

incomprehensible, act of attempted violation of the self, of the home community, and in consequence a stimulator of personal and collective trauma.

As the detail of this article has attempted briefly to suggest, fictional allusions to the historical sieges of Gibraltar may be regarded as symptomatic of a collective, communal state of mind. Most striking, in terms of the popular mythologization of Gibraltar, is the extent to which the historical “facts” of besiegement all (with a recent exception) occurred within a historical period lasting some five hundred years, but ending more than 200 years ago, with the close of the 18th century. Equally striking may be the observation that the formal reiteration of that “memory” of siege has only recently begun to acquire a new medium, that of imaginative fiction created by native Gibraltarians who – as Mark Sanchez has emphasized to me in interview – have their own story yet to tell.¹⁵

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BETWEEN EXPERIMENT AND TRADITION

The Modernity of the Augustans*

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My title may sound unduly provocative since the Augustans looked backward rather than forward, sought their models in the literature of Rome, and grounded their standards in the tried values of the past. Yet I do not intend to deal in paradoxes; my purpose is to show how much the Augustans have to say to us that is relevant to our time. One of my motivations for choosing this subject is my surprise at finding many undergraduates reluctant to turn to these writers, though I must add that when they do turn to them, they usually find them of absorbing interest. Their initial reluctance may be due to the persistence in secondary-school textbooks of those prejudices against the eighteenth century which were still shared by some college teachers when I was a student in the 1930s. When labeled “the Age of Reason,” the period seemed to promise few delights to twentieth century readers, whose confidence in *animal rationale* had been shattered by

¹⁵ Mark Sanchez, Interview with the author, London, 12 May 2012.

the first world war; when viewed as offering “rest and refreshment” to our disturbed and feverous age, it seemed merely to promise an escape from more pressing problems. But we have moved a long way from Saintsbury’s *The Peace of the Augustans*. The work of scholars over the past fifty years has taught us to grasp the complexity of the great Augustans and sharpen our ears to the disturbing notes below the smooth surface of their verse and prose. For these writers were, as Mack (1961: 1) said, “challengers of complacency”. They were dissatisfied with the modes of thought and of life which were altering the society in which they lived. It is precisely because they were so deeply concerned with the problems of their age and society that they strike a responsive chord in us. To quote Mack again (quoting Keats), “while the tendency of [the Romantics’] poetry is to extract itself as far as possible out of ‘the weariness the fever, and the fret, / Here where men sit and hear each other groan’” (1961: 2), actually, the great Augustan concern was with the here and now.

The fact that these writers were so deeply immersed in the life of their time may at first seem to be an obstacle to our understanding and enjoyment of their work, yet their satires – for their greatest works were inevitably satires – transcend the material out of which they were shaped and have applicability to our own time. True, the more we know about the actual context, whether social, political or intellectual, the better we grasp the implications of the satire and the significance of the writers’ stance. Readers of Gulliver’s visit to the grand academy of Lagado (III, chapter 5) may well wonder why Swift has the professors try to improve the language of their country by having men carry about *things* to be used instead of *words*, unless they know something of the criticism of the use of words from the time of Bacon, to Hobbes, to the recommendation of the Royal Society, that its members “return back to the primitive purity and shortness, when men deliver’d so many things almost in an equal number of words” (Sprat 1667:113), and to Wilkins’ *Essay towards a Real Character and Philosophical Language* (1668). They may also miss the point of Pope’s Epistle to Augustus, unless they know something of the British Augustus, George II. Yet no reader can be blind to Pope’s criticism of contemporary taste in poetry and drama, nor fail to see the wrongheadedness of Swift’s projectors of Lagado or the danger of encouraging such pursuits while ignoring men’s basic needs.

I do not wish to belittle the importance of the historical approach, for as Helen Gardner (1959: 14) puts it, “Because a poem already speaks to me, I want to find ways to ensure that, as far as possible, it says to me what it has to say and not what I want it to say, and that it says it in its own way and not in mine”. But, as she further adds, “The value of a poem does not lie in its power to tell us how men once thought or felt. It has an extra-historical life, which makes what had significance, beauty, and meaning in its own age have significance, beauty and meaning now.” (20) We can now understand the Augustan milieu much better than did readers a generation ago, so that we can see Swift and Pope and Gay in *their* world, and at the same time we can recognize the vitality of their artistic creation and their relevance to *our* world. In arguing for the modernity of the Augustans, I do not propose to make Swift or Pope “our contemporary,” as Jan Kot did for Shakespeare; all I am saying is that the Augustans raised the kind of problems with which we too have to grapple, and that, though we may wish to give these problems different answers, we cannot ignore these writers’ questioning.

As Croker (1971: XXI) reminds us, “[The eighteenth century] called society into question . . . by demanding that [it] justify itself in ethical terms, instead of accepting itself – as it had – as given, as fate”. True, the Augustan satirists were not critics of the existing structure of economic and political institutions (Viner 1970: 91), yet they were aware of shifts of thought and of value which were ultimately to alter such structures: what they sensed was that the bonds of mutual duties were dissolving, to be replaced by the cash nexus. Ironically, their modernity resided precisely in their stubborn resistance to

the forces of modernism, for if they clung passionately to a system of values that was becoming outmoded, they “were engaged,” as Mack (1961: 4) says, “in making men conscious of the responsibility of being human”.

What “being human” implies is indeed the central argument in *Gulliver’s Travels*. After confronting Gulliver with the vanity and trifling ambitions of the people of Lilliput, whose errors he sometimes shares, and after submitting him to the criticism of the good King of Brobdingrag, who finds that men are “the most pernicious race of little odious vermin that nature ever suffered to crawl upon the surface of the earth” (Part II, end of Chapter 6), Swift sends his traveller to Houyhnhnmland, where, instead of pigmies or giants, he encounters noble creatures who “are endowed by nature with a general disposition to all virtues, and have no conceptions or ideas of what is evil in a rational creature” (Part IV, Chapter 8), creatures whose “grand maxim is, to cultivate reason, and to be wholly governed by it” (ibid.); there he also encounters the filthy Yahoos, whom he “exactly resemble(s) in (his) head, hands and face,” although he also has some “appearances of reason” (Part IV, Chapter 3). Gulliver is fool enough at the end to consider men as “odious animal[s]” (Part IV, Chapter 11) like the nasty Yahoos, to “turn away [his] face in horror and detestation” when beholding his reflection in a lake (Part IV, Chapter 10), and to regard the Houyhnhnms as ideal creatures. So when he returns to his country he cannot bear the smell of his own wife and children, and prefers to spend his time in the stable with his horses. By then Gulliver has clearly gone mad: the sight of his family only fills him “with hatred, disgust and contempt” (Part IV, Chapter 11), just as he had hardly tolerated the converse of the good captain who saved his life. Gulliver simply cannot accept the nature of man, and his absurd misanthropy at the end is Swift’s final judgment on him, so that we can leave him safely talking to his horses since by now he has renounced his humanity. Man is not a Yahoo, however much he may resemble that animal; nor are the Houyhnhnms fit objects of imitation, not only because Gulliver can never hope to attain their rational serenity, but because their blissful indifference is obviously inhuman. Man is, as Pope said, “a being darkly wise, and rudely great” (*Essay on Man* II, 4). What Gulliver is confronted with in his last voyage is two images of man, the depraved creature of the old Calvinist doctrine on the one hand, and the rational and benevolent creature of the deists on the other. The latter was by far the more dangerous doctrine, one that was gaining ground in the early eighteenth century and that Swift as a Christian opposed, since it implied that reason unaided is sufficient to guide our moral life. He did believe that men would be all the better for behaving more rationally, as the sorry picture Gulliver draws of life in his native country amply demonstrates; but the horror of his Houyhnhnm master at the vices of mankind is no answer, if only because it cannot cope with the evil in man: Gulliver is banished from Houyhnhnmland because it is feared that his “rudiments of reason, added to the natural pravity” of the Yahoos (Part IV, Chapter 10) might drive these to rebel against their masters. It may not be too fanciful to interpret the banishment of Gulliver as a last hit by Swift at the gentlemanly philosophy of Shaftesbury, Bolingbroke, and other deists, who were quite prepared to see themselves as rational creatures while treating “the rest of mankind as yahoos” (Ehrenpreis 1958: 115).

This middle view of man is also Pope’s argument in *An Essay on Man*. Like *Gulliver’s Travels*, the poem is directed against the pride of man, who aspires to be an angel (I, 128) and reduces everything to his own scale, yet is ignorant of his true nature. The main theme of the poem is the need for man to accept the universal scheme even though he cannot fully comprehend it, and to accept his condition as a creature of the middle state. The burden is the same as in *Gulliver’s Travels*: man is “the glory, jest, and riddle of the world” (II, 18), compounded of passion and reason; these are not “self-

division's cause" as the Elizabethan poet Fulke Greville had said, but the twin principles necessary for the good life:

Self-love to urge, and Reason to restrain
Nor this a good, nor that a bad we call,
Each works its end, to move and govern all (II, 54-6)

This is a flat rejection of the Stoics' view, with which many deists largely agreed, that passions as such are evil:

In lazy apathy let Stoics boast
Their virtue fix'd, 'tis fix'd as in a frost (II, 101-2)

Such apathy characterizes the rational serenity of the Houyhnhnms. By grounding all men's actions in self-love and by showing, in the third epistle, that self-love naturally develops into love of others, Pope was at once countering the benevolists and the Hobbesian view of man in the state of nature. He was reasserting the traditional conception of man and reconciling the rational and the instinctual, which Gulliver found so neatly separated in Houyhnhnmland. Here, as in the design of the poem as a whole and in each of epistles, Pope was arguing for interrelatedness, of man within the total scheme, of the faculties within man, and of men within society; i. e. for the concord to be achieved out of the discordant elements. The very force of Pope's rhetoric when pleading with his reader, now exhorting him, now treating him with irony or contempt, is sufficient evidence that he felt this corporateness threatened with destruction, and in *An Essay on Man*, he called up a vision of judgment which anticipates the return to anarchy at the end of *The Dunciad*:

In pride, in reas'ning pride, our error lies;
All quit their sphere, and rush into the skies (I.123-4)

The poem fitly ends with the reminder that "all our knowledge is, - ourselves to know", that is, with a call to humility and renunciation. But this is also a call to cultivate those qualities that are uniquely human, i.e. that make man a moral agent.

