Displacement of Affect in the Joycean Climax and Closure

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By SEMON STROBOS

THERE IS BY NOW A considerable body of secondary literature[1] which suggests that Joyce knew Freud's work well, and that he disguised such knowledge during his own lifetime partly from a competitive consciousness that he and Freud were engaged in a similar pursuit, that is, in an investigation of the mechanisms of mentation—particularly of fantasy and dreaming—and of the means by which these mechanisms may be represented. It is the purpose of this paper to investigate some ways in which one of Freud's mechanisms—namely "displacement," as he describes it in his case studies and in his more theoretically abstract treatises—finds analogies in Joyce's representation of elements of his life, and his transformations of them, in the climaxes and closures of his fiction.

Freud defines *Verschiebung* (displacement) on p. 335 of *Die Traumdeutung*[2] "als Ersetzung einer bestimmten Vorstellung durch eine andere ihr in der Assoziation irgendwie nahe stehende" (as replacement of a given concept by another which is closely associated with it).

Freud's examples fall under classifications separated according to *modus operandi*. Two of these, *Verschiebung des Aufmerksamkeit* (focus of attention) (pp. 296, 445, *Traumdeutung*) and *des psychischen Akzents* (psychic stress) (pp. 189-91, 193, 195), may be subsumed under a single heading. Both of these types of displacement govern the mimetic poiesis of the Joycean closure.

Both types of displacement alter the importance ascribed to a dream element, either by strengthening or weakening attention (*Aufmerksamkeit*) paid it, or by enlarging or reducing time, tone and space devoted to it. The more is disguised as the less. Or as Freud puts it (p. 189):

1. Richard Ellmann in *The Consciousness of Joyce* (New York: Oxford UP, 1977) found Freud's *Leonardo* and *Alltagslebens* in Joyce's Trieste library, corroborating Chester G. Anderson's 1973 argument ("Leopold Bloom as Dr. Sigmund Freud," *Mosaic* 8: 23-43) that Joyce used *Alltagslebens* for "Wandering Rocks." *Leonardo* contains a full dream analysis. Jean Kimball's "Freud, Leonardo and Joyce" in *The Seventh of Joyce,* ed. Bernard Benstock (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1982), 57-74, claims "Joyce knew Freud's work, knew it well and knew it early"(p.53). Ellmann in *James Joyce* (New York: Oxford UP, 1965), 351, 486, describes Joyce, Italo Svevo (a Freudian) and Paolo Cuzzi discussing psychoanalysis carefully. Sheldon Brivic presents more evidence in "Joycean Psychology," *Work in Progress: Joyce Centenary Essays,* ed. Richard F. Peterson (Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1983), 106-16.

2. Sigmund Freud, *Die Traumdeutung*(1901), in *Studienausgabe*, ed. Alexander Mitscherlich et al., 11 vols. (Frankfurt: S. Fischer Verlag, 1972), Band 2.

Der Vorgang ist aber so, als ob eine Verschiebung—sagen wir; des psychischen Akzentes—auf dem Wege jener Mittelglieder Zustande käme, bis Anfangs *schwach* mit Intensität geladene Vorstellungen durch übernahme der Ladung von den anfänglich *intensiver* besetzen zu einer Stärke gelangen. (Paraphrase: In this process of displacement—we'll call it of psychic stress or accent—an initially rather weakly cathected idea or figure seems to seize, by means of certain intermediate steps, the charge of an initially more strongly cathected idea, and thereby attains much greater intensity in the final dream scenario.)

In Freud's dream, "Eine Schloss am Meere" (p. 447), the death of the main figure, the governor of the fortress, is unremarked. The sudden appearance of a warship, however, causes great emotional upheaval. Freud's analysis shows that the emotion belonging to the former has been displaced onto the latter. Similar Joycean usages are discussed below.

