purposes, is the categorization of something that is stuck between being eerie or sinister and extremely familiar. It is something offputting not for its novelty but for the fact that it can be remembered or recalled. The definitions of uncaniness are themselves constantly ‘inbetween’. Borges’ “vague horror” is already a middle ground of two opposing sentiments— how can horror be vague? The Freudian uncanny or *unheimlich* is a feeling of discomfort or disquiet that arises from the sight of

something that the individual has repressed or subdued. An inaccessible memory or feeling only previously experienced in childhood that is remembered by an interaction with something or someone associated with the feeling. It is the reemergence of the past, “the omnipotence of thoughts, instantaneous wish-fulfilment, secret harmful forces and the return of the dead” (Freud, 154). The “Circe” episode of *Ulysses* is where the uncanny fully manifests within the narrative. There is, like in “Aeolus”, a stark physical change that occurs and the established mechanics of the narrative such as the passage of time and movement through space change once again. In a structural suspension not dissimilar from Dante’s limbo, devoid of time, form, and place, the method of drama that Joyce employs for Bloom’s adventures in Nighttown “is justified for poetic reasons, not logical ones” (Borges, 26). The uncanny in “Circe” is founded on Bloom’s confrontations and evasions from his repressed pasts, and though they are largely imagined or dreamed they are striking nonetheless. The transformation of the narrative into a play is a strategy that allows each moving component to speak for and represent itself— the efforts to define and describe each phantasmic figure are unnecessary, their speech does so for them. The re-disruption of physical form presents a limitation of structure; How can the events of “Circe”, magical, psychological, and nonexistent as they are, be properly conveyed with language? As the Pilgrim is roused to wakefulness by an “enormous thunderclap” (*Inf*, IV.2) before his journey into Limbo where souls are not punished but “suspended” (*Inf*, IV.45), so does Stephen’s cry of “Burke’s!” guide Bloom into Nighttown where time and space will be paused.

In looking at Bloom’s journey as a sonata-narrative, “Circe” places us at the final measures before the recapitulation, paralleled literarily by the Homeric *nostos* that will focus on Bloom’s physical and psychological return home. The end of the development in a Sonata is aurally indicated by the presence of the V or V⁷ chord, the furthest possible sound from the home

or tonic key, the I. Bloom's journey deep into Nighttown is the point of furthest suspension of reality, form, and content. The *unheimlich* abounds and the oneiric landscape of the red light district brings Bloom as far away from home as he has been thus far. The fugal structure, overlapped with leitmotifs, at the midpoint of the sonata-narrative begins to shift its focus past Bloom's internal thoughts and toward Stephen's.

The problems of imitative form presented in "Aeolus" return in "Circe". In "Aeolus" the explanations for the accented phrases used throughout the episode ranged from the commonly accepted newspaper headline to captions on artwork, with all explanations fundamentally falling just short of accurate. Without reading and only focusing on the form, the initial paragraph of parenthesized italics look like stage directions and the following centered all-capital words with text beneath them look like character's names and dialogue. The visual form of a play is obvious, but the initial stage directions serve a purpose that is more literary than practical. A dark, dirty fairyland emerges, with "skeleton tracks" (15.02) and "will-o'-the-wisps" (15.03). The initial reaction and reading relies on the memory of plays read before, the familiarity of the dramatic form becoming a guide through one's first pass at "Circe" but the episode evades such facile categorization. The dramatic form slips through the many cracks of reality throughout the episode, we are reading a not-quite play. There is no one fixed place in "Circe" and many of the changing scenes are largely imagined. How would "THE KISSES" (15.1271) translate to the stage? "THE CHIMES" (15.1363)? "THE ARTANE ORPHANS" (15.1889)? The characters in this play are inseparable from their form on the page, it is a play that must be read, not watched. But the practicality of the dramatic format is secondary, the role of the form of "Circe" is not to accurately depict, or even concern itself with, a performable play but to reintroduce two of the successes of "Aeolus". First, the use of structure and form to evoke a sensory response to the

written material, in this case both aural and visual. The rapid appearances and disappearances of an extensive cast are unclear— the stage directions fail to actually point out when they enter or leave, we only have the dialogue and their spoken words as evidence of their usually imagined presence. The second success is that, in having structured “Circe” like a drama, this episode has a sonorous, spoken quality to it. The events of the episode are as real as any other moment in the narrative, the magnificent, impossible, insane scenes are what is playing out in Bloom’s mind and the few things that aren’t imagined are relatively mundane. While the dramatic in “Circe” pushes the structure of a play to its fullest extent, the structure itself is a necessity for the mechanics of the episode to be fulfilled. Joyce’s variation on the dramatic form “acts not so much by breaking through form, as rather, more fundamentally, by creating it” (Adorno, 565).

The first two figures “THE CALL” (15.10) and “THE ANSWER” (15.12) echo the fugal threads first sewn in “Sirens”. The eleventh episode is modelled after a fugue, a musical structure which always begins with a ‘subject’ followed by an ‘answer’. The fugue is a gathered musical structure composed of lines of variation on the same musical subject. Following the introduction of the main subject in a singular voice, another voice enters with the same subject while the first continues with its “answer” creating a densely layered polyphony as each voice echoes the subject in its own unique way. In this layering of sound the music not only travels linearly forward through time, but creates a temporal suspension. The harmonies exist vertically on the grand staff, stretching upward with the addition of each new voice while moving horizontally forward through time as the music progresses. Time moves forward and upward— it’s suspended while still in motion. The contribution of each voice toward that final fugal impression is simultaneously independent and interwoven— each voice can exist on the page in isolation and offer its own melodic line, but the layering is fundamental to the contrapuntal essence of the

fugue. The contrapuntal technique of “call and response”, mimed by “THE CALL” (15.10) and “THE ANSWER” (15.12), solidifies the fugal overtones of the episode. As we continue, these ‘characters’ stretch further and further backwards into the past. We are (re)introduced to a cast of names and items seen throughout the day and new figures that were previously hidden by memory, but their presence within “Circe” is completely unique to the chapter. Gerty Dowell, for example, momentarily returns to reflect Bloom’s own guilt back onto him; She is confrontational, declaring her hatred for Bloom before “*glid[ing] away*”^x back to episode thirteen. But the primary Circean element of the episode is not any of the quasi-magical, surreal figures, though they are transformed and changed, but the structure of the narrative itself. In this episode the dramatic layout takes inanimate objects like “THE SOAP” (15.337) or past figures mentioned only in passing like “THE MAN IN THE MACINTOSH” (15.1560) and transforms them into living, active characters with whom Bloom interacts in his innermost fantasies and digressions.

In the reappearances of momentary characters, Joyce builds these textual harmonies through “the creation of latent middle voices... always drew the traditional accompanying figures into his subjective dynamics and transformed them according to his intention” (Adorno, 565). While Adorno is describing Beethoven’s middle period, most famous for its symphonic efforts, the drawing in of an accompanying voice or motif is one of the primary contrapuntal methodologies. Though no voices in Bach’s fugues are truly latent, Adorno’s observations about the middle voices apply. These inbetween lines of music are precisely what amplify the outer melodies as the reiteration of the subject in each successive voice emphasizes it as the primary focal point of the fugue. The fugal structure also welcomes a physical inbetween, with the tenor and alto registers occupying the space on the staff between the more prominent bass and soprano

voices. Similarly, the inclusion of numerous characters from the day like Lydia Douce, the painted Nymph, or baby Boardman draws these otherwise stagnant figures, limited to their respective episodes, into the ever increasing number of fugal subjects. Each character's voice or musical thread continues on past the conclusion of their episode into the *tutti* of "Circe", their middling moments that straddle the bass, the running themes throughout, and the more prominent soprano melodies of Bloom and Stephen. Each of these "accompanying figures", though transformed in their animacy, maintain their set associations. The Wagnerian leitmotif, a short but very distinct musical phrase that is readily associated with a particular operatic character, similarly contributes its technique to these reappearances. The Blooms' bedroom Nymph laments about her eternal framing "in oak and tinsel" (15.3263) and blushes as she recalls all she has witnessed from her frame. Though she is suddenly alive and vocal, she remains confined to the bedroom wall, her experience is informed only by those private domestic activities which Bloom imagines she bore witness to. This Frankensteinian musical substructure spanning from Bach to Wagner pushes both the musical comparisons and the dramatic format to their most liberal definitions, becoming "free...from convention on the strength of their own uniqueness" (Adorno, 565).