Pope's and Swift's concern with useful knowledge should be viewed in this perspective. No doubt there is a strong anti-intellectualistic bias in their rejection of metaphysical disquisitions, as there is in the 16th century humanists' repudiation of the speculations of the Schoolmen in favour of moral philosophy. Yet Pope's advice: "know then thyself, presume not God to scan" (II, 1), coming as it does after the forceful assertion of universal order in Epistle I, should not be interpreted to mean total rejection of knowledge about God; what he censures is the carping criticism of God's dispensations that issues from man's application of his own limited rational standards to the inscrutable purpose of God's creation. What they censure is such erection of the mind that leads to man's alienation from that stupendous whole "whose body Nature is" (I.268); as it threatens to break all bonds with the cosmic order, so it tends to alienate man from man by encouraging self-assertion at the expense of interrelatedness. In the second Epistle, Pope links his censure of the futility and presumptuousness of metaphysical speculations with that of the claims of science not only to "measure earth, weigh air and state the tides", but to "instruct the planets in what orbs to run to correct old time and regulate the sun" (II, 20-2) and "teach Eternal Wisdom how to rule" (II.29). Aware though we are of Pope's distortion of the aims of experimental science, of his clever shift from *research* into the laws of the universe to *regulation* of the universe, we cannot but sense his fear that Science might usurp power to control and shape not only nature but men as well, according to some scheme of its own devising. It is not only that the providential order will give way to clockwork mechanism, but that a man-made pattern of behaviour may

supersede the god-given order of being that man should strive to maintain. What he expresses is his “mistrust of natural philosophy as competitor of ethics” (Mack 1961: XXXI). Not that he denied the use of scientific research, as his epitaph for Newton testifies:

Nature, and Nature's Laws lay hid in Night.
God said, *Let Newton be!* And All was *Light*.

But to such achievements he opposed man's ignorance of the workings of his own mind, and he advised man to

Trace Science, then, with *modesty* [his] guide (II.43)

His targets, like Swift's, are, rather than true scientists, the many virtuosi who dabbled in science, and who therefore seemed to be fiddling while Rome was burning. It was the vogue of such trifling pursuits that aroused their ire and proved to them that men were straying from the true path. In this respect, the collectors and virtuosi differed little, in the satirists' view, from the system makers who were preoccupied with transcendentals and, while arguing about the attributes of God, forgot their duties to man. Gulliver's silly censure of the learning of the people of Brobdingnag best brings out Swift's standards by indirection: “The learning of this people is very defective; consisting only in morality, history, poetry and mathematics, wherein they must be allowed to excel. But, the last of these is wholly applied to what may be useful in life; to the improvement of agriculture and all mechanical arts; so that among us it would be little esteemed. And as to ideas, entities, abstractions and transcendentals, I could never drive the least conception into their heads.” (Part II, Chapter 7).

Similarly, in *The Dunciad*, “Science groans in chains” (IV.21) beneath the footstool of Dullness while “mad mathesis alone [is] unconfined” (31); that is, as Pope's notes stress, Science is “depressed and confined so as to be rendered *useless*”, while “the strange Conclusions some Mathematicians have deduced from their principles concerning the *real quantity of Matter*, the *Reality of Space*, etc.” are applauded by the goddess. Gulliver's Voyage to Laputa is indeed a condemnation of moral irresponsibility, for “to the Dean, the pure research of astronomers or mathematicians seemed like frivolous evasions of real duties” (Ehrenpreis 1958: 113). Gulliver notes that in the city of Lagado “the houses are very ill built” (Part III, Chapter 2) and that on the mainland the soil is so badly cultivated that he cannot discover one ear of corn, or blade of grass (Part III, Chapter 4); this, he soon discovers, is owing to the new rules and methods of agriculture devised by the Professors of the academy, who spend their time prosecuting new schemes, but never bring them to perfection, so that “in the mean time, the whole country lies miserably waste; the houses in ruins, and the people without food or cloaths” (ibid.). The point is that these professors devote all their time to pure research instead of studying *practical* geometry, instead of aiming at useful knowledge. The point is worth stressing because today we are apt to look down on *mere* technology and to give pride of place to pure, disinterested research, as a reaction against the excess of consumer goods which create rather than meet needs. Swift's and Pope's condemnation of abstract science thus makes us pause, and reflect that only those who have had all the benefits of technological progress are prone to despise them. No such primitivism was likely to attract the Dean: he had only to look around him to see the decay of agriculture and the destitution of the people in Ireland.

Swift did know something of the economic conditions that reduced the Irish people to a state little better than that of the Yahoos; he did know that the country was exploited so that England, or at least the ruling class in England, could live in luxury. And his *Modest Proposal* (1729), horrifying as it sounds, is only one degree more cruel than the

treatment actually meted out to the Irish children; so true is this that his parting shot is to desire politicians who dislike his proposal to

ask the parents of these mortals, whether they would not at this day think it a great happiness to have been sold for food at a year old, scene of misfortunes as they have since gone through, by the oppression of the landlords the impossibility of paying rent without money or trade, the want of common sustenance, with neither house nor clothes to cover them from the inclemencies of the weather, and the most inevitable prospect of entailing the like, or greater miseries, upon their breed for ever (Mack 1961: 89)

In this pamphlet, as Maynard Mack (1961:13) says, Swift indeed lays “bare (for our time as well as his) the unconscious gross brutality of mankind, who commonly regard the ‘standard of living’ of their own country as more important than whether *human* lives can be lived at all in another”. That Swift could also deal with specific economic problems, such as that of debased currency, is clear from him *Drapier's Letters* (1724) directed against “Wood's half pence,” i. e. the copper coins that the iron-merchant William Wood had been patented to supply. Here again he stood out for the wretched people of Ireland, for their right to be treated as human beings and not as mere cattle to be sacrificed to Wood's interests. It is in one of these pamphlets that he exclaims:

Were not the people of *Ireland* born as free as those of *England*? How have they forfeited their Freedom? . . . Does not the same Sun shine over them? And have they not the same *God* for their Protector? Am I a *Free-man* in *England*, and do I become a *Slave* in six Hours by crossing the Channel? (Letter III: To the Nobility and Gentry of the Kingdom of Ireland)

What he means by freedom is not the nominal freedom of electing a parliament and of administrating their own affairs; it is the right to have decent conditions of living, above starvation level, whereas all he saw in Ireland, as he said in *A short view of the state of Ireland* (1728), was

the miserable Dress, and Dyet, and Dwelling of the People The general Desolation in most Parts of the Kingdom... The Families of Farmers who pay great Rents, living in Filth and Nastiness upon Butter-milk and Potatoes, without a Shoe or Stocking to their Feet, or a House so convenient as an English Hog-sty to receive them.

As Bonamy Dobrée (1962: 440) writes, “[these pamphlets] cry of a man injured because humanity is injured, outraged because the spirit in man is being denied”. And the people of Ireland knew it well, who, when a reward for information was laid against Swift, quoted the verse from *I Samuel* 14:15:

And the people said unto Saul, Shall Jonathan die, who hath wrought this great salvation in Israel? God forbid: as the Lord Liveth, there shall not one hair of his head fall to the ground, for he hath wrought with God this day. So the people rescued Jonathan and he died not.

Jonathan Swift did not die either, and Wood's money was withdrawn.

Wood's halfpence was only one example of the predominance of the moneyed interest, which, like other Augustans, Swift abominated. He was the only one of the great satirists to attack specific legislation, but they were at one in denouncing the moneyed interest; perhaps, as has been suggested, because their patrons belonged mostly to the landed aristocracy. It may be true, that “they tended to be most alert to [the] concrete manifestations [of the sin of avarice] when it took the form of ungentlemanly pursuit of money by ‘moneyed man’ and merchants, but not to find worthy of note the gentlemanly pursuit of power, status, or acres,” that is similar sins of the landed gentry (Viner 1970: 91). Yet the satire of “material interests” and of the hypocrisy that cloaked greed is so sharp and so pervasive that it is clear that the Augustans were aware of the shift of power that was taking place in their time. Business was becoming a popular pursuit – the Bank

of England was founded in 1694 – trade flourished and speculation was rife, especially after the South Sea Company was formed (1711) and promised quick wealth from trading with South America. In 1720 a bill was passed “by which persons to whom the nation owed money were enabled to convert their claims into shares in the Company.” The shares quickly rose to as much as ten times their value, and the fever of speculation increased, encouraged in many cases by unscrupulous men trading on people’s wish to get rich quickly. This, known as the South Sea Bubble, appeared to the Augustans symptomatic of the speculating frenzy and dishonesty of the age. “When the crash came, the outcry of the disillusioned and ruined filled the land” (Trevelyan 1944: 533), yet stock jobbing continued to attract people. No wonder then that Pope should have said in one of his *Imitations of Horace* that:

Alike in nothing but one Lust of Gold,
Just half the land would buy, and half be sold

While with the silent growth of ten per cent,
In Dirt and darkness hundreds stink content
Imitations, I, i 124-5, 132-3.

There was nothing wrong with trade as such, even though the old landed gentry looked down on the successful merchants who invested in land. The Whig Addison considered trade as the main source of the wealth of the nation and praised the self-made man Sir Andrew Freeport at the expense of the obsolete Sir Roger de Coverley. Pope himself, in *Windsor Forest*, celebrated Britain's expanding trade, and the Epistle to Burlington shows that for him mercantile activity is the basis not only of a prosperous society but of artistic life as well, provided, that is, its patrons are Burlingtons, not Timons. What was censured, however, was the unscrupulous practice of many tradesmen and merchants: there was nothing new in this, but, with the development of banking, obtaining financial credit on a man's or a company's supposed worth led to dubious transactions on the Stock Exchange. It was the moneyed men, or financiers, and the trade of stockjobbing – especially since the introduction of paper-credit – that roused the satirists' indignation. Not only the two Epistles on the use of Riches, but the bulk of Pope's satires may be said to be directed against the perversion of values in a commercialized society.

He was not the only one to sense the topsy-turvydom of this money culture: in his Newgate pastoral *The Beggar's Opera* (1727), John Gay wittily presented a world where everything is for sale, at the same time as he mocked the absurdity of one of the genres most favoured by the new patrons of art, the Italian opera. Nor did the Walpole administration fail to grasp the point of his political satire: his next play, *Polly*, was banned. What *The Beggar's Opera* devastatingly shows is that the same rules obtain in the business or legal world as among thieves and whores. Indeed Macheath, the chief of the gang, has a kind of honesty and integrity compared with the Peachums and Lockits who use all the cant of morality while conducting a very efficient system of bribery. The highwayman mock-hero is finally betrayed to the crooks who administer the land; yet he gets a reprieve, for, as the player says, the beggar poet must “comply with the taste of the town,” that is, end his opera happily. And Gay, with tongue in cheek, has the poet say at the end

Your objection, sir, is very just, and is easily removed;
for you must allow that in this kind of drama, 'tis no matter
how absurdly things are brought about.

Yet the play ends in mirth as the rabble crowds round Macheath and he takes Polly for wife, standing “like the Turk, with his doxies around,” while they dance and sing, and the chorus repeats the last couplet of the air:

But think of this maxim, and put off your sorrow,
The wretch of to-day may be happy to-morrow.

