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THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE HAMLET MOTIF IN ULYSSES

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Ulysses is, perhaps, a supreme example of the increasing sophistication and self-consciousness with which mythic parallels and literary archetypes have been used in the literature of our century. Joyce's method presents a particularly difficult problem for critics because of the fluid richness of his parallels and allusions. Motifs commingle and interpenetrate in his novel to create an organic pattern, comparable to a "web of mirrors" in its elusiveness and complexity. Nevertheless, we shall endeavor to discuss one aspect of the pattern here-Stephen's preoccupation with *Hamlet*-and find that it shapes and infuses the world of Ulysses with meaning, perhaps differently, but in a manner just as significant as the Homeric parallels which form the basic substructure of the book.

There is no doubt that Shakespeare's most mysterious and philosophical play held a profound interest for Joyce. It is in infinite variety everywhere in the world he has created. On the verbal level, there are the innumerable quotations and parodies of quotations from *Hamlet* that occur and recur, registering moods and feelings. These, in themselves, are an indication of the degree to which the work occupied the author's thoughts. To cite but a few: "...these cliffs here remind me somehow of Elsinore that beetles o'er his base into the sea" (*Ulysses* 20*, *Hamlet* I iv), "I pace the path above the rocks, in sable silvered, hearing Elsinore's tempting flood" (*Ulysses* 45, *Hamlet* II ii), "(Bloom) Hamlet, I am thy father's spirit/Doomed for a certain time to walk the earth" (*Ulysses* 150, *Hamlet* I v), "Jack Power could a tale unfold..." (*Ulysses* 160, *Hamlet* I v), "A hesitating soul taking

* All quotes from 1934 Random House edition

arms against a sea of troubles" (*Ulysses* 182, *Hamlet* III i), "They list. And in the porches of their ears I pour" (*Ulysses* 194, *Hamlet* I v), "The play's the thing!" (*Ulysses* 206, *Hamlet* II ii), "Man delights him not nor woman neither" (*Ulysses* 210, *Hamlet* II ii), "Tis a custom more honoured in the breach than in the observance" (*Ulysses* 329, *Hamlet* I v), "For this relief, much thanks" (*Ulysses* 366, *Hamlet* I i), "List, list, O list!" (*Ulysses* 464, *Hamlet* I v), "Frailty, thy name is marriage" (*Ulysses* 542, *Hamlet* I ii), "To have or not to have, that is the question" (*Ulysses* 534, *Hamlet* III i), "The mirror up to nature" (*Ulysses* 528, *Hamlet* II ii).

There are suggestions in *Ulysses* of scenes in *Hamlet*. The opening scene at Martello Tower is a kind of parody of the nightwatch at Elsinore in the opening scene of *Hamlet*. There are the two "sentinels," Stephen and Buck Mulligan, standing atop the tower which overlooks Dublin Bay. And like King Hamlet's ghost who appears, pale and mournful on the platform at Elsinore, to unfold his harrowing tale of murder and solicit young Hamlet's oath in revenge, we have the visitation of Mary Dedalus's apparition, "her wasted body within its loose brown graveclothes." (*Ulysses* 7), "Her glazing eyes, staring out of death, to shake and bend my soul... The ghostcandle to light her agony... Her hoarse loud breath rattling in horror... Ghoul! Chewer of corpses! No, mother. Let me be and let me live." (*Ulysses* 12) And the restless, remorseful Stephen thinks of himself in terms of the young Hamlet: "So in the moon's midwatches I pace the path above the rocks, in sable silvered, hearing Elsinore's tempting flood." (*Ulysses* 45) It is not without relevance too, that the chapter ends with the solitary word, "Usurper."