Among the more fascinating of these latent yet fantastic transformations is that of the soap, who becomes a character in its own right. Attracted in the chemist's shop by the "[n]ice smell these soaps have" (5.501), Bloom buys the lemon scented soap and slips it into his "hip pocket" (6.22) until he exits the carriage toward Paddy Dignam's funeral where he moves the soap to his more comfortable "inner handkerchief pocket"(6.495). In "Aeolus", we are reminded "ONCE MORE" (7.221) of the soap when Bloom dabs at his nose with his now lemon-scented handkerchief, reminding him that the soap was moved into the same pocket which prompts him to

place it back into the “hip pocket of his trousers” (7.228). The soap appears here and there again and again, it gets “rather sticky”(11.1137) from sweat, Bloom recalls that he has yet to pay for it, and makes its grand solar entrance in “Circe” rising up from the eastern horizon dousing the sky in its lemon-scent and morning light. The “soapsun” (15.337) comes to life in “Circe”, even if only for a short moment to sing a couplet about his relationship with Bloom.

“We’re a capital couple are Bloom and I.

He brightens the Earth. I polish the sky.” (15.338-339)

The soap’s uncanniness is easy to note. We have followed the soap very closely from 9:00 a.m. to midnight– its familiarity at this point in the novel cannot be overstated, we know its smell, the stickiness of its lather, its shape, and its cost, but this sudden appearance as an animated, living thing is eerie and impossible. But in the suspended reality, space, and time of “Circe” it is possible that the soap has momentarily become the rising sun and sings to Bloom. The transformational aspects of this chapter are believable and real within “Circe”, but when reality resumes in “Eumaeus” the soap is back where it was. Looking backward from Eumaeus, the soap never left. The soap simultaneously undergoes a superb metamorphosis and remains completely stagnant, tucked away in Bloom’s pocket against the potato he leaves the house with in “Calypso”.

The plethora of physical objects that pop up throughout the episode are not the only elements of the texts that undergo transformation. The word “mauve”(6.326) , for example, first appears in “Hades” to describe Rudy’s face in his “whiteline deal box”(6.327). Rudy’s funerary rites are most explicitly disclosed in the context of “Hades” but the impact of his death lingers,

and is closely tied to this initial description of mauve-coloredness that Bloom provides. The word appears later in “Aeolus”, this time as a more emotionally unattached color— simply the “mauve” (7.721) clothing of girls walking down the street. Again it appears in Gerty’s romantic description, her carefully selected “mauve”(13.176) undies and briefly in “Oxen” to describe the colors of the cosmos, carried “on currents of the cold interstellar wind, winding, coiling, simply swirling”(14.1106-7) perhaps the same wind that first blows in “Aeolus”. In “Circe” the word appears constantly, “a shade of mauve”(15.2040) becoming the primary color of the brothel. A “veiled mauve light”(15.2407) surrounds Florry, Kitty, and Zoe and the same “mauve shade” (15.2476) from earlier in the episode is crashed into by the dizzy moth, while even later in the episode Stephen’s ashplant will render it “a crushed mauve purple shade”(15.4285). The word's final appearance in this episode brings us back to its first mention in “Hades”, the tragic, irreversible color of Rudy’s face, tucked in his baby’s casket. His “delicate mauve face”(15.4965) lands the word at a temporary resting point, back home to its original use nine episodes prior en route to Paddy Dignam’s funeral. The word has undergone a striking series of changes but remains fundamentally attached to that initial use— the haunting image of Rudy that has, like this adjective, accompanied Bloom throughout his day. ‘Mauve’ appears one more strikingly unremarkable time in “Ithaca” to describe the possible aquirement of an impressed postage stamp. The word’s appearance in “Ithaca” gives it a characteristic animacy. Despite having completed its cyclical purpose, it continues on past that heartfelt return home. Its change at the end of “Circe” back into a word that is heavily attached to Rudy’s death is not the end of its many changing appearances throughout the novel. The persistence presence of ‘mauve’, constantly invoking that initial description of Rudy until it finds itself directly doing so once more, echoes the sudden warning at the end of “Oxen”, before the language of the text begins to

erode into the post-Babel nonsense upon Stephen's "utterance of the word"(14.1390). Those "evil memories which are hidden away by man... wait" (14.1344-1346) and it is in "Circe" that they finally strike. Though these memories might become repressed, "as though they had not been"(14.1347) it only takes the repetition of the color mauve or any of the numerous other "chance word[s]"(14.1348) to "call them forth"(14.1348). In this episode, these memories "rise up to confront [Bloom] in the most various circumstances, a vision or a dream"(14.1350). The language, the very mauve-ness of Bloom's last memory of Rudy has lain in wait across the nine chapters from its initial mention, changing each time it appears on the page. The language of the text's ability to reemerge and shift its own meaning backward into a previous association is itself a wielding of the very same uncanniness that shapes the Soap or the Moth, a simple word that in its repeated simplicity becomes a "piteous vesture of the past"(14.1354). "Circe" is an episode compiled entirely of chance words, each of which constructs a labyrinthine road to Bloom and Stephen's previously obfuscated pasts which are only accessible through the dramatic return of memories, sinful or not. That the word Mauve's odyssey ends on such an ordinary note in the penultimate episode concludes these many metamorphoses and lapses the word back out of its heavy association with Rudy, whose memory Bloom has now directly confronted. The "serried stormclouds, heavy with preponderant excess of moisture"(14.1382) have released their water over the course of "Circe"—the forty days and nights of torrential downpour have given way to the rainbow of "Ithaca", where finally, the word has completed its own arc.

In the same Nighttown that is so heavily populated by the uncanny, or the return of the familiar, are those things that occupy Bloom's most intimate and interior thoughts. Freud's writings on the topic note that the English words most similar to the German *unheimlich* are 'uncanny' or 'eerie' but that, etymologically, 'unhomely' comes the closest to the original word

(Freud, 132). The *heimlich*, then, pertains to the realm of “the house... dear and intimate, homely” (Freud, 126). One of the more distinct spaces that has haunted Bloom’s day is his home, or more accurately, his evasion of it is part of what has led him here to Mabbot Street at midnight. The *unheimlich*, is the antonym, the furthest possible point from domesticity. Deep in the underbelly of Nighttown, Bloom certainly seems to be as far as ever from home. The women surrounding him seem to be the opposite of the image of Molly we are left with, lying alone in bed while enjoying the breakfast Bloom has brought her. But Freud observes that the *heimlich* itself is perhaps the area of being that is closest to the uncanny as it exists entirely behind closed doors and shut windows, physicalized iterations of repression, “so that what is called heimlich becomes unheimlich”. When faced with the physicalized imaginings of the thoughts that have plagued Bloom for long before than June 16th, Bloom finds himself closer to home than ever, the sins of his past are around every corner and in his direct and indirect confrontations with these reappearing secrets, his performance of domesticity and marital satisfaction from the day begins to crumble. Seeking shelter from the wild thunder, Vico’s bestial man “would drag a woman into his cave and keep her there as his lifelong mate” (NS 504), establishing both the domestic sphere, the *heimlich*— that which is familiar but secret, kept from “the sight of Heaven” (NS 504), and the marital relationship, another familiar and constant but private relationship. In “Circe”, it is Bloom who has been dragged into the dimly lit house of ill repute, the long and extensive fantasy of punishment and change happening in the relative privacy of his mind. The distracted, digressive nature of this episode is paralleled by its Homeric predecessor, Book X of *The Odyssey* which details the long interlude that Odysseus spends with Circe on Aeaea, suspending his journey homeward for an entire year. Circe’s introduction in the *Odyssey* isolates her as the individual with the most power, turning Odysseus’ men into swine. It is not until she is bested by