The exuberance and gaiety of the play, “the frolicsome reversal of all values” (Dobrée 1962: 237) make fun of the grim reality of “a culture rotted through, with ‘business’ values.” In the world of the play, as Mack (1961: 19) says, “the artist (naturally in a society like this a *beggar*-poet), knows that moral values ought to prevail, yet he has no recourse but to discard them and bring literature into line with life. This is the ‘down-right deep Tragedy,’ profoundly serious as well as comical, of *The Beggar's Opera*.” At the same time, I would add, the poet Gay asserts his freedom from this rottenness by writing this wittiest of comedies with verve and with his usual “apparently careless grace” (Dobrée 1962: 238). Macheath's last-minute reprieve is certainly a fitting end to the story of that great man and comic hero, especially if we remember that the Prime Minister, Walpole, was commonly called ‘the great man’ and was known to have said that ‘every man has his price,’ a fit maxim for the crooks of *The Beggar's Opera*.

Fielding's *Jonathan Wild the Great* (1743), on the contrary “proceeds to the highest consummation of human greatness,” the tree of glory on Tyburn hill, so that he is indeed exalted among men amid the universal shout of the people who have assembled in prodigious number to see so rare a sight as the hanging of a Great Man. Fielding had warned us at the outset against a common error among sages and philosophers, that of confounding goodness and greatness, so that he can embark on the history of this illustrious person in the manner of a Plutarch or a Suetonius. So he recounts the career of this Great Man in the manner and style due to such heroes. The work is a mixture of burlesque and mock-history (Jonathan Wild, a real criminal hanged in 1725, was the symbol of political knavery and in political journalism his name had become synonymous with Walpole); the mock seriousness of the historian playing on the contrast between goodness and greatness so that he can close his account with this remark:

To say the Truth the World have this reason at least to Honour such Characters as that of *Wylde*: that while it is in the Power of every Man to be perfectly Honest, not one in a thousand is capable of being a Complete Rogue: and few indeed there are who if they were inspired with the vanity of imitating our Hero would not after much fruitless Pains be obliged to own themselves Inferior to Mr *Jonathan Wild the Great*. (289)

Fielding's *Jonathan Wild* (1743) is far less effective than *The Beggar's Opera*, but, like Gay, Fielding is treating knavery comically and implying all along that such powers as Jonathan Wild possesses make for success in a world wholly ruled by greed. If Gay and Fielding showed that there is not much to choose between great or successful men and thieves, the hypocrisy of a society that pretends to honour virtue yet depends for its survival on industry and trade was exposed most biting by Bernard Mandeville in his *Fable of Bees, or Private Vices, Public Benefits* (1714). Mandeville's contemptuous tone laid him open to the charge of cynicism; yet what he unmasked in his fable was the double standard of his age, in which religious teachers still preached restraint of the natural impulses while society gave its blessing to trade, which thrives on the satisfaction of men's desires. Mandeville was considered as a scoffer and an heir of Hobbes for arguing that private vices are public benefits, and for regarding love of money as both the root of evil and the source of all progress. The bees, when ‘vicious’, were happy and prosperous; when they reformed, their prosperity came to an end, since they could do without all the luxuries that industry and trade had brought them. As Mandeville (1957: 272) put it, “Religion is one thing, and trade is another” or “The Reformation has been scarcely more efficacious in promoting prosperity than the silly and capricious invention of hooped petticoats” (411). This could not fail to give offence all round, for Mandeville was generally thought to be recommending vice. In fact, he was stripping the mask from a complacent society, which, to use Swift's words, was enjoying the happiness of being

well deceived. He was indeed a stern moralist, bitterly opposed to Shaftesbury's theory of man's fundamental good nature, which he found highly complimentary to mankind, but unfortunately not true. For him there is nothing virtuous in gratifying one's impulses, however generous; virtue consists in self-denial. Hence, the highest kind of virtue is renunciation. But, if we regard the Trappists' vows of poverty as virtuous, then we must be prepared to view virtue as incompatible with the development of industry. In Mandeville's view, the self-denial preached by priests and politicians has no other purpose than to enable them to reap benefits from *other people's* virtues or sacrifices: let others work hard, stint themselves, accept low wages, and the tradesmen's profits will be all the larger. Mandeville did not mean that vice is not odious, as Hutcheson mistook him to say; he was forcing his contemporaries to question the ethical basis of economic development, and to recognize the divorce between Christian and business ethics.

The relevance of his criticism to our own day hardly needs to be emphasized, since we are only too keenly aware of the contradictions of a society which depends for its survival on the production of more goods and which both encourages consumption and expects one section of the population to do without the necessaries of life. Nor is the contradiction between the ethics of hard work and the ideals of an affluent society more easily solved today than it was in the eighteenth century. Whatever charges were levelled at Mandeville, he was at one with his contemporaries in believing that the wealth of a nation does not consist in hoarding gold or silver, but in making it circulate. This meant that the Augustans as individual members of a society are knit together to form one body, and that each contributes by his work to supply some individual need. This sense of interrelatedness is the basis of Pope's epistles on the Use of Riches, as can be seen from this rhymed exchange with Lord Bathurst

B. What Nature wants, commodious gold bestows;
'T is thus we eat the bread another sows.

P. But how unequal it bestows, observe;
'T is thus we riot, while who sow it starve. (III, 21-4)

Though he may have intended to show that as "Extremes in Nature equal good produce/Extremes in Man concur to gen'ral use," the force of Pope's Epistle to Bathurst (III) resides in his characters of financiers and speculators who reached eminence through lucky hits in "stock and subscriptions" (370), such as Sir John Blunt, one of the first projectors of the South-sea Company, and one of the most unscrupulous directors at the time the South Sea Bubble burst. The Epistle ends with a brief account of the career of Sir Balaam – no doubt a composite portrait – the citizen of sober fame,

Religious, punctual, frugal and so forth;
His word would pass for more than he was worth.
Constant at church and change; his gains were sure.
His givings rare, save farthings to the poor. (343-4, 347-8)

This "plain and good man" (342) – although his name will gain him credit for more than he is worth, i.e. on the Stock Exchange – is tempted by the devil, like Job,

But Satan now is wiser than of yore,
And tempts by making rich, not making poor (351-2)

So that Balaam rises to eminence and obtains a seat in Britain's Senate (393); but to repair the losses of his lady at the gaming table he takes a bribe from France, is impeached and hanged, his money forfeited to the Crown.

Whether at the gaming-table or on the stock exchange, speculating was the general itch, and exploitation of both rich and poor was the surest way to wealth, as was demonstrated by Peter Walter, a "money scrivener" who became notorious as "money-lender-in chief to the aristocracy" (n. to 127), or by that of the Charitable Corporation

swindle. This Corporation had been formed for the relief of the industrious poor “by assisting them with small sums upon pledges at legal interest”; but a large proportion of the capital found its way into the pockets of the overseers, with the connivance of the directors, one of whom, Denis Bond, is reported to have said “Damn the poor, let us go into the City, where we may get money” (n. to l. 102). Nature's plan to “concur to general use” was thus warped by these unscrupulous moneyed men who could invoke God's authority to dignify their malpractices:

“God cannot love (says Blunt, with tearless eyes)
“The wretch he starves” – and piously denies:
But the good Bishop, with a meeker air,
Admits, and leaves them, Providence's care. (105-8)

Pope is referring here to the general belief – which he himself underwrites – that the poor are “a natural, permanent, divinely ordained class of humanity” (Ehrenpreis 1971: 9). The good Bishop seems to be an imaginary character, and his indifference runs counter to the teaching, though not to the practice, of his profession. It is true, however, that the charity encouraged by the religious preachers only aimed at relieving, not at removing, penury and destitutions. Poverty seemed to be as useful in enforcing the duty of charity on the rich, as it was in keeping down the prices of manufactured goods so as to make them competitive. Neither Mandeville nor Pope could envisage another scheme of things; but Pope stresses the discrepancy between theory and practice, and his good bishop, for all his meeker air, does not differ much from Fielding's Peter Pounce, who insists to Parson Adams that charity “does not so much consist in the act as in the disposition to do it,” and who believes that “the distresses of mankind are mostly imaginary, [so that] it would be rather folly than goodness to relieve them” (*Joseph Andrews* III, ch. 13). Fielding's Peter Pounce was modelled on the money lender Peter Walter of whom Pope says in this Epistle:

Wise Peter sees the world's respect for Gold,
And therefore hopes this Nation may be sold (125-6)

For all his attacks on individual financiers and his awareness of the part paper-credit was playing in undermining moral values, Pope was not attacking the social structure and he would have been as horrified as Burke was to be by the French Revolution. But before we accuse him of complacency in accepting the social structure of his time, we should remember that in his treatment of poverty he differed little from the French *philosophes*. While acknowledging the limitations of his social criticism, we must not forget that his is the most far-reaching denunciation of the evils of a society where money is the only value. *The Dunciad* is perhaps the eighteenth century work that has most relevance to our time just because it so brilliantly shows how in such a society “Art after Art goes out, and all is Night.” The progress of Dulness from Smithfield to the Court images the decline of culture and the final extinction of all values. Pope would not have claimed with Shelley that poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world; but he did believe that the poet is the guardian of values both moral and aesthetic: indeed, that the two are one and the same. The corruption of words from their true end is an index of the corruption of the Word or Logos, and the triumph of Dulness is return to chaos, the triumph of the un-creating word, that is, of the Creator's enemy.

Twentieth-century readers may at first be put off by the many dunces which crowd the stage, because they are largely forgotten figures; but once we see what they stand for, we realize that the poem deals with an evil that is very much with us today, “with extant dunceness more than with forgotten dunces,” as one critic puts it (Reichard 1968: 683). Moreover when Pope moves from the hackwriters of Grub Street to the even more formidable dunces of Book IV, the cultural – or anti-cultural – trends he is denouncing

are more easily identified, and the antics of the first three Books are seen in their proper perspective. The potboilers of the ridiculous creatures whom Dulness never fails to reward are the vehicles through which sense is lulled asleep. Pope is very much aware of the relation between culture and society and all but says, to quote the same critic again, that “a society gets almost exactly the writers that its leaders are worthy of” (1968: 684). The arbiters of taste are no longer men whose artistic sensibility has been formed through acquaintance with the great works of the past; these men's voices are drowned in the shouts of an unthinking crowd that takes its lead from venal critics. Pope does not blame writers for writing for money: Shakespeare, he says, wrote for money not for fame (*Epistle to Augustus*, 69-72) and he himself was proud of having achieved financial independence through his translation of Homer. What he blamed was the debased taste of the time and the decline of patronage. If, in choosing the Lord Mayor's day for the coronation of the King of Dullness, he exploits the traditional contempt for the City, it is not merely out of social snobbery, but because the failure of the aristocracy to play their part as patrons of the arts has led to a debasement of values. The needy poet now can only hope to be rewarded by providing what publishers think most likely to sell best, or by providing the kind of stuff that will support the party in power or flatter the vanity of the fop turned patron. We need only to name the kinds of patrons who, in the second book, preside over the games of the hacks, to see the relevance of the satire to our own day. No wonder, then, that under such conditions each dunce should “catch the epidemic littleness from his neighbor” (JRS, xlii). Pope's triumph lies in the consummate skill with which he presents this littleness, in the “lighthearted precision” and “genial contempt” with which he draws these mediocre men. For in the first three books, the delight which the poet takes in portraying the antics of these insects is unmistakable, and, as in Gay's *Beggar's Opera*, testifies to his own immunity from the catching disease. It is great fun, indeed, the more so if the reader is “sufficiently familiar with the classical poets to feel that small shock of delighted surprise which Pope intended by his irreverent shifting of the context” from classical epic to mock-epic (JRS, xxxviii).

