

# THE BOOKS AT THE WAKE

*A Study of Literary Allusions*

*in*

*James Joyce's Finnegans Wake*

*by*

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## The Structural Books

'*The aximones*' (285.29)

The books which Joyce used when he was writing *Finnegans Wake* can be divided roughly into two classes according to the way in which he used them. The larger class would consist of books from which Joyce took a few words, perhaps only a single word, perhaps a phrase, or perhaps—from some books—as much as a page or two; but these words and phrases were chosen not for what they said but for the way in which they said it: it was the words themselves that interested him, not the ideas which they expressed. Such books could almost be described as Joyce's sources for the vocabulary of *Finnegans Wake*, but I shall discuss them, in the present study, under the general heading of 'Literary Sources'. The other group is much smaller, and consists of books from which Joyce took not only words but ideas; ideas which he embodied in *Finnegans Wake*. They are a strange and seemingly incompatible assortment, but Joyce knew from the beginning exactly the kind of book he wished to write and chose precisely those books which could provide him with the theoretical structure he required. The inevitability of his choice struck him so forcibly indeed that he wrote to Miss Weaver saying that certain books had 'gradually forced themselves upon me through circumstances of my own life'.<sup>1</sup>

The strangeness of *Finnegans Wake* as a literary phenomenon can be analysed as a uniqueness of style, of structure, and, of what may be called the interior logic of the book. These three features seem to me to be based on certain axioms which Joyce assumed from those books which I am describing as structural. And underlying all the other axioms is the fundamental assumption that the artist is God-like in his task of creation.<sup>2</sup> This romantic conception appears to me to be the basis of *Finnegans Wake*.

<sup>1</sup> *Letters*, p. 241. Letter dated '21 May, 1926'.

<sup>2</sup> 'Joyce seems to have taken quite seriously the romantic view of the artist as a kind of word-combining, word-erecting, surrogate for God.' Maurice Beebe, 'Whose Joyce?' *The Kenyon Review*, Vol. XVIII, No. 4, Autumn 1956, page 650.

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There was a medieval theory that God composed two scriptures: the first was the universe which he created after having conceived the idea of it complete and flawless in his mind; the second was the Holy Bible. What Joyce is attempting in *Finnegans Wake* is nothing less than to create a third scripture, the sacred book of the night, revealing the microcosm which he had already conceived in *his* mind. And as the phenomenal universe is built upon certain fundamental laws which it is the task of science and philosophy to discover, so the microcosm of *Finnegans Wake* is constructed according to certain fundamental axioms for which Joyce is careful to provide clues, but which it is the task of his readers to discover for themselves. None of his axioms originates entirely with Joyce, although his combination and development of them is fantastic in its originality, producing an account of a unique universe that is also unique as a literary phenomenon. It is an original and carefully integrated universe, but it cannot be understood without a knowledge of its basic sources.

The structure is based on the cyclic view of history which Joyce took from Vico, elaborated by Bruno's theories of monadism and innumerable worlds which Joyce read as a student, and the studies of Vico's *New Science* by Michelet and Quinet. The logic is taken from Lévy-Bruhl's works on primitive psychology, from some aspects of the theories of Giordano Bruno and Nicholas of Cusa, and—to a lesser extent—from Freud. The style was prescribed, in the very year that Joyce entered university, by Arthur Symons in his book, *The Symbolist Movement in Literature*, from theories propounded by Mallarmé. Joyce added to it Pound's dictum that every word must be fully charged with meaning; and developed it by using techniques from Wagnerian opera and other forms of music, by applying theories promulgated by painters, and by constant and unwearied experiment.

An adequate treatment of these 'structural books' would require far more space than can be given here. Richard M. Kain remarked in his book about *Ulysses* that 'To attempt to do more than scratch the surface of the immense companion volume, *Finnegans Wake*, would clearly exceed any reasonable limits of time and space',<sup>1</sup> and David Hayman has written a work in two volumes upon the influence of Mallarmé on Joyce<sup>2</sup> without completely exhausting his chosen topic. Since the aim of the present work is to explore the entire literary background of the *Wake* it will not be possible to give a complete

<sup>1</sup> Richard M. Kain, *Fabulous Voyager, James Joyce's Ulysses*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1947, p. 193.

<sup>2</sup> David Hayman, *Joyce et Mallarmé*. Paris: Lettres Modernes, 1956.

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account of any one aspect of it—even if I were certain that I knew every detail about it. All that I hope to do is to point out some of the basic facts.

The first, and most important fact—for the would-be reader of the *Wake*—is that it is not necessary to have read all of these source books to understand Joyce's strange book. All that is needed is a knowledge of the axioms Joyce took from them. This appears from the fact that Joyce, who was careful to explain to Miss Weaver which books she ought to read if she wished to understand his writing, never once told her to read any of the books dealt with in this section. Instead he explained to her what the theory was that he had taken from them. So in this section I shall first point out the books from which Joyce derived his theories and then try to suggest which are the basic axioms upon which *Finnegans Wake* was constructed.

But before doing so I feel that I should repeat the warning with which Samuel Beckett began the essay which first pointed out the importance of Vico in the *Wake*. 'The danger', he wrote, 'is in the neatness of identifications. The conception of Philosophy and Philology as a pair of nigger minstrels out of the Teatro dei Piccoli is soothing, like the contemplation of a carefully folded ham-sandwich. Giambattista Vico himself could not resist the attraction of such coincidence of gesture. . . . And now, here am I, with my handful of abstractions, among which notably: a mountain, the coincidence of contraries, the inevitability of cyclic evolution . . . Literary criticism is not book-keeping.'<sup>1</sup>

### VICO

Beckett was the first to mention Vico, but almost everyone who has written about the *Wake* since has discussed his influence, for Joyce forces him upon the reader's attention. His name is used over and over again, usually in a context concerned with the theme that history repeats itself, such as 'moves in vicous circles' (134.16), or 'by a commodius vicus of recirculation' (3.2) in that sentence which puts Vico's theory into practice by joining the beginning and end of the book together. It is probable that Joyce read Vico in the original, but all my references are to translations, and mainly to the only English translation (which was not published until after Joyce's death).<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *An Exagmination*, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Goddard Bergin and Marc Harold Fisch, *The New Science of Giambattista Vico*, translated from the third edition (1744). Ithaca, N.Y., Cornell University Press, 1948.

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Vico taught that God planned the universe down to the last detail of its history before the act of creation commenced, and although God's creation was unutterably complex yet it was ruled to the smallest particle of its structure by God's rigid law. Joyce seems to have decided that he also would go to the uttermost extreme in his way of creation and call into existence something approaching in complexity and as rigidly integrated as the universe itself. But the best known feature of Vico's philosophy is that he believed in the cyclic nature of history. This is a basic axiom in *Finnegans Wake* which has been pointed out many times. It accounts for the circular structure of the book in which the incidents described are to be considered as happening over and over again: 'Teems of times and happy returns. The seim anew. Ordovico . . .' (215.22). Satan fell, Adam fell, so also did Parnell fall and many another hero, and each fall is a repetition of the original story according to the 'Ordovico', or Vico's order. Vico described how in the first stage of history 'Men of gigantic stature . . . wander on the mountain heights. But at the first clap of thunder . . . as they felt the aspect of the heavens to be terrible to them and hence to inhibit their use of venery they must have learned to hold in check the bodily motion of lust.'<sup>1</sup> The giants are on page 4 of the *Wake* while the thunder rolls first on page 3. Vico goes on to describe how the giants dragged their women into caves for protection against the God of the thundering sky and so established the state of matrimony. 'Thus they founded families and governed them so that later as cities arose they taught the necessity of obedience and order.'<sup>2</sup>

By one of the odd coincidences which so often occur in the material of which the *Wake* is constructed Vico comes very close here to quoting the motto of the city of Dublin: *Obedientia civium urbis felicitas*; and Joyce did not fail to make use of the coincidence, as will be seen when heraldry is discussed. But Vico's first Age of Giants is mentioned frequently in the *Wake*, 'When mulk mountynotty man was everybully' (21.7), for example, and the building of cities comes as a consequence of 'this municipal sin business' which follows 'that tragoady thunders-day' (5.13). The theme, like all the themes in the *Wake*, recurs frequently, being given its most succinct expression in 'framm Sin fromm Son, acity arose' (94.18).

Vico based his theory of the origin of language on the assumption that thunder was the voice of God. The first men, he tells us, were mute; their only language was gesture. But they attempted (blasphemously perhaps) to imitate the voice of the thunder. Their first

<sup>1</sup> *The New Science of Giambattista Vico*, p. 378.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 379.