Odysseus that she loses this power, and it is only because of the supernatural aid he receives from Hermes that he is able to do so. His wit and cunning would have failed him and without divine aid he, too, would have found himself in the sty. Even so, Odysseus is not entirely in control, pausing his own journey homeward to linger on Aeaea. Playing the role of the most important woman in Odysseus' journey back home, Circe's role as a lover and guide to Odysseus parallels the familiar though distant marital relationship between Odysseus and Penelope in the same way that Bloom's scenes with Bella Cohen represent particular aspects of his marriage (or his opinion of his marriage) with Molly. The act of mimicry returns within this play-imitation, a familiar relationship begins to signal some kind of closeness to home, or an approximation of the expected reward for homecoming, that is, the reestablishment of the marital relationship. Bella Cohen's performance, however, quickly disrupts the notion that her purpose will be to imitate the sexual marital relationship— instead she inverts it.

Bella Cohen is among the more distinct characters within "Circe", her transformation in Bloom's psyche is not so much a shift from one state of being to another, as it is the occupation of an inbetween space. Bella Cohen, in the several pages of Bloom's sadomasochistic digressive fantasy is both woman and man— as is Bloom. Bella Cohen very quickly becomes Bello, a figure of "magnificence"(15.2846), ordering Bloom "[d]own!"(15.2848) in a "baritone voice"(15.2835). The sudden shift of 'A' into 'O' suggests a kind of masculinization, however many of Bello's attributes maintain a middle ground, Bella *and* Bello exist in simultaneity. Bello's voice is baritone, not as deep as bass nor high enough to be a tenor but inbetween the two. A "hard basilisk stare" (15.2835) evokes the figure of Medusa, a classically fatal female, a kind of "aggressive womanhood" (Brewer, 5) that entralls Bloom and contrasts with the direct masculinity suggested by the changed vowel at the end of her name. Bloom, too, has shifted into

a kind of performed femininity. “She” (15.2852) falls to the floor, bowing toward her master/mistress performing an intensely submissive role for Bello. The changed dynamic becomes a confessional opportunity for Bloom, who admits to trying on Molly’s clothes “only twice” (15.2986). Bloom’s confession suggests that his fascination with feminine clothing has enabled this kind of performance prior to this imagined interaction with the nonexistent Bello. Both Bello and Bloom are demonstrative of incomplete metamorphoses, their transformations into man and woman, respectively, provide an unfinished imitation of the marital relationship. But the “mantamer”(15.3062) Bello and “blushing” (15.3124) Bloom still arrive at a central concern of Bloom’s. One of the more persistent past sins that Bloom has carried with him is his perceived fault for Rudy’s death, whose poor health came “from the man”(6.329). Bloom expresses his desire not only for femininity but motherhood, “I so want to be a mother” (15.1817) a substitution of identity that absolves him of his guilt. Bello, however, seems to undermine this fantasy-solution by questioning Bloom’s ability to “do a man’s job” (15.3132). Once again, the strange and unfamiliar has returned Bloom to the central questions and concerns he has been trying to avoid. The entire fantastical, masochistic, coprophilic, gender-fluid, “buttocksmothered” (15.2939) sequence of desires has been entirely imagined by Bloom, and Bello disappears from the scene suddenly. When Bella Cohen reappears the two greet one another for the first time “contemptuously” (15.3489, 3492). Bloom has reestablished his masculinity and advises her to “take a handful of hay and wipe [her sowcunt]”(15.3493,3489) invoking Stephen’s definition of Ireland as “the old sow that eats her farrow” (*Portrait*, 182). The Odyssean pig motif has left Bloom and now falls back onto Bella, expanding outward to echo this national critique. The porcine projection is feminized and maternalized but stands in

striking contrast to the “great sweet mother” (1.80) figure that is painted of the green Irish sea in the first episode.

The brief return of “GARRET DEASY”(15.3986) begins to move the imaginative world into Stephen’s past and to start the rapid, chaotic crescendo toward the aural peak of the chapter. “*The pianola*”(15.4026) begins to play a tune and Stephen throws his cane for the first time in the episode, dancing with Zoe to the “prelude”(15.4047). The music resumes, this time with “THE PIANOLA”(15.4051) singing, becoming a character itself. The prelude of the pianola is aptly placed and named, the instrument playing it serves as the first thread that hearkens back to Stephen’s final moments of connection with his mother— entirely aural. The denial of prayer at her bedside, spoken or thought, was replaced with the sounds of the piano, who returns now to remind Stephen of “[s]weethearts...left behind” (15.4053). As the music continues in waltz-tempo, quick, lively groups of threes, the dancing builds in momentum and swing. The noisy Maginni punctuates each step with increasingly erratic shouts of dance steps, “*Dos à dos!*” (15.4090) adding to the noise, the motion, the building sound and movement toward some kind of *fortissimo*. Kitty jumps up to join, now three people dance to the three beats of the waltz while the noise rises in volume and devolves in sound. “*Screaming... high whistle shrieks...Groangrousegurgling*” (15.4110-4112) join the autonomous pianola as Lynch, Bloom, and Bella join the floor their figures all beginning to blend into “Bloombella Kittylynch Florryzoe” while Stephen wildly kicks and jumps, ashplant in hand. This accumulating, frenetic motion continues to build, it seems almost unstoppable like a boulder flying down a hill. It is the crescendo of an orchestra, a “dance of death”(15.4139) has taken over, spurred by Maginni’s french incantations and aided by the pianola. A “*Baraabum!*” of the timpanum sounds out— the return of that percussive thunderstrike— before the long awaited *fortissimo* of the “TUTTI”

(15.4134) rings out. The kinetic energy is sustained, the full orchestra continues, the timpani ring out again “*Baraabum!*” (15.4150). The frantic motion persists as Stephen and the room spin before a sudden *caesura*; “He stops dead” (15.4154).

Stephen’s mother is among the more overtly sinister of these apparitions, rising through the floorboards to haunt her son. Her description emphasizes the decay of death that her corpse has undergone, she is rotted “*green with gravemould*” (15.4159). She speaks inaudibly, “*uttering a silent word*” (15.4161), perhaps that same word Stephen has been searching for since “*Telemachus*”. May Dedalus’ return shifts the imaginative aspect of the episode by placing us completely within Stephen’s inebriated consciousness, away from Bloom’s. The noisiness and clamor of the preceding section is completely absent, *subito piano*. The choir enters, “*voicelessly*” (15.4162) and Buck briefly returns bringing flashes of noise with him. Stephen stands “*horrorstruck*” (15.4176), but his mother offers some comfort or, at least, attempts to reassure him. She reminds him that “[a]ll must go through it” (15.4182-83), the universal experience of death or loss that both Bloom and Stephen have grappled with all day. May Dedalus’ literary antecedent, Odysseus’ mother in Hades, untouchable and completely separated from the hero’s grasp, is in a similarly liminal place, not alive but present nonetheless. Anticlea and May are both physically intangible, there is an airy quality to the both of them, reminiscent of “*Aeolus*” and its constant wind, replicated here in “*her breath of wetted ashes*” (15.4182). Still, Stephen chokes with “*fright, remorse and horror*” (15.4185) as the combination of overwhelming guilt and excess alcohol begin to engulf him. As the apparition of Stephen’s past intensifies, it becomes clear for the first time in the episode that this ghost is experienced by Stephen alone. While Bloom’s fantasies were relatively collaborative, Stephen’s is not. Bloom opens a window and Florry, noting his sudden paleness, goes to get cold water. The quick change

in his mother's ghost from offering some degree of comfort to Stephen's sudden fervor and panic peaks, once again, "upon the utterance of the word"(14.1390). In his operatic finale, Stephen yells "*Nothing!*"(15.4242) and his ashplant undergoes a Wagnerian metamorphosis as he wields it to smash the chandelier above him. A final, conclusive cymbal crash as time "leaps"(15.4246) and he stands amidst the "ruin of all space"(15.4246).