The twentieth-century reader may wonder why Pope made so many insects immortal through his verse, writers who today would only be regarded as purveyors of “reading matter,” not literature. But, as Professor Sutherland remarks in his edition of *The Dunciad*,

Pope, no doubt because he lived at the beginning of a new era of popular publishing and weekly journalism, took a firm stand against the upstarts whom he saw invading the enclosed territory of literature... The standards of literature must be kept up; the barbarians must be driven from the Capitol before it was too late. Men like Swift and Pope, conservative in their outlook, were honestly alarmed for the future of polite letters, and in 1728 there was some reason for alarm... What was happening in the theatre seemed, to some observers at least, to be happening in every branch of literature... Pope was exaggerating magnificently, and he must have known it, but the danger threatened, and it would be more than a mere threat if our Popes did not remain eternally vigilant. (xlvi-xlvii).

By the time he wrote *The New Dunciad*, after twenty years of Walpole's administration, “the reign of dullness, which only threatened in 1728, had really begun” (ibid., xix), and the sinister notes that were only heard occasionally in the first three books now became the leading theme of the poem. As the echoes from *Paradise Lost* resound in the opening lines, the irresponsibility of people in power prepares us for the Second Coming, when chaos and eternal night shall blot out order for ever. This is no longer a laughing matter, and Pope shudders as the great Anarch buries all. The insect imagery in the last book mirrors this levelling down and the reversal of man to the subhuman and mindless: Dulness's children are drawn to her “by a wonderful attraction” (Argument). They roll in the vortex as a vast involuntary throng (82), some like so many heads of cattle (192), some as thick as locusts (397). For by now it is not only in the realm of *belles-lettres* that

venality has destroyed human values. Market values have invaded all fields and Mammon is enthroned. Yet far from opting out of society, the poet as guardian of the word builds up order in spite of the impending chaos; he asserts his power as artist and pits himself against the degeneracy of the world around. In this final vision of judgment, Pope triumphantly vindicates the power of the creative imagination to rise above the tide of material interests.

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*This unpublished piece by late Professor Irène Simon (1916-1998), which probably dates back to 1979, was brought to our attention by Jacques Rosenfeld, a former student to whom she had entrusted it when he was working on an MA dissertation bearing on *The Beggar's Opera*. It testifies to the powerful and original thinking that was her hallmark, the sharpness with which she detected parallels between ages, and her unimpeachably elegant phrasing. The text was typed, with handwritten corrections, but not yet quite ready for publication. Bibliography was only sketched in, yet we could trace most references. For primary works we indicated both the edition she was likely to have used and an online version, for easy access. From the critical sources she could rely on, but essentially from her own daunting knowledge of the texts she discusses, she brings out the defiant struggle of those major eighteenth century writers against the encroaching forces of market values and concomitant mediocrity. The present article was probably written in the late 1970s, when the post-war balance of social concerns and capital-owners toppled in favour of the latter. The situation today, in the second decade of the twenty-first century is even worse, both in terms of trampling on social rights and of loss of cultural standards. So the relevance of this text is more accurate than ever.

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Charles Ludlam's Plotting Ways

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That Charles Ludlam (1943-1987) did not share Gertrude Stein's weariness toward storytelling is an understatement. A playwright, actor, director and head of his own troupe, the Ridiculous Theatrical Company, which he founded in 1967 in New York City and ran until his death of AIDS in 1987, Ludlam embraced dramaturgy and the infinite possibilities of plot combinations. His artistic project can best be summarized in his self-declared goal to "make anagrammatic use of the world's plot matrix" (Samuels 1992: 4).

What are the exact implications of his position in terms of playwriting? And why would his case warrant further attention?

The fact that his approach consisted in looking back at dramatic precedents rather than forward suffices to make him stand out in an avant-garde landscape, dominated by the opposite tendency; yet, his devotion and sense of belonging to experimental theatre went mostly unquestioned by his contemporaries. Post-war New York City was a hotbed for aesthetic innovation, and in the performing arts the most notable developments hinged on a rejection of drama and the concurrent rise of a "theatre of images" (Bonnie Marranca), often relegating the text to an ancillary position. Which explains why drama has been given short shrift, and why theatrical experimentation has tended to be perceived as either part of a visual arts genealogy or belonging to a newly created, non-medium specific category, known as performance art. Hence the problematic situation of dramatists who stressed the primacy of the text while engaging in obviously experimental behavior, and, in some cases, including Ludlam's, even refusing to sacrifice the visual dimension in the productions (Bottoms 2004: 2-3). Ludlam's professed allegiance to drama thus accounts in great part for his exclusion from most American experimental theatre histories¹, alongside a number of peers. His unique interest compared to others lies both in his command of dramatic technique and his ability to provocatively articulate his position.

A tangled web of stories

The playwright's apparently paradoxical stance can be explained by his impressive dramatic erudition, which included non-Western and non-English speaking theatre, as

¹ S. Brecht (1986) condemns his evolution toward seemingly traditional plays, while A. Aronson (2000) mentions him only in passing and A. Sainer (1997) and Th. Shank (2002) overlook him entirely.

well as forms considered minor or obsolete (Kaufman 2002:24, Pecorari 2008:74); it also relied on a capacity to connect drama to its actualization in performance, whether past or potential. The choice to look for inspiration in theatre history instead of trying to reinvent theatre from scratch or offer a mimetic representation of his contemporaries grew out of a desire to take a lucid, rational approach to his art: ambitioning to revolutionize theatre had to start with taking stock of the available possibilities before attempting to offer new ones. In so doing, Ludlam was acutely aware that carving out a personal niche meant selecting from existing solutions. Following models could not be regarded as anathema but rather as a necessity, and what mattered most was picking the ones that strayed as far as possible from either the *tabula rasa* attitude of most experimental practitioners or the naturalistic bent of commercial fare – professed counter-models had to be fought with their antidote.

Likening the “plot matrix” to an alphabet amounts to claiming that the array of potential solutions stems not from the creation of new elements, but from the multiple combinations of a limited number of possibilities, that number being already mapped out. This does not preclude the combinations from being unexpected and the reactions unpredictable. So that experimenting with stories and recycling older ones were in Ludlam’s mind two intricately tied gestures; the underlying assumption being that, as there is no way out of the story, there is no use trying to minimize or eliminate it. Far from being questioned as a practice, storytelling was reaffirmed, and not just out of necessity: it could no longer be accused of repeating itself if it was to be examined beyond its raw material and stock themes and approached in terms of architecture rather than content.

What mattered was the “tangled web” – a phrase that refers to the title of one of Ludlam’s plays, *Love’s Tangled Web* (1981), itself an allusion to a well-known quote by Walter Scott –, as well as the nuances of the plot pattern and its efficacy with regard to spectatorship. In order to maintain a high level of creativity and sustain a wide variety of plot models, Ludlam turned to all forms of drama, as well as film, and theatrical history. His approach also reached beyond dramaturgy and encompassed acting traditions, scenography, costume design, etc., which could also be quoted and incorporated into the productions to create other layers of cultural references to enhance and enrich the plot itself.

This article offers a story of Ludlam’s stories – or at least a condensed version of it – that will paradoxically have to gloss over most of the plots themselves in favour of their conception and reception. For practical purposes, a sole angle and moment in his career have been retained here, namely the transition from the so-called “epic” period to the “well-made play” in 1970. After defining the two notions, the motivations behind this change in storytelling mode and its implications will be retraced. Steering clear of the “post-modern” label is a purposeful choice, as many of Ludlam’s plays from either period may indeed be conveniently classified in such a way. The playwright thought of himself more as a modernist than a post-modernist but regardless, the focus here is on showing *how* he works rather than fitting his work into preexisting and, in that case, problematically broad categories.

The author's disappearing act

When Ludlam made his debut on the New York theatre scene in 1967, straight out of college, a network of young theatre artists, mostly gay, were laying claim to the term Ridiculous. One of them, Ronald Tavel, who had been Andy Warhol’s screenwriter, summed up in a few words the premise behind the Ridiculous: “We have moved beyond the absurd. Our position is absolutely preposterous” (qtd in Marranca and Dasgupta 1998:

xiv). Although the principles stated may sound vague, they had clear, practical implications for those involved: “beyond the absurd” meant a return to storytelling, which the absurd had not abandoned altogether but rendered minimal; with the Ridiculous, not only did the story come back, but it also tended to be flaunted and take center stage. The Ridiculous emerged out of a philosophical reflection close to the absurd in its existential despair, so that the return to storytelling was not exactly straightforward but excessive, based on the juxtaposition and accumulation of cultural references, with the dramatic arc being more often than not somewhat crooked. In fact, “preposterous” literally means in the wrong order, so that the Ridiculous gesture may come across as a simplistic move in the exact opposite direction, toward expansiveness – the spectators’ experience being widely different (a plot overflow instead of a whittling down), but the impression of senselessness conveyed was not necessarily at odds with that which the absurd sought to evince.

An early Ridiculous play looks like a montage of allusions, with a new story being written out of the bits and pieces of others, mixing high and low culture, contemporary and older references, and different art forms (drama, film, literature, the visual arts, etc.). Parody and collage are the terms that best describe the impression left. Ludlam took the method possibly the furthest: his first play as author/director and actor, *Big Hotel* (1966), an apparent parody of a 1932 MGM film starring Greta Garbo, called *Grand Hotel*, was composed entirely out of preexisting material from various sources, whose connection to the film ranged from the obvious to the cryptic. The playwright was then placing himself in the position of a mere editor – hence the name “epic” Ludlam assigned to that early phase of his career, in reference to Brecht’s montage technique. The artistic gesture was meant to challenge the notion of authorship and the reverence toward aesthetic categorizations and value, at a time when these were coming under attack in the cultural sphere².

In *Big Hotel*, in the absence of familiarity with the material used as intertext, the story told frequently fails to make sense to the spectator. In other words, because of the frenetic cut-and-paste technique, the bits of stories from various sources have to be identified and connected with each other in order for the whole to come together. The ellipses created by the presence of multiple stories side by side in a state of seeming incompleteness become understandable only when the audience is able to mentally situate the passages included within the original continuum of their storyline. Even when this proves feasible, the story’s fragmented state renders the reading process inherently complex, because the effort to identify stories and connect the dots is often made at the expense of the continuity and fluidity of the whole.