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words were stuttering, as was to be expected since the thunder itself stutters. In *Finnegans Wake* we meet them as Jute and Mutt:

Jute.—Whoa? Whoat is the mutter with you?

Mutt.—I became a stun a stummer.

Jute.—What a hauhauhauhaudibble thing, to be cause! (16.16). So, says Vico, 'Mutes utter formless sounds by singing and stammerers by singing teach their tongues to pronounce.' Joyce tells us that 'the sibspeeches of all mankind have foliated (earth seizing them!) from the root of some funner's stotter' (96.31). There is, as usual, another meaning here for *Sanfundets Stotter* is the Norwegian title of Ibsen's *Pillars of Society*. Society, we are being told, is founded upon stuttering. The theme is repeated frequently: 'Suppwose you get a beautiful thought and cull them sylvias sub silence. Then inmaggin a stotterer. Suppoutre him to been one biggermaster Omnibil' (337.16). Another Ibsen play, *The Masterbuilder*—in Norwegian *Bygmester Solnes*—is brought in to provide a symbol of a Fall. And it must be remembered that stuttering, according to the modern psychologists, is a neurotic symptom caused by a consciousness of guilt. Joyce is suggesting that the original masterbuilder is God and that He stutters when His voice is heard in the thunder—thus proving that He is conscious of having committed a sin!

This attribution of Original Sin to God is one of the basic axioms of *Finnegans Wake*. Joyce had studied theology under Jesuit teachers and knew that the official Catholic solution to the problem of the existence of pain in a world controlled by an omnipotent and loving God was to be found in the doctrine of Original Sin. Joyce transferred the responsibility for Original Sin to God. This, he says, is the original Fall. I will discuss the nature of this primordial sin in a later chapter on Joyce's use of the sacred books. Perhaps it will be enlightening to study this situation on other levels of the *Wake* and, in particular, to consider it on the autobiographical level. For Joyce's cosmic image of an angry God expressing Himself through a thundering sky is repeated in every small boy's household when the father of the family is enraged. And serenely behind the outraged father there rests—in Joyce's version—the mother-figure, Anna Livia. She is always calm, and always right. It is, indeed, to be regretted that her neighbours tell strange stories about her; but unlike her husband, who is constantly stuttering his apologies, she is aware of her virtue. This is a typical situation.

It is not the autobiographical details that concern us here but the structural formulae. And from what has been said so far it can, I think, be laid down that the following axioms from Vico apply to *Finnegans*

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*Wake*. 1. History is a cyclic process repeating eternally certain typical situations. 2. The incidents of each cycle have their parallels in all other cycles. 3. The characters of each cycle recur under new names in every other cycle. 4. Every civilization has its own Jove. 5. Every Jove commits again, to commence his cycle, the same original sin upon which creation depends. It would appear to follow from this that creation is the original sin.

Professor W. Y. Tindall has already pointed out that 'All three of Vico's languages appear in *Finnegans Wake*'.<sup>1</sup> According to Vico the three kinds of language were first, 'A divine mental language by mute religious acts or divine ceremonies . . . And it was necessary in the earliest times when men did not yet possess articulate speech . . . The second was by heroic blazonings with which arms are made to speak; this kind of speech . . . survived in military discipline . . . The third is by articulate speech which is used by all nations.'<sup>2</sup> Not realizing the use that Joyce was making of this statement by Vico I wrongly said in an article about Lewis Carroll and *Finnegans Wake* that by 'middle' and 'ancient tongue' Joyce meant simply Middle Egyptian. It is always unwise to say that Joyce only means one thing, practically every word in the *Wake* has at least two meanings, and it is now apparent to me that heraldry is also a middle ancient tongue and that the passage in which the phrase occurs is concerned with heraldry as well as with Middle Egyptian. The passage runs: 'To vert embowed set proper penchant. But learn from that ancient tongue to be middle old modern to the minute. A spitter that can be depended upon. Though Wonderlawn's lost to us forever. Alis, alas, she broke the glass! Liddell lokker through the leafery, ours is mistery of pain' (270.16). 'Vert' and 'Proper' are terms from heraldry brought into the *Wake* because it is Vico's 'Middle language'. Alice Liddell, Carroll's Alice, is portrayed as being an Eve before the Fall. We, coming after the Fall, have the mystery of pain, which has just been discussed. But Joyce is repudiating the Christian explanation and brings in the Ancient Egyptian creation myth of Atem who populated the world by spitting on the fertile mud. ('Take your mut for a first beginning . . . Anny liffle mud . . . will doob') (287.5). Other versions of this creation myth say that the first pair of gods, Shu and Tefnut, were begotten from the primeval mud pile by Atem's self-abuse.<sup>3</sup> This, of course, takes us back to the theory that the original

<sup>1</sup> W. Y. Tindall, *James Joyce, His Way of Interpreting the Modern World*. London: Charles Scribner's Sons, Ltd., 1950, p. 74.

<sup>2</sup> *Vico*, p. 69.

<sup>3</sup> See below in the chapter on 'The Sacred Books'.

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sin was God's. And in the passage I have quoted there is a group of allusions to Lord Tennyson and Lewis Carroll to which I will return later. For the present we are concerned with Vico's middle language which is heraldry.

The theme of heraldry is developed in various ways, the most frequently used example is the Dublin coat of arms. A. C. Fox-Davies, whose *Book of Public Arms* Joyce probably consulted, gives under 'DUBLIN, city of: Azure, three castles argent, flammant proper. Supporters: On either side a female figure proper, vested gules . . . Motto: Obedientia civium urbis felicitas.' The various coats of arms mentioned in the *Wake* include references to this, as, for example: 'His crest of huroldry, in vert with ancillars, troublant' (5.6). 'Ancillars' suggests antlers and the favourite Elizabethan joke about cuckoldry, which is the word that has mutated heraldry into 'huroldry'. The word 'Ancillars' also combines *Ancillae*, Latin for 'Handmaidens' as in the *Angelus*, *Ecce ancilla Domini*, with 'anklers' showing that, as Adaline Glasheen points out, the two temptresses of the *Wake* are derived from the Dublin supporters who are shown 'coyly pulling up their skirts to display their ankles'.<sup>1</sup> The three castles of the Dublin arms are used, in a way probably suggested by the old Irish expression, 'The Castle', for the government of Ireland, to serve as a sort of *kenning* for Dublin. 'His three shottoned castles' (22.33), 'the spy of three castles' (101.23), are examples of this usage. 'Shot two queans and shook three caskles' (128.17) brings in both the castles and the supporters.

Heraldic mottoes are frequently quoted in the *Wake*, where they are probably intended to supply examples of Vico's 'middle language'. The Dublin motto is the one used most often and it is quoted at least seven times in various distorted forms ranging from 'The hearsomeness of the burger felicitates the whole of the polis' (23.14) to 'And the ubideintia of the savium is our ervics fenicitas' (610.7).<sup>2</sup> The last example follows a distorted version of another motto which is often used in the *Wake*. This is the motto of the House of Savoy which is: 'F.E.R.T.' and is interpreted in two ways, *Fortitudo eius Rhodum tenuit*, and *Foemina erit ruina tua*.<sup>3</sup> Joyce gives five mutations of the first

<sup>1</sup> *A Census*, p. 136.

<sup>2</sup> The others are: 76.8: the obedience of the citizens elp the ealth of the ole. 140.6: Thine obesity, O civilian, hits the felicitude of our orb! 277.7: To obedient of civicity in urbanious at felicity . . . 494.21: Obeisance so their sitinins is the follicity of this Orp; and 540.25: Obeyance from the townsmen spills felicity by the toun.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Chassant et Tuasin, *Dictionnaire des Devises*. Paris, 1896, I, 119. Other meanings are given in Brewer's *Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*, article 'Annunciation'.

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version all including a change from *Rhodus*, Rhodes to *Rhodanus*, the river Rhône.<sup>1</sup> I suspect that in every case the reader is expected to infer both meanings. We are told that H.C.E. 'Made a fort out of his postern and wrote F.E.R.T. on his buckler' (127.9), and here again I think that both meanings are intended. The motto of Belfast, *Pro tanto quid retribuamus* (521.10), and Ulster's 'Red hand' (522.4) are also used. Several versions of the Garter motto are given such as 'Honey swarns where mellisponds' (238.33), while the German name for the Order appears as 'rossy banders' (250.3), from *Hosenband*.