This "displacement of affect" is an important part of Freud's insight into dream mechanics. An "unconscious idea" has two aspects: ideational content and emotional import ("affect").[3] This is crucial because "die Verdrängung betreffe die Gefühle, nur sind diese nicht anders als in ihre Bindung am Vorstellung fassbar" (10:47) (feelings are what require repression, but feelings are only graspable through their attachment to concepts, ideas or images) though the two (affect and idea) are far from inseparable (see "Irmas Injektion" below).[4]

In *Ulysses* Stephen's strong feelings about his father are not expressed as directly as those about his mother's death. It is the thesis of this article that those filial emotions—Joyce's expression of feelings about his fictional fathers—undergo a process similar to the Freudian "displacement of affect." Although the paternity theme in *Ulysses* is by all accounts more powerful than what might be called the maternity theme, material about Simon Dedalus is muted and ambivalent compared to material about his wife. Stephen suffers for the latter "agenbite of inwit" (remorse of conscience) and calls her in "Circe" "ghoul" after she terrifies him with her "breath of wetted ashes."

James and Stanislaus suffered similar childhoods at the hands of John Joyce but while James's filial expressions remained almost or quite tender, Stanislaus Joyce made it clear all through his memoir *My Brother's Keeper*[5] that he (Stanislaus) never forgave his father for abandoning his children, for spending his money in taverns while they went hungry, for beating them when he was drunk (i.e., often). In reaction, Stanislaus in the Joyce household in Trieste became the bourgeois, the worrier about money. This inevitably led to prob-

3. This is of course a great irritant to those philosophers who are upset over the concept of an "idea"—something to them by definition verbal—which is unconscious.
4. See also Freud, *Die Traumdeutung*, in *Studienausgabe* 2: 254, 439, 444, 447-49 and 454.
5. Stanislaus Joyce, *My Brother's Keeper* (New York: Viking, 1958).

lems with the insouciant James, problems which resulted in a coolness between them for many years, as even the title of Stanislaus' book shows.[6]

James Joyce however never expressed anything like as much bitterness, even though his portrayal of his father offers grounds enough for it. Holding back money, Simon Dedalus in *Ulysses* sends his daughter Dilly, whom he first mocks, back home to the hungry family while he goes to a pub. The beatings go unmentioned, although they appear in *Dubliners* displaced onto Farrington.

James seems to have been more amused than distressed by his father's fecklessness. He describes Simon Dedalus as

> a medical student, an oarsman, a tenor, an amateur actor, a shouting politician, a small landlord, a small investor, a drinking good fellow, a story teller, somebody's secretary, something in a distillery, a taxgatherer, a bankrupt and at present a praiser of his own past[7]

all of which John Joyce was, and most of which James was or became. Ellmann notes James's filial affection even as James, in response to a question, described his father as "a bankrupt." Ellmann adds, "to be insolvent was oddly palatable for both father and son."[8]

Joyce's most movingly emotional climaxes—many of them closures—often concern a father. Unlike Chekhov and some other modernists, Joyce creates closures which are climactic, even purple or melodramatic to some eyes. The apogee of *Dubliners* in the last pages of "The Dead" was based on an incident with Joyce's wife Nora. Gabriel realizes that his wife Gretta for the moment "belongs" in spirit to another man. Gabriel's discovery of the cause of her estrangement—of the divagation of his mood from hers—eventually brings *relief*.[9]

> Gabriel . . . longed to cry to her from his soul, to crush her body against his, to overmaster her. . . . He was in such a fever of rage and desire that he did not hear her come from the window. . . . Then . . . drawing her towards him, he said softly:
>
> —Gretta dear, what are you thinking about? . . .
>
> —O, I am thinking about that song, *the Lass of Aughrim*. . . . thinking about a person long ago who used to sing that song. . . . a person I used to know in Galway. . . .
>
> The smile passed away from Gabriel's face. A dull anger began to gather again at the back of his mind and the dull fires of his lust began to glow angrily in his veins. . . .
>
> Gabriel felt humiliated by . . . the evocation of this figure from the dead, a boy in the gasworks. While he had been full of memories . . . of tenderness and joy and desire, she had been comparing him . . . with another. . . .