Paddy Dignam's funeral and the graveyard scene in Act Five of *Hamlet* are similar in design. Bloom's reflections on animal slaughter, suicide, murder, corpses, burial, and decay and Hamlet's grotesque speculation on skulls are both a kind of deep contemplation of the cosmic cycles of life and death. Bloom's thoughts on the desolation of his father, "temporary insanity, "Found in the riverbed clutching rushes," and "Refuse Christian burial." (*Ulysses* 95) in particular, call to mind Ophelia's pathetic suicide in the willow brook. And there is the similar sense of grotesque comedy in the manner that Paddy Dignam's coffin, in Bloom's mind, simply bounces open and throws forth his corpse (*Ulysses* 97) and the gravedigger in *Hamlet* nonchalantly flings up excavated skulls. Bloom's musings, "Burying him. We come to bury Caesar. His ides of March or June. He doesn't know who he

is here nor care." (*Ulysses* 108), as Hamlet's thoughts, "Imperious Caesar, dead and turn'd to clay, Might stop a hole to keep the wind away," ponder the meaning of life in the face of inevitable death. More striking are the macabre juxtapositions of life and death, the gravedigger's song of love, the singing skull in *Hamlet*, and Bloom's musings, "Love among the tombstones. Romeo. Spice of pleasure. In the midst of death we are in life. Both ends meet. Tantalizing for the poor dead." (*Ulysses* 106, This, incidentally, echoes Stephen's thoughts in Proteus: "Bridebed, childbed, bed of death," "allwombing tomb") What we have then, in both graveyard scenes, is a grim confrontation with the frailty of life, the finality of death, the essential mystery of human existence. In both cases, the recognition which results is epiphanic and provides the possibility for understanding and a renewed engagement in life.

Our central concern in this discussion is with the scene in the library where *Hamlet* becomes the focus of attention in Stephen's speech. With consummate command of biographical details, allusions to works, and past theories, Stephen launches the much-awaited exposition of his theory concerning the relationship between Shakespeare, the artist, and *Hamlet*, his creation (anticipated in the first chapter by Buck Mulligan's remark, "He proves by algebra that Hamlet's grandson is Shakespeare's grandfather and that he himself is the ghost of his own father."), a theory whose gross implausibility is outraced only by its breathtaking ingenuity of design. What concerns us most here, however, is not the design of the argument, but rather its role as a vehicle for Stephen's conscious self-analysis, its clues to character and character relationships in *Ulysses*, and its unwitting illumination of themes that are at the heart of the human drama of Ulysses. It is in this sense that Stephen's speech becomes coherent and relevant to our understanding of *Ulysses*. And it is perhaps the only level of coherence for a speech that is interesting, but otherwise, almost hopelessly obscure and oblique in its use of allusions.

For clarity and convenience in discussion, there is still the need to render a summary of the basic line of argument in Stephen's speech. The thesis is that Shakespeare is really King Hamlet's ghost in the play and that Gertrude represents Ann Hathaway, whose seduction and subseqnent betrayal of Shakespeare dealt him a psychological wound which he was never able to escape from in life save through his own artistic creations. The thesis is

complicated at many points, however, by subplots and digressions, and most of all by the introduction of the concept of "consubstantialty" which identifies father with son and, by analogy, artist and work, Saviour and mankind, etc. as one. Stephen begins by defining a ghost as "One who has faded into impalpability through death, through absence, through change of manners." (*Ulysses* 186) He goes on to link this to Shakespeare's absence from Stratford and, in a passing analogy, to his own exile from Dublin: "Elizabethan England lay as far from Stratford as the corrupt Paris lies from the virgin Dublin. Who is the ghost from limbo patrum, returning to the world that has forgotten him? Who is King Hamlet?" (*Ulysses* 186) Then, relating the implied conclusion to the premiere of *Hamlet*, in which Shakespeare played the part of the ghost, he establishes the correspondence of Ann Hathaway to Gertrude: "He speaks the words to Burbage... Hamlet I am thy father's spirit... To a son he speaks, the son of his soul, the prince, young Hamlet and to the son of his body, Hamnet Shakespeare, who has died in Stratford that his namesake may live forever. Is it possible that he (Shakespeare)... did not draw or foresee the logical conclusion of those premises: you are the dispossessed son; I am the murdered father; your mother is the guilty queen, Ann Shakespeare, born Hathaway?" (*Ulysses* 186-187) The configuration mirrors that of Stephen and Bloom in real life. Stephen, a ghost by exile, is also the dispossessed son of Simon Dedalus. Bloom, a ghost by absence, whose wife Molly is about to commit adultery with Blazes Boylan, and whose only son, Rudy, died in infancy, is at once both cuckolded husband (King Hamlet) and bereft father (Shakespeare). That Shakespeare is later referred to as having been a Jew (*Ulysses* 202) and Bloom as "The Wandering Jew (*Ulysses* 215) corroborates this analogy. The objection is raised that Shakespeare's later plays breathe "the spirit of reconciliation" (*Ulysses* 192). Stephen counters that Shakespeare did achieve reconciliation, but only to his granddaughter (daughters in the plays: Marina in Pericles, Miranda in *The Tempest*, Perdita in *The Winter's Tale*), the image of his once-faithful wife. There is, perhaps, an ironic allusion to Bloom, who puts hope in his daughter Milly, yet feels the same apprehension towards her as he does Molly: "Molly. Milly. Same thing watered down." (*Ulysses* 88) "Milly too. Young kisses: the first. Far away now past. Mrs. Marion... Will happen, yes, Prevent. Useless." (*Ulysses* 67) The issue of another betrayal concerning the "dark lady" of the sonnets (Sonnet 144, "Two