Another thing Joyce took from Vico, in addition to his cyclic theory of history and his theory of language, was his way of using etymology. According to Vico the course of history could be inferred from etymology since the story of man's progress was embedded in the structure of the words we use. In *Finnegans Wake* words are constructed so as to contain within themselves sufficient data to allow the structure of the entire work to be deduced from any typical word. Niall Montgomery, a Dublin architect, has already pointed this out—in phraseology suited to his profession—when he prefaced some valuable lists he has compiled of the occurrence of the letters H.C.E. and A.L.P. in the *Wake* by saying that they were intended 'principally to show in what detail and with what fidelity the highly polished cladding reflects the structural details of Mr. Finnegan's unique building'.<sup>2</sup>

## QUINET

It may have been the interest they shared in Vico that caused Joyce to be attracted to the work of Edgar Quinet. The sentence which is quoted in full (281.4) and twice parodied at full length (14.35 and 236.19) has not, to my knowledge, been previously traced in Quinet's works. It comes from his *Introduction à la Philosophie de l'Histoire de l'Humanité*.<sup>3</sup> In this essay Quinet discusses history as it is presented by Vico and Herder. 'Nous touchons aux premières limites de l'histoire; nous quittons les phénomènes physiques pour entrer dans le dédale

<sup>1</sup> 53.16: In all fortitudinous ajaxious rowdinoisy tenuacity.

93.8: fortytudor ages rawdownhams tanyouhide.

258.4: Fulgitudes ejist rowdownnan tonuout.

515.9: Fortitudo eius rhodannum tenuit?

610.6: Fulgitududo ejus Rhedonum teneat!

<sup>2</sup> Niall Montgomery, 'The Pervigilium Phoenicis', *New Mexico Quarterly*, Vol. XXIII, No. 4, Winter, 1953, p. 451.

<sup>3</sup> Edgar Quinet, *Œuvres Complètes*. Paris: Pagnerre, 1857, Vol. II, p. 367.

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des révolutions qui marquent la vie de l'humanité . . . Le moindre grain de sable battu des vents a en lui plus d'éléments de durée que la fortune de Rome ou de Sparte.<sup>1</sup> Joyce uses the same idea: 'A hatch, a celt, an earshare. . . . When a part so ptee does duty for the holos we soon grow to use of an allforabit' (18.30). All history is to be deduced from any part of the created universe. Yet it is found most completely in the mind of any human being. 'L'histoire,' writes Quinet, 'telle qu'elle est réfléchie et écrite dans le fond de nos âmes, en sorte que celui qui se rendrait véritablement attentif à ses mouvements intérieurs, retrouverait la série entière des siècles comme ensevelie dans sa pensée . . . J'aperçus, pour la première fois, [on reading Vico] le nombre presque infini d'êtres semblables à moi, qui m'avaient précédé . . . Chaque empire avait envoyé jusqu'à moi la loi, l'idée, l'essence des phénomènes dont s'est composée sa destinée. A mon insu, la vieille Chaldée, la Phénicie, Babylone . . . s'étaient résumées dans l'éducation de ma pensée et se mouvaient en moi. Ce m'était un spectacle étrange d'y retrouver leurs ruines vivantes, et de sentir s'agiter dans mon sein . . . l'âme que mon être a recueillie comme un son lointain apporté d'échos jusqu'à lui.'<sup>2</sup> This is the way in which Joyce is writing his 'ideal eternal history', for *Finnegans Wake* can be taken as being the story of one man, or one family, or of one city or country, or of all humanity and the entire course of history, since all these are progressive expansions of one story.

### NICHOLAS OF CUSA

This is by no means a new idea. Nicholas of Cusa himself connected it with the old theory of Man, the Microcosm. 'Human nature,' he wrote, 'is raised above all the works of God, constricting the universe in itself, whence the ancients rightly named it Microcosmos.'<sup>3</sup> Joyce mentions Nicholas of Cusa twice, first along with 'Coincidence of contraries' (49.36), his best-known doctrine, and secondly with 'learned ignorants' (163.16) from the title of his chief work *De Docta Ignorantia*. But there is no evidence that Joyce ever read any of his books, although he would have noticed that Giordano Bruno says that he derived some of his ideas from Nicholas of Cusa and often quotes him with approval,<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 367.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 381.

<sup>3</sup> Nicholas de Cusa, *De Docta Ignorantia*, III, 3, 46.

<sup>4</sup> For example there is an entire paragraph from 'Lo dotta ignoranza del Cusano' quoted in the 4th dialogue of *De l'infinito universi e mondi*.

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and we know that Joyce had read Bruno while he was still an undergraduate, for he quotes from the *Eroici Furori* in his first published work, 'The Day of the Rabblement'.<sup>1</sup>

### GIORDANO BRUNO

Bruno and Nicholas of Cusa alike believed in the coincidence of contraries. Joyce uses this theory to strange effect in *Finnegans Wake* where, for example, an arguing pair like Butt and Taff can suddenly become 'one and the same person' (354.8) because they are 'equals of opposites . . . and polarised for reunion by the symphysis of their antipathies' (92.8). Bruno also stated in his *Of the Infinite Universe and Innumerable Worlds* that 'The actual and the possible are not different in eternity.'<sup>2</sup> It is from this that Joyce derives his assumption that the events and characters described in history, literature and myth have equal validity. Maria Martin, Hamlet and the Duke of Wellington are characters of the same kind. Bruno also maintained that each thing contained the whole. By this he seems to have meant that the universe is made up of separate entities each constituting a simulacrum of the universe. This was a fairly common medieval theory and provides another source for the axiom already suggested that in *Finnegans Wake* each individual word reflects the structure of the entire book. Bruno's theories went much further and suggest several other possible axioms governing the construction of the *Wake*. He claimed that there was an infinite number of entities ranging in value from the minimum to the maximum—which was God; and that each entity except the last was continually changing and not merely by becoming greater or less but by exchanging identities with other entities. This suggests the behaviour of characters and words in the *Wake* where every part tends to change its identity all the time.

Bruno's name is mentioned over a hundred times in the *Wake*, much more often than any other philosopher's. As has been frequently pointed out he is usually personified as the firm of Dublin booksellers, Browne and Nolan. This is probably because of his habit of referring to himself in his writings as 'il Nolano'. Professor Tindall has pointed out that 'Tristopher and Hilary, the twins of the Frankquean legend,

<sup>1</sup> In *Two Essays*. See Slocum and Cahoon, *A Bibliography of James Joyce*. London: Rupert Hart-Davis, 1953, p. 71.

<sup>2</sup> John Toland, *A Collection of Several Pieces with an Account of Jordano Bruno's Of the Infinite Universe and Innumerable Worlds*. London, 1726, p. 322.

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get their names of sadness and joy from Bruno's motto: *In tristitia hilaris hilaritate tristis*.<sup>1</sup> It appears on the title page of Bruno's play, *Il Candelajo*. The title of one of Bruno's books is quoted in the 'Night Lesson' Chapter, 'Trionfante di bestia!' (305.15). This is *Il Spaccio di Bestia Trionfante*, 'The Expulsion of the Triumphant Beast', but none of the axioms that I have quoted is taken from this book.

Many commentators on *Finnegans Wake* have discussed the influence of Bruno on Joyce. Probably Joyce was first attracted to him as a self-confessed 'Restless spirit that overturns the structure of sound discipline' (*Spirto inquieto, che subverte gli edifici di buone discipline*),<sup>2</sup> and as a heretic who was burned to death. But he is not likely to have read his work very thoroughly for Bruno is one of the most verbose of all writers and on one occasion takes a page to say that he himself, *Il Nolano*, calls things by their right names: *Chiama il pane pane, il vino vino, il capo capo, il piede piede . . .*<sup>3</sup> and so on to say that 'He calls bread bread, wine wine, a head a head, a foot a foot' until he has given nearly a hundred examples of his own virtue in calling things by their right names. Joyce seems to have read this passage, and probably many more, for practice in Italian when he was an undergraduate, doubtless fortified against the boredom by the thrill of meeting so notorious a heretic in the original text, and by his confidence that Bruno was an author too obscure to be read by anyone else in Dublin. Years afterwards, when planning *Finnegans Wake*, he remembered the theories of Bruno. Probably he then looked up Bruno again and found him just what he was needing, although he also seems to have found his style irritating on a second reading, and appears to be parodying the passage I have just quoted in 'did not say to the old old, did not say to the scorbutic, scorbutic' (136.10). It also seems probable, from various hints in the *Wake*, that Joyce also consulted Coleridge's translations of parts of Bruno's works in *The Friend* (1809-10, No. VI, pp. 81-2).