6. See also Ellmann, *James Joyce* (New York: Oxford UP, 1965), 495-96.
7. Quoted ibid., 20.
8. Ibid., 21.
9. Please excuse the length of the quote. I have much to say about it, and the entire feeling and effect are germane. The *affect* is what is in question, and this quality—equivalent more to *mood* than *tone* in literary terms—will have to stand for equally lengthy quotation from Joyce's other closing passages, which I invite readers to review for themselves.

—I suppose you were in love with this Michael Furey, Gretta, he said.

—I was great with him at that time, she said. . . .

—And what did he die of so young, Gretta? . . .

—I think he died for me, she answered.

A vague terror seized Gabriel at this answer as if, at that hour when he had hoped to triumph, some impalpable and vindictive being was coming against him, gathering forces against him in its vague world. . . .

She stopped, choking with sobs, and, overcome by emotion, flung herself face downward on the bed. . . . Gabriel held her hand for a moment . . . irresolutely, and then, shy of intruding on her grief, let it fall gently and walked quietly to the window. . . .

leaning on his elbow, [he] looked . . . unresentfully on her tangled hair . . . listening to her deep-drawn breath. So she had had that romance in her life: a man had died for her sake. It hardly pained him now to think how poor a part he, her husband, had played in her life. . . .

Generous tears filled Gabriel's eyes. He had never felt like that himself towards any woman but he knew that such a feeling must be love. The tears gathered more thickly in his eyes and in the partial darkness he imagined he saw the form of a young man standing under a dripping tree. Other forms were near. His soul had approached that region where dwell the vast hosts of the dead. He was conscious of, but could not apprehend, their wayward and flickering existence. . . .

snow was general all over Ireland. It was falling on every part of the dark central plain, on the treeless hills, falling softly upon the Bog of Allen and . . . into the dark mutinous Shannon waves. It was falling, too, upon . . . the lonely churchyard . . . where Michael Furey lay buried. It lay thickly drifted on the crooked crosses and headstones, on the spears of the little gate, on the barren thorns. His soul swooned slowly as he heard the snow falling faintly through the universe and faintly falling, like the descent of their last end, upon all the living and the dead.

The assuagement that Gabriel designs is similar, mechanically, to the relief which Bloom works upon himself. Whenever Bloom hears of Boylan, Bloom's thoughts first become agitated; then he turns mentally to some other topic; and finally "satisfied"[10] he proceeds with his normal, ruminative, self-entertaining interior monolog.

Gabriel does not change the subject like Bloom but by changing his attitude rejoins his estranged wife. He shares her feeling and imagines their journey to Michael Furey's grave. Joyce and his wife put flowers on the tomb of the real Michael Bodkin.[11]

The anger of Gabriel's first reaction was already present ("A dull anger began to gather *again*") in the "fever of rage" which preceded any epiphany of Gretta's feelings. The rage originates primally, not situationally. Spirits of the dead assail the terrorized Gabriel but they are mollified by his joining them. That the final assuager, the "unresentful indifference," is a peace which surpasseth the understanding of this world is indicated by "sleep," "darkness," "the grave," the "swooning of Gabriel's soul" and "the descent of their last end, upon *all* the living and the dead." Gabriel (swooning) will join Gretta

10. Joyce, *Ulysses*, 92. See also Bloom's two other encounters (not including the hallucinatory "Circe") with Boylan on pp. 183 and 263.

11. Ellmann, *James Joyce*, 252.

(asleep) as they reach Michael (dead).[12]

John Gordon[13] touches on the themes of the rivals and the dead mother in similar terms (starting on his p. 36). His pp. 149-51 describe the profound influence of the rival Michael Bodkin on Joyce and discuss the condensed and split rivals as transformed in Joyce's work in a way similar to my thesis here. Gordon notes (p. 155):

> Their [Joycean protagonists'] lives mingle with ghostly doubles. . . . The endings of *Ulysses* and all of *Finnegans Wake* suggest that the ghosts that haunted Joyce came increasingly from [Nora]. The characteristic swooning ecstasy of the Joycean ending . . . was . . . Joyce renouncing himself to the power her lover's past had. . . . From that . . . one essential story moved to the center of his art . . . the returning lover whose abortive usurpation reveals the transience of his replacement.