Ludlam was aware of the demands made by his play, and had a character voice this metadramatic concern, ironically commenting on the confusion: “BELLHOP: The whole play is falling to pieces. I’ve lost the thread of the narrative” (Ludlam 1989: 17).

A return to form?

Experimentation aside, Ludlam’s dramaturgical choices also owed to the performance conditions he faced: using amateur – and often amateurish – actors like found objects, he was constrained to let them express themselves more or less freely, leaving room for improvisation, sometimes at the expense of coherence. He preferred to adapt to

² Roland Barthes would publish his essay “The Death of the Author” a couple of years later (1967), questioning the connection between the construction of an author figure and the interpretive limitations it implicitly set; and although what was mostly criticized in American intellectual circles was “middlebrow” (D. MacDonald) rather than popular culture *per se*, discourses on the latter were still far from devoid of snobbery and condescension.

circumstances and make a virtue of necessity, seeking to tap the creative potential of the situation and find meaning in it. The implication was that he had to renounce trying to rein in the actors – a number of them being on drugs – or impose on them a discipline which they would not have been able to follow or might have resisted.

A change in performance conditions presided over his move from the “epic” format to what he called the “well-made play”, appropriating a derogatory term from dramatic history and resemanticizing it to give it a positive spin. Starting with *Bluebeard* in 1970, Ludlam knowingly abandoned the sprawling epic vein; he could by then rely on a stable core group of performers and develop characters for them, which proved instrumental to the transformation:

The epic drains you. It demands, because the cumulative effect of the plot doesn't pay off. As Brecht said, in the epic each scene stands for itself [...]. The more you invest in the epic, you're always getting face value back. In a variety show, each thing is exactly the same as the thing that came before. You always start from scratch with each act. It's very hard to get momentum going. [...] Concentric structure – like the well-made play, plays that conform to unities, plays with more intricate structure, where the climax is very controlled, contrived – are more supportive of the actor. Since this is actors' theatre, I felt we needed that support from the script. Personally, I find it more satisfying to act in a play where the climax is built very consciously for certain rhythmic effects. It was inevitable, since an actor was writing the scripts, that we would choose the mode that gave us the most support. (Samuels 1992: 102)

In addition to the plot patterns, Ludlam could play on the narrative created by the interaction between past and present productions in a form of personal, intertextual game, which was rendered even easier by his insistence on performing in repertory at his own theatre house.

The playwright's reinterpretation of the well-made play hinged on broadening the definitional scope of what is usually perceived as a worn-out 19th century commercial drama template. Connecting the form to the Aristotelian model, to screenwriting and American brands of realistic drama, Ludlam considered the redefined well-made play to be the dominant model in Western theatre. Yet this seemed to confusingly signal an intention to reclaim conventions at the expense of experimentation.

So why then engage in ambiguous naming and risk jeopardizing his position in the theatrical avant-garde? First, because Ludlam, a contrarian spirit wary of labels, viewed creating confusion about his status as a token of his belonging to the avant-garde. He entertained an ambivalent relation to the term itself, now claiming ownership of it as an innovator, now rejecting it when he felt lumped together with more minimalist, less drama-centric practitioners:

A lot of avant-garde artists have embraced “the theatre” and thrown out the concept of drama. That's where we differ. Because to me the theatre is the necessary evil and the drama is what is great and eternal [...] Plays are combats – they have conflicts – which are a forum for debate and for the exploration of ideas... the intellectual function of the theatre. [...] Spectacle could produce only beauty, which is empty without subject matter. (Samuels 1992: 33)

In spite of his plaidoyer for drama as intellectual stimulation, Ludlam's return to a more controlled form may indeed be construed as a middle-of-the-road solution presenting none of the audacious qualities of either absurdism or the original brand of Ridiculous theatre. That is how the change of direction was interpreted by some critics: having “dropped out of the rebellion” yet without managing “a transition into classical sobriety” (Brecht 1986: 83), his rough edges could understandably appear blunted and his new style bland.

Still waters run deep

Beyond Ludlam's willful provocation, how can the playwright's evolution toward a seemingly more conventional strand of dramaturgy be justified? Even a cursory glance at the "well-made plays" reveals that the distinction between the two periods may not be as clear-cut as it appears. Improved production and performance values probably contributed at least as much to the impression of plot-streamlining than actual writing adjustments. Ludlam did not cease to experiment with plots and their complex combination. The surface arguably looks smoother: contrary to the epic plays, there can indeed be a discernible dramatic thread in the well-made ones. But in the end, the cumulative effect of the many twists and turns can make the dramatic arc so convoluted, that it becomes challenging to pin down or sum up.

The well-made plays also tend to come across as more approachable: while they still function based on a system of cultural allusions, the audience can latch onto a basic, plot-based reading; in addition, other semantic layers can be deciphered by those able to recognize the references and connect them to the plot, thus retrieving the intertextual game at work in the epic period. Even Ludlam's most successful play from a commercial standpoint, *The Mystery of Irma Vep* (1984), a rewriting of a penny dreadful filled with melodramatic undertones, is buttressed by a similar brand of plot-based, dizzying deftness. With an architecture suggesting the generic conventions of the type of popular novel it is inspired by, with a series of revelations leading up to an equally unpredictable, though still logical, ending, the play flaunts its transgression of the demands of verisimilitude and realism.

Ludlam's relation to the spectator ultimately revolved around the plot as well – a counterintuitive assessment from someone also active as a director and performer: through dramaturgical manipulation, his goal was to probe the limits of what is acceptable and tolerable by an audience. By means of a trying, bellicose "collision" of styles (Samuels 1992: 99) a wedge was driven between those who took the plot at face value, following it linearly, and those who mentally interrupted the thread to establish connections external to the plot; between those who were taken in and affected by it, those who watched with detachment and those who walked out in disgust.

Whether Ludlam's tangled web of stories fits the definition of avant-garde theatre may still be up to debate when his body of work is considered on its own. But examining its production and reception contexts reveals a clear concern for experimentation, testing the threshold of tolerance of spectators and critics well after achieving a supposed turnaround early on in his career.

In Walter Scott's original quote, "Oh what a tangled web we weave when we first practice to deceive", complexity was construed as the mark of a lack of experience, the better deceiver being able to refine his craft toward increased simplification. Ludlam decided instead to run against the grain of Scott's narrative. Maintaining a high level of complexity stemmed from a desire to stay away from sleek professionalism as much as from the pared down aesthetic fashion prevalent in most avant-garde theatre. To be seen walking an ambiguous line between extreme sophistication and utter clumsiness was as much an aesthetic choice as a risky gamble.

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The Romanian Language in James Joyce

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A story is a set of incidents that happen to a person in some place at some point in time.

Writers such as Virginia Woolf and Joseph Conrad changed the rules of the story in different ways and for different reasons. T.S. Eliot wanted to make an epic poem out of his *Waste Land*. James Joyce, on the other hand, never even *thought* he had a story to tell.

Why did Modernists discredit the story? How did they do it that today readers feel uncomfortable when they read a fairy-tale kind of book, because stories do not happen to real people any more?

It all started with Henry James, even though his books *are* stories: plots deprived of endings, told in confusing ways, happening everywhere yet nowhere in particular, at an imprecise moment in time, and to so many persons at once that the reader loses track of them all. In spite of all these things, Henry James did have stories to tell, places to describe and moments in time to hold on to.

His brother, psychologist William James, invented the concept of *Stream of Consciousness*.¹ It was not of much help to Henry James, though. Henry James did and yet did not have the feeling that a traditional story could not reflect real life any more. He struggled to make peace with the plot, while undermining its known conventions. He tried very hard to tell a story, despite the fact that he changed many traditional rules in the process, such as the use of a clear ending: the last pages of any book by Henry James are an invitation to make up our own version of what the future might bring about.

Virginia Woolf rebelled against traditional stories openly. In her essay “Modern Fiction”, written in 1919 and published in *The Common Reader*, she wondered: “Is life like this? Must novels be like this? (...) Life is not a series of gig lamps symmetrically arranged; life is a luminous halo, a semi-transparent envelope surrounding us from the

¹ “Consciousness, then, does not appear to itself chopped up in bits. Such words as ‘chain’ or ‘train’ do not describe it fitly as it presents itself in the first instance. It is nothing jointed; it flows. A ‘river’ or a ‘stream’ are the metaphors by which it is most naturally described. *In talking of it hereafter, let us call it the stream of thought, of consciousness, or of subjective life.*” <http://psychclassics.yorku.ca/James/Principles/>

beginning of consciousness to the end.” (Woolf 1984: 160). It was Henry James, though, who fuelled her dissent before she formulated it. He dispensed with the clear ending, for instance. In books written by Henry Fielding, Charles Dickens or Jane Austen, the narrative ends with the last chapter, and the reader can do nothing about it. The author of the story always has the last word. The reader gets everything there is to know from the incidents and the dialogue.

Even John Galsworthy, that maddeningly perfect craftsman of incidents with whom not one detail was useless in the economy of the tale, felt this coming: he postponed the ending till the tired reader gave up the many volumes, and settled for an endless story after all.

Earlier fiction writers were first and foremost interested in building stories with suspense and an exemplary endings. While doing so, they also struggled to make their stories as lifelike as possible. Henry Fielding, for instance, did not tell his stories as the Bible had told them once; Dickens’s irony tells us more than just the incidents we witness; Thomas Hardy often wanders into philosophy and lyricism.

Coming after a long line of novelists who mostly wrote for suspense, and cultivated the sense of an ending, Virginia Woolf (1984) uttered the first ‘No’ in her essay “Modern Fiction”. She no longer thought, like her predecessors, that the story could be improved. She claimed the story should be dismissed from the novel altogether. She announced that fiction no longer needed ‘plot’.

Interestingly, though, while claiming she had no use at all for the story, Virginia Woolf actually clung to it. Her literary education had been fed by very traditional books, which inevitably bore upon her. Consequently, the moment one has finished reading her books, which are narrated according to the technique of the Stream of Consciousness, what one remembers is precisely the plot: a sequence of incidents well placed in space and time, closely following the rule of the classical unities formulated by Aristotle in the Antiquity. The novelist’s interest in the future of her heroes, her narrative training, swerved her at times from fictional experimentalism.

The traditional telling of a tale had lasted for nineteen centuries in Europe, and much longer than that in the world, if we add to it the Bible and all mythologies. It taught readers/listeners to order their experience chronologically in their minds, as divided into past, present, and future moments. This order of memory relied on the optimistic idea that any story pointed to a future, that we could order the past and the present in such a way as to get what we wanted when the time came. There was also a negative version of the future, as failure or deserved punishment.