## FREUD AND JUNG

Even more discussed than Bruno's influence on the *Wake* is the question of the extent to which Freud and Jung influenced Joyce's work. Kane and Magalaner suggest that the mythological level in the *Wake* is based on the work of Jung,<sup>4</sup> and point out that 'while Freud

<sup>1</sup> W. Y. Tyndal, *James Joyce*, p. 86.

<sup>2</sup> *Opere di Giordano Bruno, Nolano*, Leipzig, 1830, Vol. 2, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 108.

<sup>4</sup> Kane and Magalaner, p. 219.

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and Jung may have disagreed in matters of detail concerning the relation of dream to myth, Joyce's genius for extracting from any system what suited his special needs allowed him to build his "Eyrwyggla saga" on elements from both analysts that, to the mind of the lay reader, would not appear to conflict.<sup>1</sup>

Yet it is to be noticed that the twelve essays in *An Exagmination*, which were on lines suggested by Joyce himself, contain no mention of Jung and only a passing one of Freud. This latter is by William Carlos Williams who writes, 'Rebecca West . . . speaks of transcendental tosh, of Freud, of anything that comes into her head',<sup>2</sup> which sounds as if he thought that Freud had nothing at all to do with *Finnegans Wake*. It is also significant that Joyce never suggested to Miss Weaver that there was anything derived from the work of Jung or Freud in his books. But both Jung and Freud are mentioned several times in the *Wake*, often combined as one person,<sup>3</sup> and an essay by Frederick J. Hoffman<sup>4</sup> which was included by Seon Givens in his *Two Decades of Joyce Criticism* points out conclusively that the business at one point in *Finnegans Wake* is based on a dream described by Freud in his *Interpretation of Dreams*. Joyce is probably acknowledging this when he quotes the title of Freud's book, 'An intrepidation of our dreams' (338.29). Hoffman goes on to suggest that Joyce makes use of all the various devices which Freud points out as typical of the dream.<sup>5</sup> Jung has written a paper on the subject of *Ulysses*<sup>6</sup> which discusses Joyce's work with respect, and Harry Levin remarks that 'The elementary symbols for man and woman are Freud's, a building and a body of water.'<sup>7</sup>

Yet Joyce seems to have had a feeling of hostility to Jung. It was suggested by Herbert Gorman<sup>8</sup> that Joyce lost the regular grant he was receiving from Mrs. McCormick because he refused to be psycho-analysed by Jung. The situation recurs in the *Wake*: 'You have

<sup>1</sup> Kane and Magalaner, p. 228.

<sup>2</sup> *An Exagmination*, p. 182.

<sup>3</sup> 'Yung and easily freudened' (115.22); 'his freudzay' (337.7); 'Jungfraud's Messongebok' (460.20).

<sup>4</sup> *Two Decades*, p. 401. The dream is connected with 'Irmages' (486.34). Cf. *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Chapter 7.

<sup>5</sup> *Two Decades*, p. 402.

<sup>6</sup> Carl G. Jung, 'Ulysses—ein Monolog', *Europaische Revue*, Vol. VIII, 1932, pp. 547-68. English translation, 'Ulysses—A Monologue', *Nimbus*, Vol. II, June 1953, pp. 7-20.

<sup>7</sup> Harry Levin, *James Joyce*, p. 113.

<sup>8</sup> Herbert Gorman, *James Joyce, a Definitive Biography*. London: John Lane, The Bodley Head, 1941, pp. 235-6 and 261.

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homosexual catheis of empathy between narcissism of the expert and steatopygic invertedness. Get yourself psychoanalised!

—O, begor, I want no expert nursis symaphy from yours broons quadroons and I can psokoonaloose myself any time I want (the fog follow you all) without your interferences or any other pigeonstealer' (522.30). In a letter to Miss Weaver Joyce wrote that when Jung was asked to write a preface to the German edition of *Ulysses* he 'replied with a very long and hostile attack',<sup>1</sup> and it is noticeable that the mutations to which the names of Jung, and more particularly Freud are subjected are generally pejorative. A 'freudful mistake' (411.35) could be explained as being simply a description of the sort of blunder described by Freud in his *Psychopathology of Everyday Life*, and the reference to girls 'when they were yung and easily freudened' (115.23), as a reasonable comment on the defencelessness of the immature before the modern psychological techniques. But 'Jungfraud's Messongebook' (460.20) carries an unmistakable suggestion of deceit and lies. Yet Joyce's dislike of Jung and Freud did not prevent him from using their discoveries. I doubt if he accepted Jung's theory of the collective unconscious; and the technical terms such as 'Libido' (417.17), 'subnesciousness' (224.17) and 'sobconscious' (377.28) are generally mutated in such a way as to suggest that they are used mainly for decoration, as in 'ondrawer of our unconscionable, flickerflapper fore our unterdrugged' (266.30) where the last word is based on the German *unterdrückt*, 'repressed'. Perhaps the main axiom he takes from Freud is that 'A word, being a point of junction for a number of conceptions, possesses, so to speak, a predestined ambiguity.'<sup>2</sup> Freud goes on to say that in dreams *either/or* equals *and*. Joyce quotes this (and the title of a book by Kierkegaard) as:

'either or.

And.

Nay, rather.' (281.27)

This occurs on the page, to which I have often referred, on which the sentence from Quinet is quoted. It could be applied to the theory of the identity of opposites of Nicholas of Cusa. Indeed, Joyce succeeds in integrating his incompatible-seeming extracts into a homogeneous whole.

<sup>1</sup> *Letters*, p. 294. Letter dated '27 Sept. 1930'.

<sup>2</sup> Sigmund Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, trans. A. A. Brill, 3rd ed. London: Allen and Unwin, 1919, p. 315.

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MORTON PRINCE

To oppose the identity of opposites which causes a fusion of opposed characters Joyce sets a tendency on the part of all his characters to split up into two parts. The chief source for this has already been pointed out by Adaline Glasheen.<sup>1</sup> It is *The Dissociation of a Personality* by Morton Prince,<sup>2</sup> a neurologist who had as patient in Boston, Mass., a young woman whom he calls 'Miss Christine L. Beauchamp', and who was one of the most famous cases of multiple personality. Her subconscious self, identified by Prince as 'Sally', plays an important part in the *Wake*,<sup>3</sup> as the secondary personality, or looking-glass sister of H.C.E.'s daughter. Sally painted spots and moustaches on Miss Beauchamp when she was asleep, simply to annoy the personality who primarily possessed her body. Joyce's Issy talks of 'my linkingclass girl, she's a fright, poor old dutch, in her sleeptalking when I paint the measles on her and mudstuskers to make her a man' (459.4). The famous letter from Boston, Mass., in the *Wake* is given that address to connect it with Sally's letters. There were two sets of these. The first were written to Miss Beauchamp whom she was constantly mocking and addresses as 'My sainted Christine'<sup>4</sup> when accusing her of being too friendly with Morton Prince. Joyce refers to this in a passage where Issy is talking about her secondary personalities: 'With best from, cinder Christinette if prints chumming' (280.21). Here 'prints' hides the name Prince with whom Christine is 'chumming' and finding a Prince Charming. Sally's second set of letters are still more unusual, for when she discovered that Morton Prince's treatment would end in the extinction of her personality she insisted that 'People before they died wrote their "last will and testament" . . . so she must write hers . . . I never saw it but heard about it from IV [another personality] who was puzzled by what she read. . . . Then Sally wrote a number of letters about people.'<sup>5</sup> She then buried all her documents. 'I wrote me hopes and buried the page' (624.4), says Anna Livia, and there are a great many other allusions to Morton Prince's book. Prince finally found that Miss Beauchamp had four personalities and succeeded in integrating

<sup>1</sup> Adaline Glasheen, 'Finnegans Wake and the Girls from Boston, Mass.', *The Hudson Review*, Vol. VII, No. 1, 1953, pp. 90-6.

<sup>2</sup> Morton Prince, *The Dissociation of a Personality*. New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1906.

<sup>3</sup> *A Census* lists sixteen occurrences of the name Sally (p. 115).

<sup>4</sup> *The Dissociation of a Personality*, p. 127.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 487.