Names in Joyce's works (Finnegan, Stephen Dedalus, Malachi Mulligan[14]) are often significant, as in dreams. Michael Bodkin's first name is left unchanged, although he was called (by Nora for instance) *Sonny*. His last name (Bodkin means "dagger") has been changed to Furey. For Catholics, Gabriel, the angel whose trumpet announces the second coming of the *Son*, follows Michael, the angel who banishes man from Paradise with the flaming sword (Fureyous Bodkin: phallus) of the Oedipal father.

A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man ends with a paean to the dead father. "Old father, old artificer, stand me now and ever in good stead." Like Jesus, Stephen does not mean his own father, Simon, but the first artist, Daedalus, with whose help he will "fly by these nets" of Ireland the Minotaur (minatory/bull portmanteau, "bull" itself a condensation in *Ulysses*: Irish, papal, John and machomulligan). Stephen has abandoned his own and Jesus' Heavenly Father, as he left the church. The feminized (as in *FW*, see below) narrator, pregnant with "the uncreated conscience of his race," is squarely between his mother, just addressed, and Father Daedalus, the artist for whom Joyce named his portrait of himself as a young man.

Portrait has hated and betraying rivals enough—Cosgrave, Cranly—but the most interesting displacement is of poor Stanny, who figured largely in Joyce's first draft, *Stephen Hero*. He has been suppressed entirely from the finished product. There was no place in Joyce's created world for a benign living male peer.

In *Ulysses*, the fathers (Bloom, Bloom's father and even Simon) are generally positive figures, certainly as compared to the rivals, Mulligan and Boylan.

Again a swelling ending moves into sleep. Bloom conquers his dead rivals:

12. Following Rougemont's thesis, the romantic love of all three would be here inclining toward a *Liebestod* (Denis de Rougemont, *L'Amour et l'occident* [Paris: Union Générale d'Editions, 1972]).

13. John Gordon, *James Joyce's Metamorphoses* (Totowa, N.J.: Barnes and Noble, 1981).

14. "Tripping and sunny as the Buck himself"; "two dactyls": like Oliver Gogarty, upon whom the character is based.

the Odyssean suitors in the latent content become the chain of rivals in Molly's thought: and the final (i.e., conquering) figure is Bloom—as a young man proposing on Howth. *Ulysses*' often remarked peacefulness compared to the *Odyssey*—particularly Bloom's subtle, bloodless victory over "the suitors"—can be subsumed under the Joycean merger with the rival. In the marital bed in which Bloom detects another's impression and in Molly's confused half-dream, images all float toward sleep. Like ALP, Gabriel and the sleeping infant of "Ecce Puer," Bloom becomes one with his fortunately dead rival (the old Bloom is no more!). He is thereby at peace and acquiescent to being overcome.

Ulysses thus offers the most perfect merger—condensation—of preceder, rival and protagonist in sleep. The ultimate preceder and last rival was Bloom himself; and the protagonist is Bloom.

"Association" functions in a complex way with the suitors. In *Ulysses*' "Telemachus," the suitors have been condensed into one figure, Mulligan, or perhaps two if one includes Haines. In *Ulysses*' "Nostos," they have all been condensed into another figure, Blazes Boylan, except in the one instance of Molly's reminiscences of all her relationships, actual or fantastic, in the last chapter. Thus the suitors, once condensed, have thereafter been split (*Zweiteilung*). The 108 Odyssean suitors become two: Bloom's sexual rival (Boylan) and the usurper of Stephen's domain and birthright (Mulligan). As in Freud's examples, the characters are identified by their meaning: the threat to Telemakhos and the threat to Odysseus.