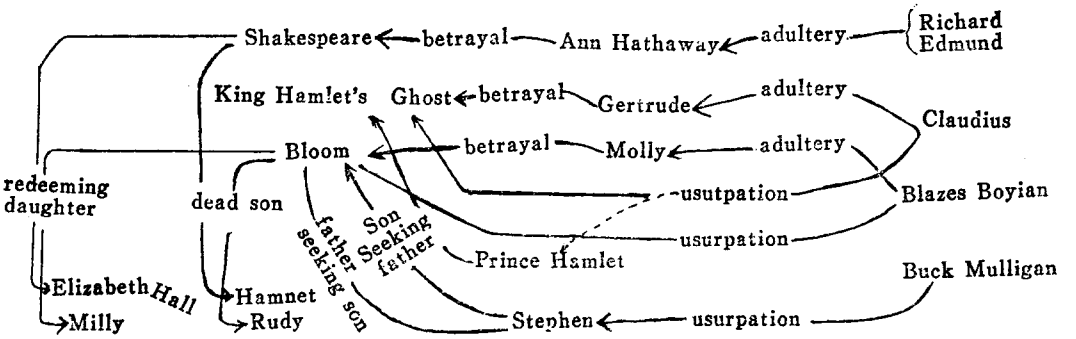
loves I have of comfort and despair") is brought up but is readily assimilated into the argument by Stephen: "That may be too... Why does he send to one who is a buonaroba, a bay where all men ride, a maid of honor with a scandalous girlhood, a lordling to woo for him? He was himself a lord of language and made himself a cloistrel gentleman and had written Romeo and Juliet. Why? Belief in himself has been untimely killed. He was overborne in a cornfield first and he will never be a victor in his own eyes... No later undoing will undo the first undoing. The tusk of the boar has wounded him there where love lies ableeding... There is... some goad of the flesh driving him into a new passion, a darker shadow of the first darkening even the first understanding of himself." (*Ulysses* 194) The argument is an imaginative addition to the main thesis, the "lordling" referring to the male friend of the sonnets and the "new passion" to Shakespeare's affair with the "dark lady." The point that "Belief in himself has been untimely killed," "No later undoing will undo the first undoiog" is relevant to the frustration and despair which Stephen and Bloom experience in real life. Stephen then goes on to develop a new and important point: "The soul has been stricken mortally, a poison poured in the porch of a sleeping ear... The poisoning and the beast with two backs that urged it king Hamlet's ghost could not know of were he not endowed with knowledge by his Creator... He (Shakespeare) goes back, weary of the creation he has piled up to hide from himself, an old dog licking an old sore... He is a ghost, a shadow now, the wind by Elsinore's rocks or what you will, the sea's voice, a voice heard only in the heart of him who is the substance of his shadow, the son consubstantial with the father." (*Ulysses* 194) The notion that the dead king could only have been invested with the knowledge of foul deeds by his "Creator" is a move towards establishing the relationship between Shakespeare the artist and his work as a purgative one, but more significantly, as that of father and son and, figuratively, that of Creator and Creation. There is the added twist that father and son and hence, artist and work, Creator and Creation are in essence, identical. This element of mystic identity in Stephen's theory is central with regard to Stephen's own situation and is hinted at all along in the chapter: "When (Shakespeare)... wrote *Hamlet* he was not the father of his own son merely but, being no more a son, he was and felt himself the father of all his race..." (*Ulysses* 205), "And as the mole on my right breast is where it was when I was born, though all my body has been woven of new stuff time after time,