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them. His name is mentioned perhaps three times in the *Wake*,<sup>1</sup> most demonstrably as 'prince . . . the mort' (460.12), but never very clearly, and always combined with other implications. This may be meant to indicate that other sources for the theme of dissociation are being used. One such source which I think is mentioned is that of a young woman called Mollie Fancher, whose numerous personalities had names including Idol, Pearl, and Sunbeam.<sup>2</sup> Vague reflections of this case appear in the passage which has already been mentioned where Issy speaks of her split personalities.<sup>3</sup>

But there are many sources for the way in which all the characters in the *Wake* split up into parts at some place in the book. The map of Dublin suggests one possible basis for the phenomenon for the city of Dublin, which is—in a way—the hero of Joyce's story, is divided into two parts by the Liffey. The Liffey itself splits at Island Bridge, otherwise known as Sarah Bridge, a name which presents Joyce with another connection with Sally. The theme connects also with what Kenner calls 'Joyce's anti-selves' and derives some of its intricacies from details of Joyce's life which I am not concerned with here. It is also necessary to remember that these cases of what is now called dissociated personality would not long ago have been described as demonic possession, for this is not a thing which Joyce would forget. Indeed, Christine Beauchamp herself told Morton Prince that she was possessed by a devil, and Joyce's Issy writes a footnote, 'Well, Maggy, I got your castoff devils all right and fits lovely' (273, note 6). But it is not usual in the *Wake* for women to be possessed by devils. This is a thing which happens to men while women simply split up into parts.

### JAMES HOGG

Perhaps the reason for the difference is that Joyce's source for demonic possession concerns only a masculine victim. It is James Hogg's *Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner*, in which the soul of the chief character is possessed by a devil named Gilmartin that drives him to ruin. The word 'gill' in the *Wake* has the meaning of 'devil' from this source. Every male character has an 'everdevoting fiend' (408.18) with whom he forms a 'musichall pair' (408.26). Gill is the 'ogog hogs in the humand' (366.26). Hogg's name lends itself to

<sup>1</sup> *A Census* gives: '239.29; 246.26; 280.22; 365.28; 460.12 . . . 22'.

<sup>2</sup> Abram H. Dailey, *Mollie Fancher, the Brooklyn Enigma*. Brooklyn, 1894.

<sup>3</sup> 'Daly . . . maid of the folley . . . Rosecarmon.' (526.20 . . . 21 . . . 28). 'It's meemly us two, meme idoll' (527.24).

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Joyce's mania for puns, so does Dublin's. H.C.E. is 'The dibble's own doges for doublin existents' (578.13), indeed 'There were three men in him' (113.14). Butt speaks to Taff of 'is boesen fiend' (345.33), which means a bosom fiend as well as a fiendish or Finnish bos'un, and 'salt bacon' (345.30) connects this to Hogg who is usually brought in in some similar way when fiends are mentioned. 'To be upright as his match . . . did I altermobile him to a flare insiding hogsfat' (483.23), says Yaun of one of his 'anti-selves'. References to Edinburgh in the *Wake* derive from Hogg's book in which much of the action takes place in that city. It is the devil who is responsible for 'The hubbub caused in Edenborough' (29.35), just as it was the devil who was responsible for the trouble in the garden of Eden. One of the incidents which is mentioned by Hogg: his hero's vision of his own shadow magnified enormously as it is cast on the clouds from Arthur's Seat, is mentioned by Joyce in 'Heidinburgh in the days when old Head-in-Clouds walked the earth' (18.21).<sup>1</sup> Arthur's Seat is mentioned as 'arthruseat' (577.28) facing the words 'the labyrinth of their samilikes and the alteregoases of their pseudoselves' (576.32), and Edinburgh becomes 'odinburgh' (487.9) inhabited by 'addlefoes', seven lines after it has been said that 'you might, bar accidens, be very largely substituted in potential secession from your next life by a complementary character, voices apart' (487.2). This 'complementary character' is usually an enemy, 'his biografiend in fact, kills him' (55.6) as Joyce says, in a passage where I think the reader is also expected to find the words: 'By Hogg—a fiend.'

The effect of this splitting up of characters in *Finnegans Wake*, or of their possession by devils, is to produce continual examples of the theme of the 'Warring Brothers'. The brothers constantly alternate between union and conflict. Sometimes both states are contained in a single word. For example 'Bettlimbraves' (246.33) is at first glance 'battling braves', and shows the brothers opposed. But there is a Swiss-German phrase, 'Brav im Bettli', which has been reversed to produce the Redskin warriors and means 'Good children tucked up in their little beds'. Joyce may have made use of Rendell Harris's books on the Dioscuri for some of the ramifications of the theme, but usually it seems to be connected with the autobiographical level of the *Wake*. The opposed characters often seem to be Joyce and one or other of his friends and rivals, and as I am dealing here only with the literary sources I shall not pursue this theme further.

<sup>1</sup> This passage also alludes to the sight of God's person granted to Moses and Haggai, Ex. 33:16, and Gen. 16:13, and to Odin as 'Head in Clouds'.

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### LÉVY-BRUHL

The plurality of characters, however, ties up with another aspect of the *Wake* which has a literary source from which Joyce took little more than a few axioms. The source-books in this case are the works on anthropology by Professor Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, whose appearance in *Finnegans Wake* has long been recognized and is discussed in *A Skeleton Key*,<sup>1</sup> where his theories are said to 'be immensely helpful' to the reader of *Finnegans Wake*. But the passage where he is most obviously mentioned seems typically ambivalent in its comments. Joyce is 'down-trodding on my foes. Professor Levi-Brullo, F.D., of Sexe-Weiman-Eitelnaky finds, from experiments made by hinn with his Nuremberg eggs in the one hands and the watches cunldron apan the oven . . .' (151.11). Joyce is repeating the old joke about the absent-minded professor who boiled his watch while holding the egg in his hand. But in *Finnegans Wake* it is not certain which is the egg and which is the watch; indeed the egg is a Nuremberg egg, which is the oldest kind of watch, and the watch may be a witch's cauldron. But whichever they are the professor's equipment is undoubtedly old-fashioned. More important (in *Finnegans Wake*) his language is out of date—out of use, in fact—for he 'importunes our *Mitleid* for in accornish with the Mortadartella tradition' (-.19). That is, he is speaking in Cornish, a language nobody uses, and this is 'the poorest commonguardiant waste of time'. A little further down the page he has to share his identity, perhaps according to his own theories of bi-presence, with Wyndham Lewis as 'Llewellys ap Bryllars', and 'the plea, if he pleads, is all posh and robbage'.

In spite of this attack on Lévy-Bruhl in the *Wake* Joyce seems to have made use of his theories. Or at least, if it is assumed that his theories are being used, certain aspects of the *Wake* become less obscure. Joyce's 'Personal Library' at Buffalo contains two of Lévy-Bruhl's books:<sup>2</sup> *L'Ame Primitive*, and *L'Expérience Mystique et les Symboles chez les Primitifs*. But Professor Connolly notes<sup>3</sup> that the first book was apparently never opened: 'Though machine-cut there are hundreds of pages still attached at the upper right hand corner.' It was given to Joyce by the author, as was the other book which has an inscription mentioning a 'too short meeting' between Joyce and Lévy-

<sup>1</sup> *A Skeleton Key*, p. 95 note.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas E. Connolly, *The Personal Library of James Joyce*, p. 24.

<sup>3</sup> Loc. cit.

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Bruhl at Copenhagen. Perhaps Joyce got his knowledge of Lévy-Bruhl's theories from the conversation at this meeting—more probably he had already read his books and never bothered to reread them in his presentation copies.

One thing Joyce took from Lévy-Bruhl was the attitude of some primitive peoples towards number. Many primitive tribes do not count. They have only two numbers: one and more than one. The grammar of most languages makes the same assumption: number is either singular or plural. Lévy-Bruhl tells us that: 'In a great many primitive peoples . . . the only names for numbers are one and two.'<sup>1</sup> Of one tribe in Borneo, the Abipones, Lévy-Bruhl says they 'refuse to count as we do . . . They are not only ignorant of arithmetic but they dislike it. To rid themselves of questions on the subject they show any number of fingers they like, sometimes thus cheating themselves, sometimes others.'<sup>2</sup> Again we are told that 'duality is often the antithesis of unity by qualities which are diametrically opposite since it signifies, implies and produces the exact contrary of that which unity signifies, implies and produces. Where unity is a principle of good, order, perfection and happiness, duality is a principle of evil, disorder, imperfection: a sign, that is, a cause of misfortune.'<sup>3</sup>

On the other hand, while numbers have no arithmetical significance they possess a magical importance. According to Lévy-Bruhl, 'there is no number among the first ten that does not possess supreme mystical importance for some social group or other'.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, 'certain multiples of numbers of mystic value participate in the peculiar properties of those numbers'.<sup>5</sup> This is the state of affairs in *Finnegans Wake*. So far as arithmetic is concerned there is simply unity and diversity. But each of the main characters has a number as well as a symbol, and certain numbers—of which 1132 is the most prominent—have a mystical value which has still not been satisfactorily explained. The particular character assigned to each number may have been obtained by Joyce from some works on occultism and the Cabbala. On the other hand he may simply have been following the mocking advice given by Swift in *A Tale of a Tub* to pick out some favourite numbers and insist that all kinds of things could be explained by them. But before discussing this possibility I wish to point out another

<sup>1</sup> Lucien Lévy-Bruhl, *How Natives Think*, translated by Lilian A. Clare. London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1926, p. 181.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 183.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 209.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 209.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 219.