Condensation and its converse, *Zweiteilung*, also further inform the paternity theme. In *Mischbildung*, a common figure is created by identifying the significant similarity of two figures; in *Zweiteilung*, two qualities found in one person are separated, making two figures. The dreamer splits apart juxtapositions which cause him discomfort. These may be his own ambivalent feelings about one person, as the dream may represent ambivalence or conflicting impulses as two entities.

Thus Stephen has two fathers, Bloom and Simon Dedalus. The deserting father who left Telemakhos behind and the returning father who rescues him have been split into the cold, distant, and sarcastic Simon and the kindly nurturing Bloom. James's kindly feelings toward John Joyce produce Bloom, although Bloom is also (through condensation) Joyce himself. The negative feelings which Stanislaus expressed more vehemently produce Simon, although Simon is still better—more governed by repression, the dream censor—than Stanislaus' character "John Joyce" in *My Brother's Keeper*.

Bloom meanwhile has two sons, Rudy and Stephen. Rudy left Bloom (is dead) and Stephen rejects him.

Both scenarios are dreamlike in the extreme. Bloom's *real* son and Stephen's real father (in life: Bloomsday) reject Bloom and Stephen; but the wished-for

son and father (reading beneath the manifest content to the true deep structure, the *Odyssey*) are, respectively, Stephen, who is there for Bloom at least during the novel-time, and Bloom, the father who feeds Stephen Epp's Cocoa. One sees in this the fairytale motif of stepmother/father vs. real father; Freud's "romance of childhood"[15] (the stolen prince raised by commonfolk who appears first in Sophocles' *Oedipus* and then through Shakespeare to Mark Twain); and the real son vs. false son motif as in Edgar/Edmund of *King Lear*. Stephen, more troubled than Bloom, characteristically rejects his opportunity for a new father. But the more realistic Bloom also loses out in both cases, part of the sardonic narration Marilyn French notices. Worse, it is David Hayman's "Arranger,"[16] Marilyn French's[17] strategic ultimate author, who would have to take the blame.

Joyce's last two climactic closures were written after John Joyce's death. "Ecce Puer," Joyce's best poem, concludes his collected poetry:

> A child is sleeping
> An old man gone
> 0, father forsaken,
> Forgive your son.

John Joyce's passing is commemorated equally with his grandson's birth a month later. Ellmann writes that birth and poem relieved Joyce's mourning. Sleep is a traditional metaphor for death, so that once again release is attained through joining the precursor in death, or, if you prefer, in the same sleep into which Gretta, Gabriel, Bloom, Molly and ALP fall.

Finnegans Wake's closure is similar:

> And its old and old its sad and old its sad and weary I go back to you, my cold father, my cold mad father, my cold mad feary father, till the near sight of the mere size of him, the moyles and moyles of it, moananoaning, makes me seasilt saltsick and I rush, my only into your arms. I see them rising! Save me from those therrble prongs! Two more. One two moremens more. So Avelavell. Yes. Carry me along, taddy, like you done through the toy fair! If I seen him bearing down on me now under whitespread wings like he'd come from Arkangels, I sink I'd die down over his feet, humbly dumbly, only to washup. . . .

Once again the protagonist (Anna Livia Plurabelle as the river) is joining her father (the sea) in a last ceremony; the father is lauded;[18] the emotion is high and mostly positive; peace and reconciliation are at hand. This last working,

15. See also Jean Kimball's "Family Romance and Hero Myth: A Psychoanalytic Context for the Paternity Theme in *Ulysses*," *James Joyce Quarterly* 20.2 (1983): 161-73.

16. See introduction of C. Hart and D. Hayman, *James Joyce's* Ulysses*: Critical Essays* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1974).