The final scenes in Bella Cohen's Irish Aeaea are strikingly realistic and unmagical. Stephen finds his way outside as Bloom settles the smashing of the chandelier with a much more constant version of Bella, upset not by Bloom's strange sexual misbehavior but the very mundane concern of damage done to her property. Midnight has struck and the carriages and footmen of "Circe" are beginning to turn back into pumpkins and mice. In the winding down that follows, a handful of lingering yet unremarkable figures pass through as the magic slowly wears off from the chapter, a soft diminuendo into the neigh of the horse that reminds Bloom of his journey "Hohohohohome"(15.4899).

There is one last burst of magic: the final and most tragic of these uncanny visitants, Rudy, whose manifestation in both Bloom's mind and the novel has been steadily building since the first mentions of him in "Hades", tying off the mauve thread with a knot. Though the thunderclaps from "Aeolus" return in the background of this episode, Rudy's apparition is hauntingly silent. The crashing, drunken, desperate noise that began in the unruly maternity ward of "Oxen" and made its way alongside Stephen and Bloom into the brothels of Nighttown is strikingly absent. The ridiculous speeches, yells, and sounds that litter the pages of the chapter come to a slow stop as the stage directions take over. The *descrescendo* has reached a final *pianissimo, morendo*. The aural options have been exhausted, the V⁷ must begin to resolve to the I, back "[h]ohohohohome."(15.4899) The first word of this final passage reads, "Silent"

(15.4955) a dynamic marking in and of itself. Rudy reads backwards, moving us retrospectively through the narrative to “Aeolus” where Bloom himself looks back toward his own father and the Haggadah book. This reading, “from right to left” (15.4959) is completely different from the reading in “Aeolus”, which was punctuated by the creaks and groans of the newsroom, the sound of each metal letter block being placed into its respective place in the wood type cabinet. Now, engulfed by a blank white noise as Rudy kisses his page “inaudibly” (15.4959) the only dialogue is similarly quiet. Bloom calls for Rudy “inaudibly” (15.4959). The call and answer that initiated the chapter are both absent. Rudy “gazes, unseeing” (15.4964), depriving Bloom of yet another sensory connection. The Odyssean effort to hold or touch him goes unattempted, this silent vision of Rudy “sifting away like a shadow, dissolving like a dream” (Homer, XI.256).

The suspension of time in “Circe” moves the dramatic episode away from the steadily progressive and linear time of the novel into a surrealist dreamscape haunted by memory, grief, and guilt. In music, a suspension is a harmonic technique which sustains a note from a previous chord that dissonates with the current one. This carried-over tone is called a “non-chord tone”, a note foreign and strange to the newly established soundscape but familiar from its prior appearance. The dissonance that emerges from the persistence of a past note typically resolves stepwise into a chordal tone one beat after, a slight delay that emphasizes the tension. The sense of relief with the resolved chord is dependent on musical and aural memory, sustaining the sound of the new chord so that when the suspended moment resumes the linearity of the melodic line follows. Suspensions are not only the reemergence of the past (either as a note or a memory), but the persistence of it. In the same way that suspended tones resolve downward by a single step, so go Bloom and Stephen making their way out of the suspended time of Limbo, “descending from the first into the second circle, that holds less space but much more pain” (*Inf.* V,1-3).

IV. The Deep Wood's Woven Shade

Ten chapters before we reach “Penelope”, Bloom sits to eat lunch. A memory of Molly comes to him, a sudden daydream perforating the midday dullness. Bloom’s recollection is subtly tactile, the pulsing heat of the midday sun is “a secret touch telling [him] memory”(8.899), guiding him into this reverie— a past moment with Molly, her kissing, their chewing, and his eating all intersecting, overlapping, and slipping the daydream back into the lunchtime setting of Davy Byrne’s pub. The privacy of memory, well explored in “Circe”, spurred by this “secret touch” returns Bloom once again to a kind of *Heimlich* Past— a secret marital memory whose present absence leaves him stranded between two different points in time. In a starkly different way than in “Circe”, “Laestrygonians” presents its own kind of time which is not quite stagnant but stagnating— a rubato. With the sun at its high point, Bloom considers the time of day directly, thinking, “[H]ate this hour. Feel as if I had been eaten and spewed.”(8.495) But it is the sun’s heat at this “very worst hour of the day”(8.495) that gives way to the flood of memory, and begins to slowly knot together various loose threads. The floral language that will later come to punctuate Molly’s soliloquy is paralleled by Bloom’s memory of the “Ben Howth rhododenrons” (8.911)— two separate memories of the same day, a running parallax that will not accumulate to its high point until the final pages of the novel. Bloom’s memory of Molly’s laughter describes it as “warmfolded”(8.913), that same heat creeping into his own memory— the laughter and secret touch both warmed by the midday sun. Folding is another loose thread— the literal materialization of memory and feeling into cloth that has been tended to, placed carefully, folded and put away conflates memory with textile chores or organization, and seems to also suggest some kind of domestication of memory, moving us back toward the *heimlich*. Women and their

clothes have been a focal point for Bloom's wandering eye but, more broadly, textiles, fabrics, and cloths are a component of "that business for women...between clothes and cooking and children"(18.1129) that Molly will later note. The task of folding bears an adjacency to weaving, Penelope's means of quiet resistance and the primary methodology of Molly's episode. While weaving creates the cloth, folding is what we do with the finished thing. Etymologically, the word 'fold' is Germanically derived, meaning "reduplicating" (OED) in its original language. Reduplication, in and of itself, is a repetition of action; it is to duplicate, *again*. Folding has itself been reduplicated within the text, both in the memories "folded away"(1.263) by each character and in the structure of the text itself, particularly within this final episode. Bloom's memory in "Laestrygonians" ends on the return to his less exciting marital reality, a tightly wound knot he cannot undo, a repeated and stagnant note, "[s]tuck."(8.918)