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strange feature of *Finnegans Wake* that may owe something to the work of Lévy-Bruhl.

Joyce has an extraordinary way of putting into his book the names of all kinds of things, and all sorts of people. There are several thousand characters identified in *A Census*, and at least another thousand may be hidden in the *Wake*, and for many—probably for most—of them Joyce seems to have been quite satisfied simply to include their names. Many hundreds of books are also named; and there are all kinds of more or less complete sets of different kinds of objects scattered through the book: most of the books of the Bible, about a hundred and eleven suras of the Koran, the titles—and, fantastically enough, the names of the original airs—of all Moore's Melodies. Most of the Lord Mayors of Dublin are named, and most of Ibsen's plays; and I think there is at least one quotation from every single play by Shakespeare. All kinds of other things are listed. Probably the most widely known fact about the *Wake* is that it contains hundreds of river names. But nobody has ever been able to suggest what purpose is served by this inclusion of names, except that perhaps the reader will unconsciously absorb an effect of rivers from reading river names, and this can hardly be extended to Joyce's collection of the titles of the suras of the Koran. Did Joyce, perhaps, adopt a principle described by Lévy-Bruhl as being almost universal among primitive people? They believe that there is a real and material connection between a man and his name; and many peoples are confused as to the difference between a name and a thing. "I know," said one man, "that this man put many of our buffaloes into his book, for I was with him, and we have had no buffaloes since to eat, it is true."<sup>1</sup> It is not impossible that Joyce himself had some such idea in mind, indeed he frequently claimed that to be mentioned in his book had an effect on the people named that was often drastic and sometimes fatal.<sup>2</sup> He seems to have had some odd idea that his work could subsume the things it named, and it seems to have been something very close to the primitive belief which he must have thought to contain some element of truth.

## THE OCCULTISTS

Joyce had, undoubtedly, many strange superstitions. He no longer believed in the Catholic faith, but this does not by any means imply that

<sup>1</sup> Lévy-Bruhl, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

<sup>2</sup> E.G., *Letters*, p. 129. Letter dated '20 July 1919'.

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he had lost all belief in the supernatural. Adaline Glasheen says in her introduction to *A Census of Finnegans Wake* that 'Joyce did not forsake received religion in order to enslave himself, as most rationalists have, to received history'. Instead, Joyce repeated the course of history in his own life, for, as Bertrand Russell pointed out, 'The first effect of emancipation from the Church was not to make men think rationally but to open their minds to every sort of antique nonsense.'<sup>1</sup> And it is precisely the philosophers whose work is fullest of antique nonsense to whom Joyce was attracted. His choice of sources leads one to reflect that in reality, as well as in its reflection on library shelves, philosophy quickly shades off into all kinds of shady subjects. Spiritualism, occultism, alchemy, the Cabbala, and the works of such people as Hermes Trismegistus and Paracelsus: these are the sources in which we are given to understand that Joyce was deeply read. It is, however significant that the only quotation from the 'Hermetic sayings' or the 'Smaragdine Tablet' is 'The tasks above are as the flasks below, saith the emerald canticle of Hermes' (263.21), which is probably based on Arthur Symons's reference to 'the secret which he Smagdarine Tablet of Hermes betrays in its "As things are below, so are they above"';<sup>2</sup> for his version is closer to Symons's than to the original text which runs: 'that which is below is like to that which is above, to accomplish the miracle of one thing.'

It seems to me very unlikely that Joyce was deeply read in esoteric lore. A great deal has been made of his use of the title of Michael of Northgate's *Ayenbite of Inwyt* in *Ulysses*. The suggestion has even been made<sup>3</sup> that the *Ayenbite* is a valuable, though obscure, source for some intricate points of theology. In fact, there is nothing original in it from the viewpoint of theology and it is not really an obscure book. Joyce would meet it, not in the traditionally dusty recesses of some monastic library, but in some standard Middle English reader such as Sisam's *Fourteenth Century Verse and Prose* where it is stated that Michael of Northgate's work is simply a translation of a French book, and that 'his translation is inaccurate, and sometimes unintelligible, and the treatment is so barren of interest that the work seems to have fallen flat even in its own day . . . But if its literary merit is slight, linguistically it is one of the most important works in Middle English.' The reasons for its importance are that it provides 'a long prose text,

<sup>1</sup> Bertrand Russell, *A History of Western Philosophy*. London: 1946, p. 523.

<sup>2</sup> Arthur Symons, *The Symbolist Movement in Literature*. London: William Heinemann, 1899, p. 125.

<sup>3</sup> J. Mitchell Morse, 'Augustine, *Ayenbite*, and *Ulysses*', *MPLA*, Vol. LXX, No. 5, Dec. 1955, pp. 1143-1159.

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exactly dated and exactly localized; we have the author's autograph copy to work from; and the dialect is well distinguished.<sup>1</sup> In fact, for a student of the English language the *Ayenbite* is required reading, but no student of theology would give it a second thought; what attracted Joyce to it was its title, and that is the only part of it that he used.

This is not to deny that Joyce's reading was extraordinarily wide, and that many of the books he used have not yet been traced. There are undoubtedly several books on alchemy underlying the chapter of 'Night Lessons' (260.308). The phrase 'mehrkurios than saltz of sulphur' (261.25), for example, refers to the alchemical equation of mercury, salt, and sulphur with the Blessed Trinity,<sup>2</sup> as the Greek *kyrios* is pointing out. And the aspect of the *Wake* which has been most stressed in this section—its confrontation of the universe with a microcosm—derives ultimately from alchemical thought, to which it was—according to a modern authority<sup>3</sup>—as important as the theory of Evolution is today. The concept in the passage 'topside joss pidgin fella Balkelly' (611.4) that the colour of an object is no part of its real nature, or alternatively is its only reality, may also derive from alchemical thought<sup>4</sup> although its context suggests the works of Berkeley and some possible oriental source as well. There are frequent mentions in the *Wake* of *ros*, or dew, which was believed by the alchemists to be a powerful if not universal solvent; and this again ties up with Rosicrucianism, a subject on which I can offer no suggestion as to the range or scope of Joyce's reading. Thomas Taylor, the Platonist, seems to be mentioned occasionally, and Joyce probably knew his works. On the other hand, everything he uses in *Finnegans Wake* about the Cabbala seemed to be contained in the article on that subject in the eleventh edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.

## SPIRITUALISM

Details and methods from dozens of books about spiritualism are used in the *Wake*, particularly in the third book, 'The Four Watches of Shaun' (pp. 403-592). Conan Doyle's *History of Spiritualism* was

<sup>1</sup> Kenneth Sisam, *Fourteenth Century Verse and Prose*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 3rd impression, 1925, p. 33.

<sup>2</sup> In the works of Jean P. Parizot and others. Cf. *Enc. Brit.*, 11th ed., article 'Alchemy'.

<sup>3</sup> A. F. Titley, 'The Macrocosm and Microcosm in Mediaeval Alchemy', *Ambix*, Vol. I, No. 1 (May 1937), p. 68.

<sup>4</sup> See H. E. Stapleton, G. L. Lewis and F. Sherwood Taylor, 'The Sayings of Hermes', *Ambix*, III, No. 3 (April 1949), p. 87.