17. In her argument in *The Book as World* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1976).

18. Jean Kimball in "Family Romance and Hero Myth: A Psychoanalytic Context for the Paternity Theme in *Ulysses*" (*James Joyce Quarterly* 20.2 [1983]: 161-73) notes the exaltation of the father in Freud's discussion of family romances. She applies this to *Ulysses* and traces other lines of this *Knotenpunkt*.

written years after John Joyce's death, is the most beautiful because it is the fullest. It is not without psychological ambiguity, however. The father is revered but also seen with fearful awe ("therrble prongs" of the pier), and even held at arm's length with mockery: worship becomes washup. He is "feary," a portmanteau of faery and fearsome. Love and respect are held at the level of tenderness and nostalgia as in "Ecce Puer." They are not allowed to become overpowering awe. The protagonist has become feminine to obviate oedipal rivalry, in a familiar Freudian movement similar to the one in *Portrait*. Literary expression finally manages that old terror John Joyce.

As Joyce grew older, his father emerged more clearly in these endings. In *Ulysses*' last paragraphs, he appears only as Bloom—the father, Odysseus, of the text. Once John Joyce dies, the father in "Ecce Puer" appears plainly and simply as the unnamed but easily inferable John Joyce. The poem would still be quite veiled without our knowledge that it is about John Joyce's death and the birth of James's grandson. In *Finnegans Wake*, the father stretches out like the sea, in full positive affect, nuanced with psychological ambiguity.

The climactic endings are *Knotenpunkten* in dreamwork terminology, and as such are the nexuses of many of Joyce's armatures of construction: like Freud's dreams, *Ulysses* is ordered thematically (by *Knotenpunkt*) and referentially (by *Assoziationskette*), rather than ordered by Aristotelian (plot) considerations. As with dreamwork, it is difficult in the Joycean closure to isolate condensation from displacement. Generally all affect about males is condensed and displaced onto two figures: the positive affect onto the mourned preceder/father, and the negative onto the living rival/sibling. To reunite with the former, the protagonist shares his mourning in order to transcend the initial interposition of the dead. The mourning though profound is delicious because no unresolved issues remain. It is an act of subservience.

The rival figure has absorbed all the hatred, fear and contempt: Boylan and Mulligan; Robert Hand, the "other man" in *Exiles*; Shaun in *Finnegans Wake*. Joyce himself could be agonizingly jealous retrospectively (e.g., of Cosgrave).[19] His work first condenses and then splits his fathers, brothers, rivals (Cosgrave, Prezioso,[20] Gogarty[21]). They become the cuckolding malignant peer[22] and the benign precursor (dead father). Condensation and splitting are commonly concomitant in dreams.[23]

In *Ulysses*, written while John Joyce was still alive, Stephen's filial feel-

19. Ellmann, *James Joyce*, 288f.
20. Ibid., 288f.
21. Ibid., 327.
22. Ibid., 286-87.
23. See ibid., 255-63, for a discussion of "betrayal."

ings are less positive and less directly expressed. They are displaced onto Stephen's rumination about consubstantiality of the Father and the Son (the Arian and Sabellian heresies), and about Shakespeare's expression of filial and paternal feelings in *Hamlet* (after the *Odyssey* the most important literary source for *Ulysses*). The "pull of the repressed" causes Stephen to deny belief in his own conspicuously bizarre Hamlet theory: which is not "true" partly because it is a false (displaced) expression of its motive.

The father/son motif in *Ulysses* is always veiled: Freud and the *DSM IV* agree (unusually) that repressed anxiety is the cause of boredom: vide "Eumaeus." Bloom and Stephen's prior reunion in "Circe" is clouded by thunder and fireworks.

Freud also cites dreams in which the focus has been displaced in other ways besides redisposition of affect,[24] including rearrangement of logical or chronological sequence, repositioning of climax or other main element, and finally falsification of temporal emphasis by passing over the important or dwelling on the unimportant.

Displacement of focus of affect is represented by Stephen's preoccupation with paternity themes in *Hamlet* and Catholic heretical tradition, even as the novel's surface underplays his relationship with his father(s), particularly in the reunion (Stephen/Bloom).