One thing is certain: for nineteen centuries of European civilization, to which we must add thousands of years of various mythologies handed down from one generation to another, nobody objected to the narrative logic that organized time into past, present and future. The fairy-tale was the school that taught young children to view their life as a sequence, despite the fact that the past and the future did not exist as such, except in their memory and imagination. Since these stories connected the past to the future in a relationship of deed and reward, or sin and punishment, narrative chronology was a close neighbour of morality for a long time. In this view, the present either conformed and was rewarded, or sinned against common rules and was sanctioned later on.

The peak year of Modernism was 1922, when T.S. Eliot’s *The Waste Land* and James Joyce’s *Ulysses* were published. Modernism as a literary age preceded and followed that year by some twenty years. Henry James and Joseph Conrad had begun publishing their novels before 1900. During the modernist age, writers such as D.H. Lawrence, John Galsworthy, Katherine Mansfield, E. M. Forster, Lawrence Durrell combined conventional narration with modernist elements.

The story with a clear past and a future which the reader could not change was a way of energizing the present, of pushing it ahead. The author was sounding a warning, he was offering the reader an alternative for the future, a contingency plan. These imaginary plans for the future became part of the library which existed in every reader's memory. In time, they came to affect the reader's morals and practical decisions. This utilitarian story — governed by suspense to such an extent that one could not stop reading till one had found out the ending — could not die. This kind of story is an idealized explanation of human life. Such stories are still being written today.

Since the primitive age, stories had helped man make sense of his own existence. Why did Modernists defy this horizon of expectation? What brought about that final 'NO' uttered by Virginia Woolf, which suspended story-telling for at least twenty years? What exactly do we mean when we say that some writers gave up plot in favour of the narrative 'experiment'?

The modernist experiment came into being almost at the same time as Einstein's theory of relativity and Freud's view of the relativity of one's inner life. It made one idea very clear: neither the past, nor the future is real. One's only real possession is one's mind. Time only exists as a present moment. Our memory fabricates a story for each new present moment. The past and the future are imaginary constructs: we remember the past, we expect the future. Between 1871 and 1922, Proust went *À la recherche du temps perdu*, or, to use Shakespeare's words four centuries earlier, 'remembrance of things past'.

Experimentalism denies the utilitarian connection of the plot to morals, and it dismisses all advice for the future which a writer can give. There is no future. This explains why suspense and the ending of a story have become immaterial. To various degrees, writers such as James, Conrad, Joyce, Eliot, Woolf lost the optimistic feeling that the hero must be waiting for a future, as had been the case for Fielding, Dickens, or the fairy-tales.

Virginia Woolf challenged the traditional narrative logic when she declared that the compound past-present-future was a broken globe, an artificial image, "gig lamps symmetrically arranged" (Woolf 1984). Modernist writers always focus on the 'now', on the mind that thinks in the text.

There are no two Modernists alike. Most certainly, though, the idea that plot could be dispensed with was in the air sometime between 1880 and 1940. Each writer used whatever means came in handy. Two of them cast a longing look back.

One of those writers who involuntarily looked back was Virginia Woolf. She proclaimed the death of all story-telling mainly because planning incidents in view of a future, of a much awaited ending seemed pointless to her. She took refuge in the lyricism of present states of mind, but the old story still haunted her and her readers equally.

Another writer unexpectedly longing for the narrative was T.S. Eliot: the structure of his *Waste Land* proves his intention to write an epic poem. What came out of his longing for the story was the 'borrowing' tool which he devised.

Eliot's borrowings may have caused massive disapproval at first, but they were soon widely imitated all over Europe. He seems to have published the only piece of literature that ended with Notes written by the author himself. No critic will deal with the poem today without analysing these Notes. No publishing house ever published *The Waste Land* again without its Notes, despite the fact that the first edition had made many exclaim that a real poem did not need the words "This is a poem" at the end of it.

Why did Eliot keep track of all the words he borrowed from other writers in his Notes? Why did he have to borrow in the first place? Because of these borrowings, *The*

Waste Land was called many names: from “the sacred cow” (Shapiro 1960: 35)² of the century to “so much waste paper” (Powell 1923), and to *piece* (instead of the original ‘peace) (Lucas 1923) “that passeth understanding”³.

The reason for these borrowings was mainly narrative: if we follow his Notes to *The Waste Land*, we realize that he was not borrowing words, but stories, such as the myth of the nightingale, Shakespeare’s story in *The Tempest*, Dante’s *Inferno*, Thomas Kyd’s incidents in *The Spanish Tragedy* (or *Hieronimo is Mad Again*), etc. Eliot was actually borrowing the old attitude of those authors who had a plan, and produced an orderly narrative. Despite his secret hopes, many readers, and many critics for that matter, refuse to see a story in *The Waste Land*.

The fact that T.S. Eliot wanted to build an epic poem definitely explains his view on Joyce. In 1923, he was introducing James Joyce’s *Ulysses* with his essay “*Ulysses*, Order and Myth” (Eliot 1975). He was describing Joyce as an organizer of stories according to the ‘mythical method’. He granted him the second place in the innovating race, though, after W.B. Yeats. Besides, Eliot’s own poem was published in 1922 as well, so his essay implied that he had used the mythical method himself.

Eliot began his argument by announcing that the novel was dead: “It is here that Mr Joyce’s parallel use of the *Odyssey* has a great importance. It has the importance of a scientific discovery. No one else has built a novel upon such a foundation before: it has never before been necessary. I am not begging the question in calling *Ulysses* a ‘novel’; and if you call it an epic it will not matter. If it is not a novel, that is simply because the novel is a form which will no longer serve; it is because the novel, instead of being a form, was simply the expression of an age which had not sufficiently lost all form to feel the need of something stricter. (...) The novel ended with Flaubert and with James.” (Eliot 1975: 175).

He continued by stating that Joyce was innovating the narrative: “In using the myth, in manipulating a continuous parallel between contemporaneity and antiquity, Mr. Joyce is pursuing a method which others must pursue after him. They will not be imitators, any more than the scientist who uses the discoveries of an Einstein in pursuing his own, independent, further investigations. It is simply a way of controlling, of *ordering*, of giving a shape and a significance to the immense panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history. It is a method already adumbrated by Mr Yeats, and of the need for which I believe Mr Yeats to have been the first contemporary to be conscious. It is a method for which the horoscope is auspicious. Psychology (such as it is, and whether our reaction to it be comic or serious), ethnology, and *The Golden Bough* have concurred to make possible what was impossible even a few years ago. **Instead of narrative method, we may now use the mythical method.**” (Eliot 1975: 177-178).

Actually, Joyce could not care less about organizing what he had to say in a story. Writing a narrative was the last thing on his mind.

There was a close contemporary of Henry James’ who could most certainly have told many stories, but, somehow, never did that fully, or rather not in the conventional way, in view of creating suspense or offering his readers a meaningful ending. It was Joseph Conrad. He died in 1924, only two years after 1922 - the peak year of Modernism -, and his fiction amply proved that there were quite a number of icebergs in the literary ocean, before one of them managed to hit ‘Titanic’ which traditional narrative had become over the years.

²“The very worst passages are those which are merely quotes (...) *The Waste Land* (...) is one of the curiosities of English literature (...) ... hoax or not, it was very shortly made the sacred cow of modern poetry and the object of more pious literary nonsense than any modern work save the *Cantos* of Pound (...) It is, in fact, not a form at all but a negative version of form.” Shapiro (1960:35)

³ Reference to Eliot’s Note 434, discussing line 433 of *The Waste Land*.

If we read Conrad's *Lord Jim*, *Heart of Darkness* or *Victory*, the feeling is the same: whatever the story may be, it just does *not* come first on the list of things the writer is trying to get through to us. The beginning, the end, the places and the time of incidents matter so little. Something else prevails. It is an attitude towards fiction which Joseph Conrad shared with James Joyce. That attitude was present in *Dubliners*, continued with *Stephen Hero*, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, and *Ulysses*. It grew into open dissent from story-telling in *Finnegans Wake*.

Before Joyce, clear language had always been the main tool of story-telling. It was the soil out of which grew plot, hero, suspense, ending, the future of the story. Joyce and Conrad, however, left the path of common language, and migrated towards peculiar individual words. What prevailed with them was the Word. How much a Word could say - or, rather, how much a Word could *suggest* - became Joyce's major concern.

There are proofs to support this focus on verbal ambiguity all over Conrad's and Joyce's fiction, but not many in Woolf's books or in Eliot's borrowings. Words such as *Victory* (whose? when? over whom?), *Darkness* ("The horror! The horror!") in Conrad come so close to Joyce's "Eveline" (Joyce 1914: 42 - 49), for instance, with "yellowing photograph", "Damn'd Italians! coming over here!" and "I know these sailor chaps".

What Joyce was looking for was the perfect shortcut between thinking and the word. It 'leaps' at us, says Joyce. It swallows plot, place and time, and it mainly swallows grammatically correct sentences. Sight, hearing, idea, and emotion are merged. Joyce wrote this in *Finnegans Wake* (193.10:8): "Do you **hear** what I'm **seeing**, hammet?" This communication is the swiftest carrier of thought from mind to mind.

Many critics must have thought that Modernists were trying to eat their cake and have it: it is generally counterproductive for a writer to undermine his own words as long as they are his only tools. Joyce's mind had a war to wage with all conventional tools, with the inability to think for oneself that a language often entails. This war bore the name of *Finnegans Wake*.

In *Hamlet* (II.2.193-206), Polonius says to himself: "Though this be madness, yet there is method in't."

Joyce's own 'method' has never been defined. Does anyone know why he merged letters, words, languages, place-names, person-names and so much more, into numberless non-existent - should we call them 'words'?

After all is said and done, what we are left with is the words of the writer. These words make one realize how many of them have hidden or are still hiding behind the conventional, clear language, which for long centuries has supported plot, hero, suspense, closure.

What T.S. Eliot may have failed to see in his essay on *Ulysses* was that Joyce turned his back on clarity, and stood all alone, on his own words. He pushed aside clear sentences and commonly used words - the fictional scaffolding of all times. He devised a language of his own. His books are paved with words that do not exist in any other language. These words are built out of the commonest, simplest syllables and meanings belonging to the 40 languages that Joyce himself listed at the end of his last book.

One of Joyce's rules was that languages, meanings, allusions of all kinds - historical, musical, literary, etc. - must always have a simultaneous existence, never a successive one. The words and allusions are uncomplicated when taken separately: Napoleon, *la cigale et la fourmi*, Mester-Master... It is simultaneity that amplifies them. Joyce makes up words which are the shortest way from one mind to another, and tell us everything at once.

Joyce's principle of simultaneity is obvious when we read the words that open and close his last book, *Finnegans Wake*:

“riverrun, past Eve and Adam’s——A way a lone a last a loved a long the”

The first words quoted here are the beginning of the book. What follows is its ending. The last words written by James Joyce in 1939 lead directly to the first line of the book, which was written in 1922.