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probably one of Joyce's source books. One book on spiritualism in his 'Personal Library', Allan Kardec's *La g n se, les miracles et les pr dictiones selon le spiritisme*,<sup>1</sup> was frequently underlined. It is possible that the technique in the third book, and perhaps elsewhere, owes something to the Myersian theories of 'cross-correspondences'. The entire third book is, on one level, a report of a spiritualist s ance, and Joyce told Miss Weaver that 'a book of spirit talks with Oscar Wilde . . . will explain one page of it. He does not like Ulysses. Mrs. Travers Smith, the "dear lady" of the book, is a daughter of professor Dowden of Trinity College, Dublin.'<sup>2</sup> From this information it is certain that the book Joyce used was *Psychic Messages from Oscar Wilde* 'edited' by H. T. Smith, according to which 'Mrs. Travers Smith at the Ouija Board, July 6th 1923, 11.45 p.m.' asked Wilde the question: 'What is your opinion of "Ulysses" by James Joyce?' The reply which Mrs. Smith claimed to have received from Wilde begins, 'Yes, I have smeared my fingers with that vast work . . . It is a singular matter that a countryman of mine should have produced this great bulk of filth.'<sup>3</sup> It goes on to describe Joyce's work as 'a heated vomit'.<sup>3</sup> Joyce's pardonable annoyance appears in the *Wake* between pages 419 and 424. 'Oscar Wild . . . Puffedly offal tosh' (419.24), 'properly spewing' (421.27), and 'Obnoximost posthumust!' (422.12) are samples of it. But I am not sure how seriously Joyce took spiritualism, and the only axiom that I can ascribe in part to his reading in spiritualism and the occult is that certain numbers have undescribed but magical properties.

### ARTHUR SYMONS

It is to be expected that Joyce would be interested in the occult for it was a topic constantly discussed in literary circles in Dublin during his formative years as a writer. Most of the prominent writers living there at the time combined an interest in such subjects as the Cabbala with an enthusiasm for the Symbolist movement which was then the *dernier cri* from France. Mary Colum wrote<sup>4</sup> that all the university students of Joyce's time were great admirers of Arthur Symons. Joyce certainly admired Symons and read his work carefully. It was Symons who was responsible for getting Joyce's first book, *Chamber Music*,

<sup>1</sup> T. E. Connolly, p. 21.

<sup>2</sup> *Letters*, p. 224. Letter dated '1 January 1925'.

<sup>3</sup> Hesther Travers Smith, *Psychic messages from Oscar Wilde*. London: Werner Laurie, 1924, p. 124.

<sup>4</sup> Mary Colum, *Life and the Dream*. London: Macmillan & Co., 1947, p. 121.

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published, and Joyce was always grateful to him for this. He mentions him several times in letters to other people and seems to have written to him occasionally for advice.<sup>1</sup> He suggested that Symons should write an introduction to the *Contact Collection of Contemporary Writers* in which the first version of the 'Earwicker' episode of *Finnegans Wake* first appeared; and when *The Joyce Book*<sup>2</sup> was published Symons wrote the epilogue to it.

In this epilogue Symons compared the style of James Joyce to that of Mallarmé, repeating a passage from Mallarmé's own account of his theories of writing which he had already translated in his book on the Symbolist Movement, and which Joyce had copied down in Symons's translation in a notebook which he used in Trieste.<sup>3</sup> 'Abolished, the pretension, aesthetically an error, despite its dominion over almost all the masterpieces, to enclose within the subtle paper other than, for example, the horror of the forest, or the silent thunder afloat in the leaves; not the intrinsic dense wood of the trees.'<sup>4</sup> I do not think that sufficient attention has been given to this suggestion of Symons even now, although in a recent work, *Joyce et Mallarmé*, David Hayman has devoted two volumes to an analysis of the influence of Mallarmé upon Joyce; for it seems to me very probable that the major source is not Mallarmé but Symons's account of Mallarmé. The fact that Joyce copied down Symons's translation into his notebook instead of Mallarmé's own words proves, I think, that this contention is true.

It would be in Symons's *The Symbolist Movement* that Joyce found the formula, first laid down by Mallarmé, which he was to use in writing *Finnegans Wake*: 'To evoke, by some elaborate, instantaneous magic of language, without the formality of an after all impossible description; to be rather than to express.'<sup>5</sup> This is precisely what Beckett said about Joyce's writing: 'it is not about something; it is that something itself';<sup>6</sup> and, as Beckett knew, this was one of the principal aims of the *Wake*: 'to be rather than to express'. 'Imagine the poem already written down,' continues Symons, 'the work has only begun . . . Pursue this manner of writing to its ultimate development; start with an enigma and then withdraw the key to the enigma.'<sup>7</sup> This corresponds to the way Shem

<sup>1</sup> *Letters*, pp. 86-98.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 237, 294. *The Joyce Book*, edited by Maria Jolas. Sylvan Press, London, 1932.

<sup>3</sup> David Hayman, *Joyce et Mallarmé*, Vol. I, p. 28.

<sup>4</sup> *The Symbolist Movement*, p. 134.

<sup>5</sup> Symons, p. 130.

<sup>6</sup> *An Exagmination*, p. 14 (Beckett's italics).

<sup>7</sup> Symons, p. 134.

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had of writing 'about all the other people in the story, leaving out, of course, foreconsciously, the simple work;' (174.1), and I think it is the method employed by Joyce in writing *Finnegans Wake*. Certainly it is typical of his methods that 'the quotation most obviously relevant to the situation' is, as M. J. C. Hodgart was the first to point out,<sup>1</sup> always carefully omitted.

A comparison with Mallarmé seems to be demanded also by his claim which Symons translates as 'out of many vocables he remakes an entire word, new, unknown to the language', a claim which Joyce justifies more completely since he goes much further in remaking entire words, but which was first made by Mallarmé. That Joyce studied Mallarmé's work is shown by the entries in his 'Trieste Note-book' described by David Hayman,<sup>2</sup> and by the quotations from Mallarmé's *Hamlet et Fortinbras* in *Ulysses*.<sup>3</sup> Yet it seems to me that the chief axiom Joyce took from Mallarmé was that expressed most memorably by Walter Pater: 'All art aspires constantly to the condition of music.' According to Symons the particular type of music aimed at by Mallarmé's art was that of Wagner. 'It is his failure not to be Wagner. And, Wagner having existed, it was for him to be something more, to complete Wagner,' said Symons. Joyce also aims at completing the work of Wagner, and in doing so makes use of Wagnerian techniques, particularly the *leit-motiv*, with which he had already experimented in *Ulysses*, and to which in *Finnegans Wake* he added several technical devices from polyphonic music which still await analysis by a competent musician. But so far as his use of Mallarmé's work in the *Wake* is concerned Joyce need not have known anything more about it than is described in Symons's book. The same can be said of the work of all the other writers discussed by Symons apart from J. K. Huysmans' *A Rebours*<sup>4</sup> which Joyce used as a source book. Professor W. Y. Tindall<sup>5</sup> has already suggested that it was from Symons's book that Joyce learned about Gérard de Nerval. The authors of *Joyce, the Man, the Work, the Reputation*<sup>6</sup> comment on this that 'Joyce must have derived equally from the artists themselves'. This may be so; but the important point, considering the exorbitant demands Joyce makes on his readers,

<sup>1</sup> M. J. C. Hodgart, 'Work in Progress', *The Cambridge Journal*, Vol. VI, No. 1, p. 29.

<sup>2</sup> *Joyce et Mallarmé*, pp. 109-115.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 7-11.

<sup>4</sup> See Appendix, p. 257.

<sup>5</sup> W. Y. Tindall, *Joyce*, p. 110.

<sup>6</sup> Kain and Magalaner, p. 148.

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is that all the reader needs to know about the French Symbolists for *Finnegans Wake* is contained in Symons's book.

Symons described De Nerval's *Le Rêve et la Vie* as 'a narrative of a madman's visions by the madman himself', and its manuscript 'scrawled on scraps of paper interrupted with Kabbalistic signs and "a demonstration of the Immaculate Conception by geometry"'.<sup>1</sup> This demonstration probably has something to do with the geometrical figure in the *Wake* (293) which shows 'figurat leavely the whome of your eternal geomater' (296.31), and parodies a Cabbalistic sign. It must have been Symons who first brought to Joyce's notice Rimbaud's sonnet on the vowels. This provides the basis for the many descriptions of the letters of the alphabet in *Finnegans Wake* such as, 'Every letter is a godsend, ardent Ares, brusque Boreas and glib Ganymede like zealous Zeus, the O'Meghisthest of all' (269.17). The universe of the *Wake* is created out of the letters of the alphabet: for which Joyce is duly thankful; the ideas, as has been shown, come from many places.