The unweaving of these knots begins with Joyce's voicing in the episodes following "Circe". The noisy polyphony of the brothel quiets as we transition into "Eumaeus", the multiple voices lessen into a more distinct melody and harmony between Bloom and Stephen's dialogue and the narratorial voice that returns in the episode, the three voices of a *Sinfonia*. The definitive return to the tonic key in "Ithaca" isolates these voices even more, not only in number but in form; The "CALL"(15.10) and "ANSWER"(15.12) return in "Ithaca's" series of questions and responses, all recounted by the narratorial voice that jumps from asking to answering, detailing both Bloom and Stephen's responses. A simple two part harmony, an earlier Invention of Bach's. While it lacks the structural complexity of the fugue, the clarity between "Circe" and "Ithaca", by way of "Eumaeus" is owed to these unravelled voices that began so densely superimposed over one another, woven into a cohesive unit. As the night progresses onward, so are these overlapping voices pulled apart. The striking monophony of "Penelope" brings us, concurrently,

to the softest dynamic marking and the highest register, Molly's "soprano"(6.693-4). Molly's vocal register stands in stark contrast to the "bass"(9.165), "baritone"(15.2835), and "tenor"(11.610) of previous episodes. The soprano range has been reserved for the soloist whose many reputations precede her, and she is the only woman assigned a vocal range at all (the baritone of "Circe" belongs to Bello, not Bella). The lower and entirely male registers are the ones in which Molly has been spoken about for the entire day, in the carriage headed toward Paddy Dignam's funeral, at the Ormond, at Barney Kiernan's, at the cabman's shelter, and finally on the first floor of her home before Stephen departs into the night. Though Molly's reclamation of the narrative grants her the voice she has been denied, her episode remains the most thoroughly silent, even the whistle of a far off train, "frseeeeeeeefronnnng"(18.596), is conveyed through her personal aural interpretation, a sound in language that is not onomatopoeic but representative. Molly performs her own retrospective arrangements, the episode is a recontextualization of the preceding nineteen hours. She employs the same technique that is first physicalized by the typesetter of "Aeolus", whose clattering letters are placed backwards for print, and is found again in "Oxen of the Sun" embedded within the chronology of the text, demonstrated by the historiographical movement through the English language from pre-nascency to post-mortemnity. It is employed once more in "Circe", found in the reanimation of Bloom's past and his subsequent confrontations with it, and finally in "Penelope" as Molly recounts her day. Our own memory of the text becomes a means through which Molly arranges the proceedings of her day and a past that far exceeds it. Passing moments from outside the home earlier in the day are contrasted with her experience spent inside all day. Though "Penelope", taking place in the earliest hours of the next morning, is the most silent episode, Molly's mental narration still foregrounds language as a universal and primary mode of experience. Molly

reserves any sound for the stage, where she can “let that out in full...in front of the footlights”(18.877-8).

Molly's character runs parallel to Penelope in the *Odyssey*, who stays home in Ithaca for the duration of her husband's twenty year absence, weaving and waiting for him to return. Weaving is the “interlacing [of] yarns... in a continuous web” (OED) and how Penelope spends a great deal of her time waiting for her husband's return. The Homeric Penelope, overwhelmed by the one hundred and eight suitors who seek to take her hand in marriage and assume Odysseus' role as king of Ithaca, demonstrates a cunning equal to her seafaring husband's in order to avoid marriage with any one of these usurpers. She devises a plan to weave a burial shroud for her father-in-law Laertes promising that upon its completion she will select a new husband amongst the suitors while, secretly and at night, she undoes her weaving so as to never progress enough to a point of completion. Rudy's memory briefly, fleetingly, manifests in her soliloquy, as Molly recalls “that little wooly jacket [she] knitted”(18.1448-49) that he was buried in. But Molly does not linger on Rudy, and as she recalls the object that she literally wove for him, she quickly moves past the memory lamenting that she didn't give the jacket to a living child in need of it, demonstrating an empathy similar to the one Bloom shows to Mrs. Dignam. “That woollen thing”(18.91-92) evokes Penelope's burial shroud and Rudy, who is named after Molly's father-in-law, maintains a continuity between Homer's version and Joyce's. But the physical act of weaving does not occupy Molly's routine like it did Penelope's. Like the stagnant memory of Howth's Head, Rudy constantly appears in Bloom's meandering thoughts, his personal feelings of guilt and responsibility constantly leading him back to the loss of his son. Molly, however, in recalling the knitted sweater, successfully undoes that knot, deciding she's “not going to think... about that anymore”(18.1451).

Both Molly and Bloom share points of memory, Bloom's reverie in "Laestrygonians" is hinted at in Molly's desire for physical connection, "a kiss long and hot"(18.106) like the one Bloom remembers. Like Odysseus ties himself to the mast while navigating past the sirens, Bloom lingers on these focal points, Rudy, Howth's Head, "that *voglio*"(7.152), tying knots into his memory that he fails to undo. Molly, contrarily, meets these recollections with a fluidity— the ability to not only undo or unweave these shared memories but to move past them. "Penelope" progresses as a woven cloth, memory and shared moments between Bloom and Molly run side by side from earlier moments in the narrative, that same parallax Bloom and Stephen share for a couple of hours. The shift in perspective from Bloom's dominant narration and way of thinking, which occupy the majority of the novel, to Molly's more free and direct confrontations with the past create an inter-episodic narrative that Molly, in her constant recollection and movement past those moments, not only weaves but unweaves. These pathways back and forth imitate "the forward and backward movement of weaving" (Sternlieb, 763). The same pattern is present at the end of Bloom's musings in the eighth episode where he compares "[me]. And me now", the past with the present. The same comparative movement drives Molly's contemplations, who is just as aware that "[her and Bloom] were never the same since" (18.1450) Rudy. Molly, too, considers the present moment and decides that it is "his own fault if [she is] an adulteress" (18.1516) moving backward through memory and following its effects to the present day. Molly goes on to consider potential futures, "suppose I divorced him Mrs Boylan"(18.846), trying on her suitor's name. Like Penelope, Molly eventually comes to a point where the permanent separation of the marital unit is considered. When, after three years of deception, Penelope must choose a husband from the suitors she arranges a trial that, as she knows, can only be performed by Odysseus. In order for any of the suitors to prove themselves worthy, they must be, at the very

least, equal to her husband. Molly seems to feel similarly in regard to Bloom. Bloom is a constant anchor in her recollections of past lovers, recent or not. She thinks about how Boylan notes “the shape of [her] foot”(18.246) and immediately recalls Bloom’s much stronger fascination with her feet, an adjacent, but more intense memory of her husband and how she “made him spend once with [her] foot” (18.263). Bloom’s amorous demonstrations are the more favored ones in her memory. She resents Boylan aggressively “slapping”(18.1369) her behind because she didn’t call him by his first name, while lamenting the absence of touch from Bloom, “never embracing [her] except sometimes” (18.1400). Like Penelope and Odysseus demonstrate a similarity in cunning, Molly knows that “no one understands [Bloom’s] cracked ideas”(18.1406) aside from her.

Penelope’s task is one that begins with perpetuity in mind. Every day she begins to weave the tapestry whose completion has been promised to her suitors and every night undoes her work from that day. In an effort to delay the task of having to choose a suitor, this weaving and unweaving allows her the freedom to not only wait for Odysseus and to remain alone. Her task is performed with only one end in mind, the return of Odysseus. The promise of choosing a suitor is made in a purely tactical sense, but from her end bears no constraints of time. Without knowing when her husband will come home, if ever, she assigns herself a perpetual task that even in its conception offers a nod toward infinity. Jorge Luis Borges writes in his commentary on the *Thousand and One Nights* about the magnificence of the title, that “for us the word *thousand* is almost synonymous with *infinite*” (Borges, *The Thousand and One Nights*, 3). This is a tale of countless, endless, infinite nights... plus one– an extension beyond the limit of infinity. Scheherezade’s chore is to infinitely entertain the murderous Sultan who, determined to never be deceived again, marries a new woman every night before slaughtering her at sunrise.