Sequence is rearranged in every possible fashion even though *Ulysses* purports to follow a day chronologically. The temporal sequence of Bloomsday, for example, hops backwards four hours at the introduction of Bloom (the father). When one includes memories and the *Odyssey* parallel, the sequence is even more disarranged. These disarrangements have psychological etiology as will be seen.

The repositioning of the climax of *Ulysses* vis-à-vis the *Odyssey* occurs in several ways. The "yes I will Yes" motif (Bloom's proposal) which forms the closure of *Ulysses* has already been discussed earlier in this paper. Its introduction twice before the end of the novel (see discussion below) makes this swelling ending at least partially anticlimactic.

Of *Ulysses*' three possible emotional climaxes, at least two are handled with the same repression.

Private Carr's striking of Stephen is pretty straightforward. The only incident of completed violence in the novel is further emphasized by its position within the verbal climax of *Ulysses*, "Circe," and from the hallucinatory exaggeration which is the technique of this chapter. Additional weight is added by the relation of this incident to one of *Ulysses*' "latent dream thoughts"—Stephen's being attacked by the philistine/civic and eventually escaping from it into exile.

24. Freud, *Die Traumdeutung*, 445.

The working out of this "dream thought" can also account for "Telemakhos'" rejection of his father's advances in *Ulysses*: Stephen's rejection of Bloom's various offers and his unresponsiveness to the older man's friendliness. In "Circe," Bloom rescues Stephen. The father theme and the driven-into-exile-by-philistinism theme coalesce as they do in the "latent dream thought." Stephen is both driven into exile by his fatherland and unable or unwilling to find a father.

The reunion of Telemakhos and his father in "Eumaeus," on the other hand, becomes a tired and desultory meeting of acquaintances, Bloom and Stephen. The "repressed content" is Bloom's memory of his son Rudy, linked to the unconscious idea—at times explicit on Bloom's part—of a search for a son. Considered as a possible climax, given both the *Odyssey* parallel and the power of the father/son motif, Bloom and Stephen's meeting is very subdued.

The reunion of Odysseus and Penelope in "Penelope" seems the most positive and dramatic of *Ulysses*' climaxes. Molly's and Bloom's memories of his proposal to her on the Hill of Howth become the final swelling affirmation ("yes I will Yes") at the end of the novel. Joyce's closures are consistently lyrical. *Dubliners'* last story, "The Dead," its finest and longest, is its most ambitious. Its ultimate, purple passage includes a last image of snow falling not only over Dublin or Ireland, but on the living and the dead. *Finnegans Wake*'s final sublime passage centers around "it's old and old it's sad and old it's sad and weary I go back to you, my cold father, my cold mad father, my cold mad feary father." The book may be a circle of sorts, but this is where p. 628 out of 628 is found, with the words "Paris, 1922-1939"—Joyce's customary form of closure, practiced from *Dubliners* on.

But in the context of a repression of affect, the curious thing about *Ulysses*' ending is that it has been undercut by a previous anticlimactic rendering of the same event. The first time we hear of the Howth episode is in Bloom's reminiscence in "Lestrygonians." Accompanying him to lunch, we are surrounded by images of food, mostly repulsive, befitting the cannibalism of the *Odyssey* parallel. On p. 175:

> Stuck on the pane two flies buzzed, stuck. Glowing wine on his palate lingered swallowed. . . . Touched his sense moistened remembered. Hidden under wild ferns on Howth. . . . Pillowed on my coat she had her hair. . . . 0 wonder! Coolsoft with ointments her hand touched me caressed: her eyes upon me did not turn away. Ravished over her I lay . . . kissed her mouth. Yum. Softly she gave me in my mouth the seedcake warm and chewed. . . . Joy: I ate it: joy. . . . Flowers her eyes were, take me, willing eyes. . . . Screened under ferns she laughed warmfolded. . . . She kissed me. I was kissed. All yielding she tossed my hair. Kissed, she kissed me.
>
> Me. And me now.
>
> Stuck, the flies buzzed.