so through the ghost of the unquiet father the image of the unliving son looks forth. In the instant of inagination...that which I was is that which I am and that which in possibility I may come to be." (*Ulysses* 192), "A father, Stephen said, battling against hopelessness, is a necessary evil...a mystical estate, an apostolic succession...a legal fiction. Who is the father of any son that any son should love him or he any son?" (*Ulysses* 204), "Sabellius... held that the Father was Himself His Own Son...Well, if the father who has not a son be not a father can the son who has not a father be a son?" (*Ulysses* 205). These dwellings sound Steven's renunciation of the father-son relationship with Simon Dedalus, yet at the same time, a real desire for the symbolic fatherhood of artistic creation and national conscience. The achievement of the latter will somehow appease the anxiety and disillusionment of the former. And in this achievement, son becomes one with father, artist one with creation, and individual one with race. The internal schisms are repaired and restored to a fine sense of unity and balance. The movement of Bloom, bereft father, and Stephen, dispossessed son, towards one another is a literal enactment of this symbolic guest. There is the religious symbolism, references to Bloom as Moses (*Ulysses* 140, 141, 148), Christ (*Ulysses* 215), Elijah (*Ulysses* 339), and Messiah (*Ulysses*, Circe chapter), which corroborates this significance of their meeting. But there is at the same time, in Bloom, a certain tenderness, humility, and maturity which entitle him to his symbolic stature, which Stephen is lacking in, and thus, which makes the meeting of Bloom and Stephen fruitful in a literal sense. There is then, both a literal and a symbolic quest, the former concerned with reconciling emotional and psychological difficulties, and the latter with achieving spiritual and aesthetic goals. And Bloom is somehow the catalyst in this scheme. Through contact with Bloom, Stephen will perhaps achieve maturity as a person and perfection as an artist.

Stephen finally ends his speech with a summary: "...the theme of the false or the usurping or the adulterous brother or all three in one is to Shakespeare what the poor is not, always with him. The note of banishment, banishment from the heart, banishment from home, sounds uninterruptedly from *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* onward...But it was the original sin that darkened his understanding, weakened his will and left in him a strong inclination to evil...an original sin and, like original sin, committed by another in whose sin he too has sinned...it is in infinite variety everywhere

in the world he has created..." (*Ulysses* 209), "He (Shakespeare) found in the world without as actual what was in his world within as possible...Every life is many days, day after day. We walk through ourselves, meeting robbers, ghosts, giants, old men, young men, wives, widows, brothers-in-law. But always meeting ourselves. The playwright who wrote the folio of the world...is doubtless all in all in all of us..." (*Ulysses* 210)

In summary, the various correspondences which Stephen's elaborate and intricate theory seems to suggest may, perhaps, be better understood diagrammatically:



As we can see, the theory makes elaborate reference to the indivividual lives of Stephen and Bloom and to their mutual relationship. The scheme is a valuable one to keep in mind, though we needn't concern ourselves with all its ingenious intricacies, for there is a larger pattern of human interaction, of psychological drama, of thematic development within which these correspondences gain meaning, but without which they are mere contrivances.

If there is some truth to the notion which Bloom attempts at one point to explain to Molly-"metempsychosis"-then it can be said that Stephen inherits a good deal of the soul and psyche of Hamlet. Alone on the beach at Sandymount, Stephen wears his "Hamlet hat," his "cockle hat and staff and...sandle shoon" (*Ulysses* 51), "in the moon's midwatches," he paces "the path above the rocks, in sable silvered, hearing Eisinore's tempting flood." (*Ulysses* 45) In the library, he is likened to "A hesitating soul taking arms against a sea of troubles, torn by conflicting doubts." (*Ulysses* 182) And in Nighttown. he describes himself as "Le distrait (French title for *Hamlet*) or absent-minded beggar." These snippets of quotations flashing through Stephen's mind capture the mood of the moment and, at the same time, identify

Stephen with Shakespeare's tragic hero and the whole context of his drama. The association is not a passing one. As we have noted, Stephen is, for one thing, the dispossessed son in search of a father. More significantly, he shares with Hamlet the same difficulty of not being able to come to terms with his world. Like Hamlet, he is the prisoner of his own pride, intellect, and idealism.