Note the inverse relationship between Penelope, infinitely delaying the task of choosing a suitor, and Scheherezade, prolonging her selection as wife. Penelope, who weaves a tapestry every day in the absence of her husband, and Scheherezade who tells a story every night in the presence of her husband. Penelope unweaves her tapestry every night but not all of it— just the portion she spent the day weaving and must reweave the following day, focused on the constant reconstruction of the same section of the tapestry. Scheherezade begins a story every night without completing it until the following night, creating a string of narratives from one night to the next. Each of these tactics aim to prolong the performance of each woman's respective goal, to maintain their positions as wives. For both women, infinity eventually ends. After three years, Penelope's scheme is found out and she is forced by the suitors to complete the tapestry as promised. Similarly, after a thousand and one nights, roughly three years, Scheherezade's stories come to an end and she is made the permanent queen by the Sultan. Molly's temporality is much more faithful to the infinite. There is a very close literary relationship between a handful of years and infinity, the bridge between the two being the time in between, the time before the conclusion. While Penelope weaves during the day undoing her work at night, and Scheherezade ends the previous night's story before commencing the next, Molly's weaving and unweaving takes place simultaneously. As she works back and forth from a "far away now past"(4.444), the eight woven phrases that make up "Penelope" are folded on the seam between the fourth and fifth sentences. Lisa Sternlieb notes that each sentence corresponds with its opposite, creating a structural symmetry in such a seemingly unbound episode. The first sentence corresponds to the eighth, Molly's mentions of her knitted sweater for Rudy appearing in both, the second pairs with the seventh, the third with the sixth, and the fourth with the fifth, the trains of thought in each phrase following through in their corresponding counterpart. Like the shared memories of

the day between Molly and Bloom, each memory finds itself repeated, reframed, echoed. Like in “Circe” or “Sirens”, these subjects, both personal and musical, are layered over one another. Penelope’s patience overlaps with Molly’s repertoire, both women “Waiting”(18.617), Molly’s narration is layered with Penelope’s weaving, the constant doing and undoing.

Molly’s extensive literary parallels are not, however, entirely feminine. In the mental list of Molly’s past suitors that Bloom makes toward the end of “Ithaca”, is a parallel to Odysseus’ own confrontation with Penelope’s suitors but it is also the reappearance of the *Don Giovanni* thread. In the ‘Catalogue Aria’ of *Don Giovanni*, the opera from which Molly is pulling repertoire for her upcoming concert series, the titular libertine’s servant Leporello sings of his master’s extensive sexual conquests across Europe famously recounting that in Spain he has already slept with “mille e tre [*a thousand and three*]” (Da Ponte, Act I, Scene 4). In this number is the same gesture demonstrated in the title of the *Thousand and One Nights*, the act of adding to a symbolic infinity. While Boylan has spent the day as the principal actor playing the role of Don Giovanni, the list of Molly’s past suitors reconfigures her as something of an understudy, her own array of successful conquests, both sexual and social creating a parallel between her and the opera’s protagonist. Spain becomes the shared location of both Don Giovanni and Molly’s prominent pasts, for the former it is where the shocking number of past encounters has taken place and for the latter it is where a private area of memory resides, a place with memories that “so many things [Bloom] didn’t know”(18.1582). Molly shifts from one of the “mille e tre” who Don Giovanni’s coercions to Don Giovanni himself with an extensive list of past lovers and suitors. Similarly, Boylan exits center stage and diminishes to nothing more than another name on her list which will continue “on to no last term”(17.2142). Bloom assumes a position that Boylan too might follow in the coming months– that of Donna Elvira in Act I, discovering that

she is one of thousands. Molly's amorous methodology (as observed by Bloom) parallels Scheherezade's stories, each man listed is "always the last term of a preceding series...repeated to infinity"(17.2128-31).

"Là ci darem la mano" is among the more famous pieces from *Don Giovanni*, a duet between the coercive Don and the peasant bride Zerlina whom he is attempting to seduce. Molly is set to perform the duet on her upcoming tour managed by Blazes Boylan, and the piece becomes representative of her affair with Boylan. The methodological simultaneity of Molly's character and the episode is also present in her roles as both duet partners. Molly will be singing the role of Zerlina, who Bloom associates with Molly in the context of her affair with Boylan, but she bears many similarities to Don Giovanni, particularly in her relationship with Bloom as well as with the catalogue of past lovers that is recounted in "Ithaca". Bloom, misquoting Zerlina's lines of uncertainty as "Voglio [*I want*]"(4.327) rather than "Vorrei [*I would like*]"(6.238) has projected his assumption of Molly's overt desires for Boylan onto Zerlina's lines which are far less definitive than Bloom remembers, but the base desire for the Don Giovanni/Boylan figure is consistent with both Zerlina and Molly. The opening lines, "Là ci darem la mano/Là mi dirai di sì [*There we will hold hands/There you will tell me yes*]" (Da Ponte, Act I, Scene 7), are Don Giovanni's initial attempts to seduce Zerlina, which anticipate that she will succumb to his efforts. Similarly, Molly's final recollection of Bloom's proposal recounts how she was the primary catalyst. She recalls how it happened, thinking back to that "day [she] got him to propose to [her]"(18.1573). Like Don Giovanni in the duet, Molly leads. After the first time Bloom asks, a flood of memories overcome her, her answer is not immediate. She "ask[s] him with [her] eyes to ask again"(18.1605), echoing the second line of the duet, "Là mi dirai di sì [*There you will tell me yes*]" (Da Ponte, Act I, Scene 7) as she anticipates her own

answer to Bloom's question. She recalls Bloom's "heart...going like mad" (18.1608) an echo of Zerlina's own nervousness who sings "mi trema un poco il cor [*my heart trembles a little*]" (Da Ponte, Act I, Scene 7) and her own middling acceptance of Bloom as a husband, thinking "as well him as any other"(18.1604-5), not unlike the line "Vorrei e non vorrei [*I would like to and I wouldn't (like to)*]" (Da Ponte, Act I, Scene 7) that has been echoed, though misremembered, throughout the day. Molly is Zerlina at the end of the duet who with her final assenting "Andiam [*Let's go*]" gives in to Don Giovanni. She is also that same libertine who in this duet draws out Zerlina's agreement, the final 'Yes' that she gives Bloom on Howth's Head after making him ask her twice to marry him, both her answer and the result of her own convincing.

In "Penelope", which recapitulates the events of the day from the limits of 7 Eccles Street, Molly not only inverts her apparent direct lineage with the faithful women of literature, but, as demonstrated in her understanding of Bloom as well as her authority over her episode and narrative, adopts the position of authoress as well. Her stream of consciousness is a complete reconfiguration of her relationship with Bloom, reshaping the image of Molly Bloom from the impressions left by the baritone gossip of the day to one that she has formed of herself. Molly's desires are articulated and evident, not the haunting and ghostly imaginings of "Circe". "I hope"(18.731), she says, "I loved" (18.812), "I knew"(18.886), "I will" (18.1608). In her reclamation of the narrative, her overwhelmingly individual recollection of memories and experiences and sounds, there is not only the literary but the authorial.

The final gap between Joyce's Molly and Homer's Penelope is the forward movement of time, or, in Joyce's case, the lack thereof. Penelope reweaves each following morning, but "Penelope" stops at 3am. Joyce does not continue the story to the reconstruction that takes place the morning after. The novel ends stranded in the middle of the night— Molly's soliloquy presents

a temporal deviation from her literary lineage. It is an episode comprised of a singular hour in time, whose repetitive aspects are found in Molly's memory rather than the passing of one day to the next. In the singular hour we read of her ever-present musings that lead her to and from Bloom, no real conclusion arrives. The flurry of "yeses" on the final pages of the episode are not themselves a conclusion, just the memory of a prior answer. Molly's performance of repetition is not an act done day to day, but her constant recollection of the past and the structure of the episode itself, layered over one another, deeply embedded within her recollections of that "[p]hantasmal mirth, folded away: muskperfumed"(1.263).