This is one of many places where we are deliberately made conscious that *Ulysses* takes place in a single unified mind. The novel purports to be the record of separate consciousnesses. But Joyce in his usual playfully destructive way undercuts this hypothesis both with striking anomalies—in whose mind is the history of English in "Oxen of the Sun" taking place?—and by letting one "consciousness" echo others in significant, dream-like ways. The coincidence here is Stephen's earlier poem with the line "mouth to her mouth's kiss" which grew in his mind in Chapter Three. "Glue 'em together well," Stephen thinks. The artist as a young man grows up to use the same image, or rather his representation of himself as a middle-aged man does.[25]

The glued-together mouths have become stuck flies, just as Stephen's comment undercuts (an exactly Heinean *Stimmungsbrechung*) his line of poetry. The episode which furnishes the most serious positive reflection on the state of man in the realistic part of this novel—the capitalized final "yes I will Yes"—is here slyly introduced sandwiched between the buzzing of coupling flies, in an atmosphere of unsavoury food. Of course in each chapter the handling of the motifs bends to the ethos of the chapter, but we have here if not the repression then still the denigration of *Ulysses*' most positive statement, its happiest moment.[26]

As a result readers wonder whether the closure can be taken seriously at all, making it part of the destructive/affirmative play of the novel as a whole. "'Yes' to what?" as Saul Bellow says,[27] pointing out that the end of "Oxen of the Sun," also a metapoetic commentary on the world's course, is gibberish.[28]

Joyce's disguise of the father/son reunion is a further example of such displacements, and the use of the "Circe" chapter—unimportant in the *Odyssey*—as linguistic and spatial climax is another. Such falsification of temporal length and relation, *Odyssey/Ulysses*, occurs throughout,[29] as does the disguise of emphasis and accent discussed in this essay. Joyce as artist fits very closely the model provided by Freud's dreamer: a uniquely gifted, demanding, recondite

25. The extended discussion—initiated by Hugh Kenner and extensively reviewed by Sheldon Brivic in *Joyce the Creator* (Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1985)—of "coincidences" or "synchronicities" in *Ulysses* (i.e., phrases, perceptions, and events common, unverisimilarly, to different characters) is in effect a discussion of associative, nexus (*Knotenpunkten*) construction.

26. Marilyn French in *The Book as World* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1976) sees this as a deliberate ploy, so to speak, on the part of David Hayman's "Arranger" to turn the reader against the dio boia who often narrates. Another way of putting the tension between cynicism and joy in *Ulysses* is Zack Bowen's emphasis ("*Ulysses* as a Comic Novel," *Joyce's* Ulysses, ed. Robert D. Newman and Weldon Thornton [Newark: U of Delaware P, 1987], 141-57) on Bloom's comedy and physical comfort with the world, which form "a hilarious celebration of life" overriding "the darkest existential problems" of "Stephen's position as would be tragic hero." Below I propose a third way.

27. Personal conversation, University of Chicago seminar, Fall 1975.

28. Whether *Ulysses* is truly comic or truly sardonic, and in what senses, is brilliantly discussed, with opposite conclusions, in Marilyn French's *The Book as World* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1976) and Zack Bowen's "*Ulysses* as a Comic Novel" in *Joyce's* Ulysses, ed. Robert D. Newman and Weldon Thornton (Newark: U of Delaware P, 1987). For me, the novel is "big" enough so that Joyce's negative capacity encompasses both: is "trivial *and* quadrivial" in his words.

29. Prescott has a fine detailed analysis of this in "Homer's *Odyssey* and Joyce's *Ulysses*," 427-29.

creator whose twin and indistinguishable goals are to express feelings and to deny easy access to that expression on the part of the philistine: mimetic fabrication designed to affirm and deny not according to the rules of logic but according to the rules of the deep, of the primary process.

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