Joyce Lexicography (<http://editura.mttlc.ro/Joyce%20Lexicography.html>) - whose continuing series has already 105 volumes - considers Joyce’s words taken one by one. We are putting in the understanding of *Finnegans Wake* as much ‘method’ as Joyce put into the 17 years he spent writing his book. Each Lexicon that *Contemporary Literature Press* has so far published is one face of that method.

Our series of *Finnegans Wake* Lexicons began with a volume that did not even bear a number. We called it number ‘One’ much later. While we were working on it, we thought our attempt began and ended there.

That first volume of *Joyce Lexicography* was the *Lexicon of Romanian in Finnegans Wake* (Sandulescu 2011a). No other Joycean scholar noticed that there were incredibly many Romanian words in Joyce’s book. We find in the European languages words that have almost identical forms, meanings, even pronunciations. They usually have common Romance roots. Our lexicon contains, however, at least 1,000 words with specific markers, which undoubtedly came from the Romanian language itself!

In 1963, in his *Concordance to Finnegans Wake*, Clive Hart published a list of what he called ‘syllabifications’: he cut Joyce’s words into segments that were meaningful to him, from an English, Germanic, Romance point of view. It was a way of forcing Joyce’s words to assume a clear-cut identity, a common meaning to us all: he was trying to translate Joyce into recognizable languages, preferably English.

Clive Hart had undertaken this syllabification in order to prove that English words were the most numerous and the most important in Joyce’s book: “My principal object in syllabifying has been to put on show the *English* words hidden away in the portmanteaux, together with some of the most obvious of the other meaningful syllables.” (Hart 1963: 344). He was positive that all complicated, unusual, extant or non-existent words in *Finnegans Wake* triumphantly led to the English language.

Our 19 volumes of *Selective Segmentation Exemplified by Romanian*⁴ indicated a somewhat different conclusion: each segment isolated by Clive Hart led to at least several possible Romanian words, of which some were not, but most *were* common to all Romance languages. Of course, Joyce’s *List* includes more than just European languages, but, somehow, the bulk of his working syllables *is* Romance after all.

When we began working on the Romanian Lexicon, we deliberately brushed aside the common European words of Romance origin. There are words like *animal*, *competent*, *insistent*, *secret*, etc. on every page of *Finnegans Wake*. These are words that have exactly the same letters, even the same sounds at times, and also the same meaning in English as they have in other European languages. The fact that Joyce chose to use them tells us a lot about his thoughts concerning the relationship between English and other languages. The effect is that, when we read Joyce, we seem to be using a sort of universal, pre-Tower-of-Babel language, which we may never have studied or spoken, but which we *can* understand in an intuitive way.

Joyce’s list of 40 languages, in neat handwriting, on the last page of the manuscript of *Finnegans Wake* has never been either published or examined so far, except on the dust cover of *The Language of the Devil* (Sandulescu 1987). A number of Joycean

⁴ *Clive Hart’s Segmentation as Exemplified by Romanian*, in 19 volumes, edited by C. George Sandulescu and redacted by Lidia Vianu, Contemporary Literature Press, 2014, <http://editura.mttlc.ro/FW-segmentation-romanian.html>

scholars – the most systematic in this respect being Helmut Bonheim in his *Lexicon of the German* (Sandulescu 2013) - did try to find words belonging to their own languages in Joyce's book. *Joyce Lexicography* identified 'Common Scandinavian' in the second FW Lexicon of our series (Sandulescu 2011b). Others tackled French, English, Irish, Italian, Hungarian, Gypsy, Slavic languages. Some of their findings are there, in Joyce's text, others may or may not be what they seem. Very much depends on who is looking for them.

At this point it is important to state that, in doing *Finnegans Wake* research, one works with suppositions. Whatever Joyce may have thought, whatever he may have meant to say, what words he actually knew, what people suggested what meanings to him - all these are useful suppositions, but suppositions still. Joyce's text raises questions. Our method - *Fragestellung*, leading directly to Heidegger - encourages readers to identify the enigmas in the text, and find their own explanations, which sometimes may take years of research.

Coming back to the enigmatic use of Romanian in *Finnegans Wake*, we must first explain why it has absolutely never been tackled before. In the twentieth century, most Joycean scholars were westerners. They came from parts of Europe that had no interest in Romanian words or elements of Romanian history, geography, proper names, etc. which Joyce might have known or used. On the other hand, during the same 20th Century, Romania was a francophone country, which explains why there was no Joyce research here before the fall of the Iron Curtain.

One of the authors of this article, G. C. Sandulescu, began his first Romanian Lexicon of *Finnegans Wake* as far back as the year 1960, but it was published for the first time only in 2011.

Contemporary Literature Press has examined many of the Joycean scholars' attempts to make sense of the literary, geographical, musical, historical, and lexical suggestions contained in various ambiguous combinations of letters (see Sandulescu and Vianu). We have also considered those scholars who claim that *Finnegans Wake* is a novel, that it has plot and protagonists. The position of our *Manual* concerning this issue is the following (George Sandulescu (2011a: 19):

"It was always very easy to get Anthony Burgess into a state of extreme agitation leading to anger. My procedure was very simple: I used to get things going by starting a discussion about *Finnegans Wake*. That always pleased him immensely, as all discussions about *Finnegans Wake* did. But, whenever I continued with the idea that, in my own opinion, *Finnegans Wake* was not a novel, Anthony Burgess invariably got into a state.

And, after no end of walking up and down, and all sorts of interjections and invectives, which lasted quite a number of minutes, and drinkwise extended over a number of shots of bourbon, he invariably came up with the sentence that I always was looking forward to and eagerly expecting.

That sentence was: I must prove that *Finnegans Wake* is a novel!

I must find the proof pointing to the fact that *Finnegans Wake* is a novel!

I must find the evidence that *Finnegans Wake* is **really** a novel.

Every time that was indeed the line that I expected, and to which I retorted somewhat maliciously the following way:

Which means that you have not yet got the evidence!

No, he replied, you are right, I haven't got it. But I will discover it!

His last sentence to me: *Finnegans Wake* **must** be a novel!"

The time has come to explain how the Romanian language is important in Joyce's book. This line of argument will also explain why *Joyce Lexicography* has hit the London literary circles, why it was recently present in the *Times Literary Supplement* (no 5797, 9 May 2014).

The American John Quinn, who collected Constantin Brancusi's work, also bought the manuscript of *Ulysses* from James Joyce, and that of *The Waste Land* from T.S. Eliot. Both Joyce and Brancusi were in Paris in the early 1920's. They may have met around that time. It seems their paths crossed in the summer of 1923. In his diary, Harry Crosby (1928) – an American expatriate living in Paris - mentioned seeing Joyce and Brancusi at the Théâtre des Champs Élysées on 29 June 1926.

It all started, in our view, from the portraits of Joyce that Brancusi made. As owners of *The Black Sun Press* in Paris, Harry Crosby and his wife decided to publish a part of Joyce's *Work in Progress*, which Joyce entitled *Tales Told of Shem and Shaun*. The book appeared on 9 August 1929, with an abstract portrait of Joyce by Brancusi in it.

In a memoir published in 1953, Crosby's wife, Caresse, remembered Joyce sitting for Brancusi while he was doing the portraits, which were five in all: "Brancusi agreed to do it, Joyce agreed to sit, but it was hard to get them together and harder to get them apart!" (Caresse Crosby 1953)

In a letter to Harriet Shaw Weaver - advocate of James Joyce and editor of *The Egoist* - Joyce wrote: "I got on well with Brancusi (who is something of a fogey like myself, deploring modern feminine fashions, the speed of modern trains, etc., etc.)." (Gilbert 1957).

Joyce was 47, and Brancusi was 53.

Joyce himself said little about the portraits. He is reported to have stated: "His design of me will attract certain buyers." (Geist 2011). Besides that, in a letter to Valery Larbaud, Joyce mentioned 'Brancusi's whirlgig'. (qtd. in Aubert and Jolas (eds.) 1979: 70). In another letter to Miss Weaver, sent on 17 January 1932, he wrote: "When he [Joyce's father] got the copy I sent him of *Tales Told* etc. (so they write me) he looked a long time at Brancusi's Portrait of J.J. and finally remarked: Jim has changed more than I thought." (Gilbert 1957).

Of the five portraits made by Brancusi, one was entitled by the Romanian artist 'Symbole de James Joyce'. Brancusi himself said it expressed *le sens du pousser* that he had felt in Joyce (qtd. in Aubert and Jolas (eds.) 1979: 77). James Joyce, on the other hand, coined in *Finnegans Wake* (FW155.09:1) a word suggestive of Brancusi's first name 'constantinently'.

Three out of the five portraits of Joyce that Brancusi made have the 'whirl' in the centre. The key to the connection between Joyce and this whirl (*le sens du pousser*) is suggested by the cover to *The Joycean Monologue*, by George Sandulescu (2010). It was, as the title says, *A Study of Ulysses*, and it was first published by the Department of Literature, University of Essex, in 1979. The cover to this book on *Ulysses* had on it a whirl, which vaguely pointed to an ear in its middle, and which was surrounded by an anagram of *Lisant au livre de lui même*, which points to Hamlet through Mallarmé. Joyce himself translated these words in *Ulysses* as "reading the book of himself." (Joyce 1986: Episode 9, line 115).

Finnegans Wake is a book of himself, indeed: it is an ideal definition of the interior monologue. Here is Mallarmé again, present in the epigraph of the site that hosts the whole series of FW Lexicons (<http://sandulescu.perso.monaco.mc/>): *Tout, au monde, existe pour aboutir à un livre*. Everything Joyce thought and heard and felt ended up in the book: that one book was *Dubliners-Ulysses-Stephen Hero-Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man - Finnegans Wake*.

We have absolutely no idea so far when, how, where Joyce and Brancusi met, and what they did on those occasions. We can imagine Joyce in a Parisian café with Brancusi, drinking or talking, but mainly listening. The almost blind man who had chosen writing over singing certainly used his musical ear to record in his memory everything he overheard in cafés, pubs, inns - since his afternoons were spent there more than once.

James Joyce's connections with Brancusi and Romania have not been examined so far. Our first Romanian Lexicon, published by *Contemporary Literature Press* on 11.11.2011, was enlarged in 2012. We are enlarging it again this year, in 2014. The fascination comes from the fact that whenever one has a fresh look at the text, one finds more Romanian words. Looking for Romanian words, while reading the whole of FW, does not help much. You only notice them when they strike you: sometimes the letters, many times the sounds.