Coda: A Little Night Music

Vico writes that "the *nature* of an institution is identical with its *nascence*" (Vico, Fragment 147), noting an essential interrelation between the beginning of something and its extant state of being. *Finnegans Wake* is Joyce's Book of the Night, written in a polyphonic arrangement of languages and sounds, beginning with its ending – an infinitely circular motion, *da capo* without *fine*. *Finnegans Wake* begins where its final sentence is cut off. "riverrun" (3.1) sets forth the torrential current of language through which the central dream of the novel takes shape. The musical structure that was present in the framework of *Ulysses* is absent. Instead, patterns blend with one another, a nocturne plays softly over a suite, a thumping waltz overlaps a fugue. Echoes of operatic lines ring out over the phrases of jumbled musico-linguistic ideas and while musical gesture remains integral to the text, the structure itself dissolves. The tensions between spoken and written have not been resolved, and they manifest with a much more brutish force in this text and the musical language through which that tension is expressed remains. While *The Odyssey* is a primary foundational work for the structure and characters of *Ulysses*,

Finnegans Wake takes the popular Irish bar song of the same name as its most overt mythic undercurrent. “Tim Finnegan’s Wake” tells the story of the inebriated Tim Finnegan’s fatal fall from a ladder and his funerary processions. He is wrapped in a clean sheet and laid out for his viewing with bottles of alcohol placed at his head and feet. A contentious mood takes over the vigil and the mourners begin a great scuffle. When a poorly aimed bucket of whiskey douses the deceased in the elixir of life he bolts upward, revived and shouts “t’anam ’on diabhal” (“Tim Finnegan’s Wake”, 56) sending the gathered to the devil. Within this bar song is the collective nature of music, a story told entirely in song.

Finnegans Wake follows Dublin pub owner Humphrey Chimpden Earwicker down into an extensive, ridiculous, and transcendent dreamworld in which the manifestations of his family and life outside of sleep follow. The Earwicker family is comprised of the patriarch HCE, the mother ALP, twins Shem and Shaun, and their younger sister Issy. Within the dream a number of foundational stories and myths appear, Adam and Eve, Humpty Dumpty, the giant Finn Maccool, the *Thousand and One Nights*, Tristan und Isolde, and Cain and Abel, to name the first handful. The book is written in four parts, representing Vico’s four ages of human society, the age of Gods dominated by myth and fear of God, the age of Heroes which sees the formation of fundamental institutions of religion, marriage, and burial, the age of Men driven by reason and political order, and the ricorso. The ricorso is the final stage which works backwards through the first three and resets society from its initial point. It is a series of events whose end gives way to the beginning of the next cycle and so on and so forth.

Book I, commencing from where the ricorso has ended and beginning another cycle, starts from the first moments of sleep. The primary elements of the dream are set forth in rapid, jangled succession, and the punitive thunderwords strike, marking HCE’s fall down the rabbit

hole into Wonderland. As Book I progresses so does the night and the dreamer's sleep, every passing chapter marking a later and later hour of the night. The final chapter begins the transition into deepest and darkest night. Told through the conversation of two washerwomen, washing and airing out the Earwickers' literal and figurative dirty laundry in the river Liffey, they discuss Phoenix Park, where the "duddurty devil" (196.15) has committed a well-known crime, ALP's devotion to her publicly denounced husband, and the children's whereabouts. The family history, liberally discussed, is dissected through the women's gossip becoming elevated beyond the conventions of casual rumor.

A lone "O" (196.1), isolated on line 1, begins this first final chapter. This is the first exclamation of the gossiping washerwomen whose conversation will form the chapter, voicing their comments, concerns, compliments, and complaints about the Earwicker family and its extensive history to one another against the banks of the River, which is at once the river Liffey and every river in the world, the "neuphraties" (199.14), the "ganres" (196.30), the "moravar" (213.9). Like the multiplicitous River, the 'O' is similarly dense in its significations. It is the vaginal opening, source of life and birth, a point of beginning. It is an egg, which is both another starting point for cosmic or gallinaceous existence as well as a still intact Humpty Dumpty (one of the more famous falls in the history of spoken nursery rhymes). The 'O' is the shape of the mouth, an imitation of the speaker's language in writing. And it is "a static representation of a temporal cycle" (Slote, 69), the interwoven processes of beginnings and ends with which this novel is so preoccupied. The word "cunniform" (198.25), written a couple pages later, compounds the Latin root word *cunnus*, "female external genitalia" (OED) with *form*, "shape, configuration" (OED), while also reconfiguring *cuneiform*, "the characters of the ancient inscriptions" (OED) of Sumeria. This Joycean term as well as the name of the ancient language

both share the same suffix of “-form”, used for “adjectives with the sense ‘having the form of’” (OED). “[C]unniform” demonstrates how the language of the chapter not only uses the vagina as one of many symbolic sources of creation, but literally implements ‘cunnus-form’, that is, vaginal shape itself. The letter “O” which begins the chapter is an example, while “cunniform” language is the methodology. If we consider “cunniform” to be the writing system for this chapter like *cuneiform* was for the ancient Middle East, the ovoid language of the chapter (“ovoca” (203.15), “Egg” (205.36)) is not just ovoid but ovulatory, suggesting that the woman’s form (and eggs) are as important as the archetypal egg stories that Joyce draws upon, namely Humpty Dumpty and the Kabbalistic cosmic egg, the former of which in a nursery rhyme about the titular character’s Fatal Fall, and the latter of which points to an egg as the source of all life—the cycles of birth and rebirth as originated by women are engrained within the text’s texts. The “O” (196.01) might then be every egg, the vaginal opening, an exclamation, or the actual shape of the mouth when saying ‘O’. Joyce also seems to be hinting at the age-old question concerning a chicken and an egg, that “first and last rittlerattle of the anniverse”(607.11), whose circular logic is also contained within that introductory “O”.

This chapter, focused on ALP, the primary mother figure of the book, whose physical presence within the section is retained by the incessant invocation of rivers from all around the world, the main symbol by which she is identified. While *Ulysses* was concerned with the vivid identity of its characters, mobilized and embodied through the text, *Finnegans Wake* shifts that performance to a manifestation that is, first and foremost, alphabetic. The family unit, namely its originary members, HCE and ALP, are woven into not only the narrative text itself but the letters that comprise it. Any and all series of words that begin with ‘HCE’, are the paternal figure’s presence within the text— he who “Haveth Childers Everywhere” (535.34), haunted by the

phantasmal “crime or crimes” (107.26) he has committed, is the dreamer who has fallen into a deep sleep in “Howth Castle and Environs” (3.3). In parallel, Anna Livia Plurabelle, the Earwicker matriarch, appears in all the many variations on the theme of ‘ALP’. She navigates her husband’s ancient and constant Fall from grace in “a lovely park” (138.05), her own “ashes with lustres of peins” (55.30) seeping through. The letters of the text and the identities of HCE and ALP are inextricably linked. The alphabetical arrangements of *Finnegans Wake* are not the “symbols... in grave morrice” (2.155) that Stephen observes in “Nestor”, but “lines of litters slithering up and... slettering down” (114.17) dancing the “kinkinkankan” (113, 10) in a constant, spontaneous rearrangement. The amalgamatory “cunniform” also suggests the act of gestation, with ‘form’ serving as a transitive verb or that which is formed *by* the ‘cunnus’ – in this case, the language that gives shape to the Earwicker family. The word itself is also a play on “cuneiform”, one of the first identified systems of writing in the ancient Middle East. The female body is one source of original creation, parallel to our primitive languages.

But written and printed language remain, like the opening “O”, stagnant. The kineticism of the spoken word, then, is what moves this chapter forward. The washerwomen’s gossip is pivotal to I.8, whose essence is embedded in the culture of gossip and word of mouth. Gossip is deeply rooted in shared language and is a historically feminized mode of communication. Among Gossip’s literary founding fathers reside the Wife of Bath, the slanderous older women of Titus 2:3, given to wine, Nelly Dean, the bickering washerwomen, and “gossipaceous Anna Livia” (195.4) herself. Rumor and gossip, these socially collected and disseminated ideas, stories, or beliefs, are a mode of truth.