Joyce's main interest was in words; his second interest was theology; it is difficult to say which interest was pursued by him to the greater excess of idiosyncrasy. It has often been said that in writing *Finnegans Wake* he set out to create for himself a new language.<sup>2</sup> On the other hand many critics have protested that 'James Joyce Wrote English',<sup>3</sup> as Walter Taplin entitled an essay on this subject, and I think that this is true. What Joyce did try to create was a complete philosophical system. It is interesting in this context to consider a remark he once made to Frank Budgen. He was speaking to Budgen of the things which women have done, and he ended, 'It brings me to this point. You have never heard of a woman who was the author of a complete philosophical system. No, and I don't think you ever will.'<sup>4</sup> It appears from this that Joyce felt that such a system was a special mark of the superiority of the male; and I have no doubt that he believed that he had created such a system himself. The last recorded description he gave of the *Wake* was 'the great myth of everyday life'.<sup>5</sup> This was in an interview with a Polish journalist named Jan Paradowski whom he told that he had

<sup>1</sup> Symons, p. 28.

<sup>2</sup> E.g. Jolas in *An Exagmination*, p. 89: 'Language is being born anew before our eyes.' McGreevy, *ibid.*, p. 120: 'In spite of the difficulty of having to invent a new language as he writes'.

<sup>3</sup> Walter Taplin, 'James Joyce Wrote English', *The Critic*, Spring, 1947, p. 12.

<sup>4</sup> Frank Budgen, *Further Recollections of James Joyce*. London: The Shenvall Press, 1955, p. 6.

<sup>5</sup> Jan Paradowski, 'Begegnung mit Joyce', *Die Weltwoche*. Zürich, 11th Feb. 1949.

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taken literally Gautier's motto: *L'inexprimable n'existe pas*. I am suggesting that he took a number of other mottoes as bases, and said nothing about them.

The most obvious of these is Pound's frequently repeated statement that: 'Good literature is simply language charged with meaning to the utmost possible degree.' The *Wake* puts this into practice to an extent which might well be held to disprove it. But Manifestoes and statements of artistic Credos were in the air. Joyce spent his most creative periods in cities containing groups of painters who were fertile in devising theories of art and culture which they put into words as clear and comprehensible as their paintings were difficult and mysterious. In this latter aspect they resemble Joyce, and I do not think that the resemblance is simply a coincidence; more probably it results from their following similar lines of thought, although Joyce's range was, I think, wider.

There are several axioms proposed by painters which Joyce may perhaps have used. Chevreul, for example, the 'heresiarch of cubism', wrote that 'I have had the idea of suppressing the images one sees in reality, the objects which have the effect of corrupting the hierarchy of colour.' This is what—as we have seen—Joyce called 'leaving out . . . the simple worf'; and, as applied to colour, is one of the ideas which Joyce is playing with in the 'topside joss pidgin fella Balkelly' (611.4) passage. There was also Larionov, who—as long ago as 1910—declared his aim to be a new combination of space-time. More important, for the *Wake*, is Paul Klee, whose name Joyce puns on in many passages containing variants of the word *key*. The phrase 'arpists at cloever spilling' (508.33) includes Klee's name along with Hans Arp's, and puns on clover/clever for Arp's experiments in poetry with distorted spellings. Klee announced that the most vital aim of the artist was to create new 'possible worlds'; Joyce seems to have applied himself to this aim with his usual thoroughness, and—from internal evidence in the *Wake*—it seems that he knew of Klee's theories, and probably found them useful to combine with Bruno's concept of innumerable worlds.

Here, then, to summarize, are what appear to be the main axioms of the *Wake*:

### *I. The Structure of History. (Vico)*

- a. History is a cyclic process repeating eternally certain typical situations.
- b. The incidents of each cycle have their parallels in all other cycles.

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c. The characters of each cycle recur under new names in all other cycles.

### II. *The Structure of the Universe.* (Vico, Bruno, Nicholas of Cusa, Klee)

- a. There are an infinite number of worlds. (Bruno, Klee.)
- b. As each atom has its own individual life (according to Bruno) so each letter in *Finnegans Wake* has its own individuality.
- c. Each word tends to reflect in its own structure the structure of the *Wake*. (Bruno, the Cabbala.)
- d. Each word has 'a predestined ambiguity' (Freud), and a natural tendency to slide into another state (Bruno).
- e. Characters, like words, not only transmigrate from era to era (Vico and Bruno), but also tend to exchange their identities. This is most marked when they are opposites (Nicholas of Cusa).

### III. *Number.* (Lévy-Bruhl, Nicholas of Cusa, the Cabbala)

- a. Unity and diversity are opposed states each constantly tending to become the other. (Nicholas of Cusa.)
- b. Duality is the most typical form of plurality. Two of a kind therefore represent all of that kind. (Lévy-Bruhl.)
- c. Numbers have a magical, not an arithmetical significance. (The Cabbala.) The numbers one to twelve also indicate certain characters or groups of characters. Certain numbers (e.g. 1132) have special magical properties.

### IV. *Theology.* (Vico, Bruno, Budge's notes to *The Book of the Dead*)

- a. Original sin was committed by God. It is simply the act of creation.
- b. 'Each civilization has its own Jove.' (Vico.)
- c. Each Jove commits again, in a new way, to commence his cycle, the original sin on which creation depends.

### V. *Style.* (Symons, Mallarmé, the theory of music, Pound)

- a. 'Every word must be charged with meaning to the utmost possible degree.' (Pound.)
- b. 'It is the aim of language to approximate to music.' (Pater.)
- c. Musical techniques can therefore be applied in the *Wake*. The

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Wagnerian *leit-motiv*, and the concept of 'Voices' in polyphony are frequently used.

d. Since the book is a whole all parts must cohere.

### VI. Language. (*Vico, Freud, Gautier, Jousse*)

a. 'Everything can be expressed.' (*Gautier*.)

b. In its portrayal of the ideal eternal history the *Wake* must use the three forms in which language developed. These are:

1. Symbolic acts, gesture. (*Vico, Jousse*.)
2. Heraldry. (*Vico*.)
3. Human speech.

This last evolves from the attempts of men to reproduce the voice of thunder. Their first attempts were stuttering. (*Vico*.)

c. Stuttering indicates guilt. (*Freud, Carroll*.)

d. As words contain in themselves the image of the structure of the *Wake* they also contain the image of the structure of history. (*Bruno*.)

e. Thundering, being itself a kind of stuttering, is an indication of guilt.

### VII. Space-Time.

Joyce's experiment in creating what Larionov called 'a new combination of space-time' has been left to the end of this section because I am neither confident of the correctness of my interpretation nor aware of any literary sources for Joyce's methods. My suggestion is that Joyce's four old men represent in the first place Space, being geographically the four points of the compass and literally the first four letters of the Hebrew alphabet—thus standing for all the other letters and so representing literary space. They have, of course, many superimposed qualities, such as their identification with Swift's *Struldbrugs*, who were impotent immortals. But they acquire these extra personifications because they are primarily Space. They represent the four walls of the room and the four posts of the bed, watching impotently and enviously the actions of the ever-changing figures that occupy the space between them. They are Aleph, Beth, Ghimel and Daleth, eternal beings: 'semper as oxhousehumper' (107.34) gives us the English meaning of their names—ox, house, camel; Daleth, the door, is named in 'till Daleth, mahomahouma, who oped it closeth thereof the. Dor' (20.17). As letters they are the 'fourdimmansions' (367.27); as points of the compass 'the bounds whereinbourne our solied bodies all attomed

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attain arrest' (367.29). Their order is unchangeable: North, South, East and West. It is probably from the old prayer 'Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, bless the bed that I lie on', that they become also the evangelists for they are still in the same order. As the four provinces they occur invariably as Ulster, Munster, Leinster and Connaught; never getting out of their order of precedence, and usually even speaking in that order. But I think it is as circumambient space that they are really important. They have been there all the time and know everything that has happened. That is why we can be told that 'the quad gossellers may own the targum' (112.6) when the difficulty of understanding the *Wake* is being discussed, for the Targum is the book which explains the Old Testament and they were there when the events described in the Old Testament took place.

This account of Joyce's personification of Space may be completely wrong; but it seems to me to make sense of much that is otherwise incomprehensible if my theory is accepted. But for my interpretation of Joyce's treatment of Time I have less confidence. Time is, I think, personified by Tom, the manservant who brings things and takes them away. His name is also Tim which is what we dial in England to find the time by telephone. He is sometimes 'tompip' (178.27) which suggests the 'time-pip' given by the B.B.C. His name mutates into Atem and so on, for Time is a sort of God in that it puts a period to our lives. Tom Tompion, the watchmaker (151.18), provides the typical link that Joyce always seemed able to find between his fantasy and history. All I can really affirm with confidence, however, is that if Tom is Time a number of mysterious things in the *Wake* become a little less mysterious. And that is all that can be said for most of my suggestions.