The first time Joyce alluded to Romania was in *Ulysses*, where Plevna was mentioned four times: 4.63, 15.1529, 17.1425, 18.690. Plevna is closely associated with Romania's becoming an independent state in 1877:

- 4.63 Pity. All the way from Gibraltar. Forgotten any little Spanish she knew Wonder what her father gave for it. Old Style. Ah yes! of course. Bought it at the Governor's auction. Got a short knock. Hard as nails at a bargain, old Tweedy. Yes, sir. At **Plevna** that was. I rose from the ranks, sir, and I'm proud of it. Still he had brains enough to make that corner in stamps. Now that was far seeing.
- 15.1529 Lo! We charge! Deploying to the left our light horse swept across the heights of **Plevna** and, uttering their warcry Bonafide Sabaoth, sabred the Saracen gunners to a man.
- 17.1425 Why, firstly and secondly, did he not consult the work in question? Firstly, in order to exercise mnemotechnic: secondly, because after an interval of amnesia, when, seated at the central table, about to consult the work in question, he remembered by mnemotechnic the name of the military engagement, **Plevna**.
- 18.690 and only captain Groves and father talking about Rorkes drift and **Plevna** and sir Garnet Wolseley and Gordon at Kharthoum lighting their pipes for them everytime they went out

Plevna is a meaningful word in *Ulysses*:

"Leopold Bloom knew about Plevna, as he had among his books *The History of the Russian-Turkish War*, published in London, and bearing the stamp 'The Garrison Library' at Gibraltar. In consequence, it could only have belonged to Major Tweedy himself, Molly Bloom's father. As to the Battle of Plevna (a city in Northern Bulgaria), which lasted for 143 days, from 20 July to 10 December 1877, the English maintained an attitude of strict neutrality, though the British Navy had an ample presence in the area." (Sandulescu 2011a: 38)

In *Finnegans Wake*, Joyce shows us in several ways that he was acquainted with the Romanian language, with its basic grammar, some of its peculiarities, with Romanian folk beliefs, with some places in Romania, and some proper names. More often than not, when he uses an approximation of a Romanian word, he builds around it a context which supports the association with Romanian. We have chosen here those Romanian words which Joyce placed in his book for a Romanian to find - words which are Romanian beyond the shadow of a doubt. In an undemonstrated way, or undemonstrated yet, these words suggest the presence of Brancusi in Joyce's mind.

We must add that, in enlarging the Romanian Lexicon with some of the following words, we were greatly helped by the Index to Alexandru Rosetti's *Histoire de la langue roumaine des origines au XVII^e siècle* (2001). This includes words which are unmistakably Romanian, and it was a welcome confirmation of what we had found in Joyce's text.

The list of words below will prove that Joyce knew exactly what he was doing. If those interested will take the time to use the *Finnegans Wake* address we give (page, line,

position on the line) and read the context, they will understand the full extent of our finding. Joyce made it crystal clear that he knew what he was talking about.

“...Rumanian tends to be, with Joyce, almost as important as Irish! For Irish was used for local colour. The Rumanian language, together with a few others, have been resorted to for more obscure, and more cryptic, reasons. It is the honest and sincere researcher’s job to find that out.” (Sandulescu 2011a: 9).

We have grouped the few examples chosen to illustrate the statements above under the following headings, which support the lines of our argument:

1. Words presumably mentioned in conversations with Brancusi, or which refer to Brancusi;
2. Words accompanied by specific markers of the Romanian language, such as enclitic definite articles, suffixes in proper family names, vocatives, diminutives;
3. Names connected with Romanian topography;
4. Romanian proper names;
5. Common Romanian phrases;
6. Random words.

Joyce’s punctuation before and after these words has been preserved.

1. Words presumably mentioned in Joyce’s conversations with Brancusi, or which refer to Brancusi:

038.25:1 *vinars* (“brandy”); 054.16:6 *.Ismeme de bumbac* (“men’s underwear, made of cotton”); 158.19:7 *Vallee Maraia* → *Valea Mare*: a place in Romania, not far from Târgu Jiu, where Constantin Brancusi accepted the commission for three major sculptures in 1935; well known for its wines; 222.08:9 *Mester* (“master”, “craftsman”); 386.30:3 *barrancos* → *Brancusi?*; 420.28:2 *O’Domnally* (“Sir”); 518.28:2 *mujic* (“peasant”); 518.30:1 — *Da Domnuley*. (“Yes, Sir”); 549.14:7 *coloumba mea, frimosa mea*, → *Măiastra?* (cca 1911) (“My dove, my beauty”); 599.08:6 *fattafottafutt*. (“girl.skirt.fuck”)

2. Words accompanied by specific markers of the Romanian language, such as enclitic definite articles, suffixes in proper family names, vocatives, diminutives:

049.15:8 *Paul Horan*; 053.02:2.3 *Wildu Picturescu*. → [Rad]u [Lup]escu, Oscar Wilde + Picture; 064.25:3 *Pamintul* (“the Earth”); 064.32:2 *Duzinascu* (imaginary typical surname); 241.08:1 *Collosul* (“the colossus”); 244.05:9, *Neomenie!* (“inhumanity”); 255.15:3, *procul abeat!* (“drunken pig”); 230.07:7 *omulette* → *omule!*, *omuleț*, *omletă* (“little man. omelette”); 404.14:9, *O romence*, (“Romanian women”); 484.29:7 *rumanescu* (“Romanian”); 505.25:3 *The form masculine. The gender feminine.* → This is the best definition of the Neuter Gender in Romanian; 518.22:10 *sorowbrate* → *soro + frate* (“sister + brother”); 518.23:9, *scusascmerul?* (“excuse”); 518.24:9, *Limba romena* (“the Romanian language”); 518.22:8 *Ruman* (“Romanian”); 621.34:4 *in the timpul* (“during”).

3. Names connected with Romanian topography:

105.26:8 *Galasia like his Milchcow* → *Milcov* (Romanian river, the border between former Moldova and Muntenia); (Galiția included Bucovina between 1786-1849 and 1860-1861) (Bucovina: ‘Țara Fagilor’, ‘Buchenland’); 114.04:5 *Bukarahast* → *Bucharest*; 136.08:4 *Ostrov* (“island”); 158.19:7 *Vallee Maraia* → place in Romania, not far from Târgu Jiu, where Constantin Brancusi accepted the commission for three major sculptures in 1935; well known for its wines; 209.17:6 *pruth* (“the river Prut”); 403.09:3 *Tegmine* — sub — *Fagi* (“mine.birch trees”); 554.01:2, *buckarestive*

4. Romanian proper names:

049.15:8 Paul Horan; 053.02:2.3 Wildu Picturescu.; 064.32:2 Duzinascu; 145.32:12 Dracula's; 192.21:3 Paraskivee; 343.02:2 Draco; 358.12:8 corvinophobe; 360.13:1-6 Carmen Sylvae, my quest, my queen.; 540.21:2 ! Redu Negru may be black

5. Common Romanian phrases:

198.19:5 spate a spate. → spate la spate ("back to back"); 212.26:6 Merced multe! → Mersi mult! ("thanks a lot"); 215.25:5 howmulty → cât de mulți ("how many"); 338.13:13 But da. But dada, → Ba da, ba da! ("yes, yes"); 340.23:11 drumbume → drum bun ("safe journey"); 343.11:2 Attent! ("attentive"); 355.30:8 Misto ("cool"); 439.16:12 !As broad as its lung → Romanian fairy-tale hero: Păsări-lăți-lungilă; 464.07:7 omportent man! → om ("man") + important; 466.01:5 Babau and Momie! → baubau + momîie ("fee-faw-fum. Scarecrow"); 555.01:7? Too mult sleepth. ("too much sleep"); 578.03:2 Oom Godd → Om bun! ("good man"); 583.03:8, her dinties are chattering, → îi clănțane dinții ("teeth"); 598.18:3 Panpan and vinvin → pâine și vin ("bread and wine"); 619.27:3 from cape to pede. → din cap (până) în picioare ("from head to foot"); 621.34:4 in the timpul ("during")

6. Random words

010.17:1: Ap Pukkaru! ("catch hold"); 117.12:1 jambeatiste → (jambe+) batistă ("handkerchief"); 176.36:6 somnbomnet ("good?sleep"); 180.35:10 boer constructor ("boyard. builder"); 184.29:11 his uoves, oves and uves à la Sulphate de Soude, his ochiuri ("fried eggs"); 213.30:4 ? Deataceas! → dată + ceas ("date.hour"); 219.05:2 Somndoze → somn (+ doze) ("sleep" + doze); 241.02:4 summan, ("long thick peasant coat"); 360.27:2, Salam! ("salami"); 365.17:5 starafs ("folk music band"); 370.13:3, oooom oooom! ("man"); 397.11:9 Mamalujo ("polenta"); 406.07:5, Margaretar → mărgăritar; Margareta ("pearl", "margareta"); 455.08:10 Iereny → ierni ("winters"); 493.31:7, Nu-Men, → nu ("no") (+ men); 577.01:2, mandragon mor → mătrăgună + mor → ("mandrake. die")

This list of possibly Romanian words is indirectly explained by Joyce himself in the following collage of statements - all chosen from page 83, lines 10-25 of the book: "Marx my word: this is nat language at any sinse of the world. One might as fairly go and kish his sprogues as fail to certify. Remarxing in languidoily. Much more highly pleased than tongue could tell. The lexinction of life."

One interpretation of these sentences could be: "Mark my words: this is not language in any sense [+ sin] of the word. One might fairly put it aside, ignorant as we are, since it fails to certify. Remake it as language. Much more highly pleased than tongue could tell. The language of life."

These sentences explain, maybe, why Romanian is present in *Finnegans Wake* - a book whose translation into just one language or one meaning at a time stands no chance at all. It is a book that emerges from the simultaneity of languages and meanings. One does not 'read' Joyce's book. By means of idiosyncratic words, this book breeds thoughts that propagate at light speed.

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INTERVIEW

An Interview with James Robertson

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*The ESSE 12 conference in Košice was enlivened by the presence of Scottish writer James Robertson. Dr Robertson read from his work on the opening day, and stayed to participate in several sessions, amongst them a panel organised by Professor Carla Sassi and Dr Jessica Aliaga Lavrijsen, on the ways terrorism has been framed and reframed in novels and on-screen. Robertson is a poet, publisher, writer, editor and translator, a cultural activist who was prominent in the 'Yes' campaign for Scottish independence – but he is best known as a prize-winning novelist. His novels are *The Fanatic* (2000), *Joseph Knight* (2003, winner of both the Saltire and Scottish Arts Council Book of the Year awards), *The Testament of Gideon Mack* (2006, longlisted for the Man Booker Prize), *And the Land Lay Still* (2010, winner of the Saltire Book of the Year award) and *The Professor of Truth* (2013). His latest novel was inspired by the bombing of Pan Am flight 103 on 21st December 1998. This atrocity resulted in the deaths of all 243 passengers and 16 crew, as well as 11 inhabitants of the Scottish town of Lockerbie. He has translated several children's books into Scots, including works by A.A. Milne, Roald Dahl, Alexander McCall Smith and Julia Donaldson. Robertson has held writer-in-residence posts, at Brownsbank Cottage (former home of the poet Hugh MacDiarmid) from 1993 to*