Vico argues that “[p]opular traditions always have a public basis in truth” (Vico, Fragment 149). In the final pages of this chapter and the first book, HCE’s crime becomes

elevated to the level of myth or legend. It becomes clear through the washerwomen's gossip and tattle that this crime is both public and well known amongst Dubliners, but the truth of the crime remains fundamentally unavailable to us as readers—so removed are we from the intimacy that washerwomen have with this subject. Though the gossiping ladies openly discuss “what he did” (196.20) their whispers never actually reveal what he did. HCE's crime is discussed as though it has been already preserved within the cultural consciousness of his time, presumably through conversations that parallel the washerwomen's. In the same way that we can discuss Adam and Eve without having to mention the snake or the apple, the washerwomen can discuss ALP and HCE without having to delve into specificity. Gossip, hearsay, and rumor are fundamental to these “uniform ideas... in entire nations” (Vico, fragment 144) and the primary methodologies which “[explain] their birth and their preservation” (Vico, fragment 149).

The final two paragraphs of the Chapter conclude the first book of *Finnegans Wake* and guide HCE into the point of deepest sleep, down the rabbit hole of night. A reversed HCE, “**Etrurian** Catholic Heathen”, invokes two of the central characteristics of this chapter—cyclicity as a method for storytelling, gossip, and mythos, and the many rivers of the world. While the “O” (the vaginal opening, an exclamation of disbelief, one complete cycle, an egg) cannot move on the page, the retrospective arrangement of the letters H-C-E into E-C-H suggests the reversal of these circular patterns in a manner not dissimilar to Vico's *ricorso*. There is movement in this rearrangement that the singular “O” cannot achieve.

The gossip begins to grow quieter and quieter as we progress forward through these last, final, fleeting moments of relative lucidity before the setting of darkest night begins to deeply obfuscate the text—particularly its sound and form. “Tys Elvenland!” (215.22), the women announce, the Danish “tys” for ‘shh’ or ‘hush’ begins the decrescendo into absolute silence, a

gradual *morendo* of sound. We move from the Liffey, and every other river in the world, where the washerwomen do their work to ‘Elvenland’, Danish for fairyland, perhaps the same dreamscape of “Circe”. This shift into Elvenland is the movement into mythos, the world of fairytales and legends which we access through the very gossip that preserves them. HCE’s crime, which ranges from the lowly acts of voyeurism and incest to Original Sin itself, is moving out of the family unit, out beyond the gossip of the town and its inhabitants, and into the realm of fairytale, into Elvenland, into an aural history of story. The washerwomen facilitate this migration into fairyland by echoing the beginning of all stories, “Teems of times and happy returns” (215.22-23) blending together the archetypal ‘once upon a time’ with “happy returns”, reinvoking the circularity that is so pivotal to this section that concludes the first book. The babbling washerwomen continue, directly implementing Vico and his theories into the text. “Ordovico or viricordo” (215.23) begins with a reference to the Ordovices, a Celtic tribe in Northern Wales whose name is derived from ‘ordo-’ a “variant of the Common Celtic word for ‘high’” (Kessler) and the proto-Indo-European “*eredh-, meaning ‘high’” (Kessler) while also using Vico’s name directly. “Viricordo” has the Italian ‘ricordo’ meaning memory or remembrance preceded by ‘vi’ which in Italian means ‘I remember you’, or something close. Vico’s ‘ricorso’ is not far behind phonetically or visually. The ricorso is the fourth age– the grand recapitulation, the retrogressive metamorphosis. The rearrangement of letters from ‘ordovico’ to ‘viricordo’ is the same action as the ricorso itself, the movement “a temporal cycle” or moment. These are the same self-rearranging and copulatory letters seen earlier slithering up and... slithering down” (114.17).

The washerwomen begin to analyze the family unit itself, beginning with the source of the family– Anna Livia. A fluvial figure from her first mentions, ALP as the matriarch of the

Earwicker family unit and the embodiment of all the rivers of the world, flows in and out of the narrative. In the rumormill of Chapter 8, she flows just as easily through time. “Anna was, Livia is, Plurabelle’s to be.” (215.24) The father figure also returns, maintaining the Roman roots of his first incarnation in the paragraph, appearing as “*Hircus Civic Eblanensis!*” (215.27), Latin for the goat citizen of Dublin. His “buckgoat paps” (215.27) configure him in a space between paternal and maternal, the former making the paps seem vaguely incestuous, the latter making them seem nurturing. The maternal aspect seems more dominant as we arrive at Shem and Shaun, the “[t]wins of *his* bosom!” (215.28, emphasis mine) but the paternal and perhaps more incestuous undertones return as Issy appears in the text, his “tittering [daughter]” (215.29) – the implications of his crime are never far.

The washerwomen begin to transform into parts of the natural landscape, a rock and a tree, sudden shifts that echo that of the nymph Daphne who transforms into a laurel tree to escape Apollo’s unwanted advances, not dissimilar from HCE’s own dynamics with the women of the text. The women begin to metamorphose before any clear conclusion is drawn or can even begin. A flurry of noises pervade the text, “chittering” (215.31), “flittering” (215.32), the “bawk of bats” (215.33) and “dark hawks” (215.36) all sounds of the night– the scurrying of small animals, the rustling of trees, noises that, perhaps, are being heard by HCE in sleep and mistranslated into his dream. These noises and the sudden, more intensified babbling of the river water is an interruption to the Viconian gossip, that crucial methodology for the preservation of myth and legend. The gossip that not only dominated but constructed the chapter stops suddenly and the collective memory of HCE’s sin fades out into night as we shift into the second book.

The small trickle of sound that remains consists of the muffled chatter of the washerwomen, transforming further and further into Stem and Stone, the Tree of Knowledge and

Deucalion's rocks, Yggdrasil and the boulder of Sisyphus, the trees of Dante's 'selva selvaggia' and the philosopher's stone, "old...heavy" (215.34,216.1). The washerwomen's metamorphose into the Stems and Stones of history and mythos, their exchanged gossip— central to the preservation of legend, cultural stories, and knowledge— serving as that first incantatory step of their transformation, beginning with "O", a fixed representation of Vico's historical methodology, the ricorso, the recapitulation, the retrospective arrangement, the retrogressive metamorphosis and the start of their own integration into history.

The sweeping "riverrun" (1.1), the wind section of the orchestra section entering on an upbeat, sails with the soft might of the thousands of rivers of the world. The washerwomen attempt to reach one another "amiddle of meeting waters" (605.12), their voices the "[s]trings by the river where/The willows meet" (Chamber Music, I.3-4). Their conversation fails amidst the process of change, the transmutations into Stem and Stone begin to seep into the language of the text itself, "Tell me, tell me, tell me, elm!" (216.3). The 'elm' embedded within 'tell me' comes forward, the written letters on the page shifting and changing alongside the washerwomen who speak them. The night is pressing, and swells, insisting upon itself "Night night!" (216.3), a sudden *sforzando*, until the riparian orchestra finally begins to dissipate into softly bubbling streams and brooks, melodic with their "hitherandthithering waters" bringing us back by process of musical recirculation to Bach, the German giant of musical streams. Language has transformed language— the sound of the page comes off in quick whispers, the conversational echoes of call and response blend into the waters of the chapter, "music along the river" (Chamber Music, I.5). This magical decrescendore isolates the flutes and oboes of the first pagem, the deep roll of the timpanum guiding the words deeper into the nocturnal scene, as "the rivering waters" melt into hushed trickles and we enter the abyss of "Night!" (216.5)

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