For young Hamlet, the appearance of his father's ghost at Elsinore brings him melancholy, cynicism, and anxiety. There is the sense of a "sundering" in his world, between the values and beliefs he once held and the "rank and gross" reality which he now faces. Moreover, there is the oppressve injunction to act, and in acting, involve himself in that reality. The sense of what Stephen calls "original sin...in infinite variety everywhere"-which darkens the understanding and weakens the will-is at work. Murder, incest, treachery, the "infectious ulcer," "the unweeded garden," "the poison of deep grief" are all things which the young prince must contend, and somehow come to terms with. Rightfully then, does he feel betrayed, suppressed, and disillusioned: "The time is out of joint. O cursed spite/That ever I was born to set it right!" (*Hamlet* I v)

The appearance of Mary Dedalus' apparition in the opening scene of *Ulysses* triggers a similar sense of remorse and disillusionment in Stephen. Her recent death, his failure to submit to her death wish, are definitely very much on his conscience. However adament he had been against accomodating her in *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (246*), he cannot deny some attachment to her. Nor can he deny his ties with his figurative mother, the Church, and his motherland, Ireland, the profound influence which they have had on him. His arrogant claims to autonomy and artistic freedom at the end of *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* have, as a result, brought him naught but isolation, sterility, and frustration. The beginning of *Ulysses* finds him gloomy, destitute, slighted by friend, banished from home, and as far from realizing his grand dream, "to forge in the smithy of my soul the uncreated conscience of my race" (*Portrait* 257), as he could be. And it is the burden of this inevitable attachment which separates him from the realization of his dream. The increasing awareness of his dilemna is the source of much anxiety for Stephen in *Ulysses*. The appearance of his

* All quotes from 1956 London edition

mother's apparition is the first indication of this. He is then mocked, bantered, and symbolically usurped by Buck Mulligan and the Englishman Haines. "Pyrrhic victory" and "disappointed brides," the topic of the school-room discussion in chapter two, symbolize the frustration and sterility of Stephen's endeavors. "History is a nightmare from which I am trying to awaken," Stephen's words to Mr. Deasy at the close of chapter two, express his sense of the overwhelming burden of things which he wishes to but cannot escape from. And in his library speech on *Hamlet*, Stephen pauses briefly for a revealing aside: "Fabulous artificer...You flew. Whereto?... Paris and back, Lapwing. Icarus. Pater, ait. Seadabbled, fallen, weltering. Lapwing you are." (*Ulysses* 208) The ironic transition from Dedalus to Icarus, from flight to fall, again dramatizes the frustration which Stephen so acutely feels.

The relationship between Stephen and his home, religion, and country forms the crux of his difficulties. He is, on the one hand, bitter and disdainful about it: "I will not serve that in which I no longer believe, whether it call itself my home, my fatherland, or my church: and I will try to express myself in...life or art as freely as I can...using for my defense the only arms I allow myself to use, silence, exile, and cunning." (*Portrait* 251), "Non Serviam!" (*Ulysses* 567), "But in here it is I must kill the priest and the king." (*Ulysses* 574) Yet Stephen suffers from the isolation of his position and from remorse of conscience for having spurned that which is so undeniably a part of him. "Agenbite of Inwit" haunts his thoughts. And the fact that his mother's apparition appears to him recurrently, at Martello Tower, on the beach at Sandymount, and in Nighttown, is an indication of the degree to which this remorse hangs on his conscience. As in Hamlet, there is the pain of a "sundering" in his life, and the need to make some kind of reconciliation. But as in Hamlet, such a reconciliation inevitably involves a oompromise of his initial stance, a debasement of his original aspirations and beliefs, something which his pride will not easily submit to. Pride is perhaps the single most damning attribute in both Hamlet and Stephen. Hamlet is "very proud, revengeful, ambitious, with more offenses at my beck than I have thoughts to put them in." Stephen too, is aloof and disdainful in his relentless "Non serviam," in his attitude towards Buck Mulligan and Haines, the literary figures in the library, and the soldiers in Nighttown. He is the arrogant aesthete, at war with his surroundings, using

for his defence only "silence, exile, and cunning." He is "A hesitating soul taking arms against a sea of troubles" and "Christfox in leather trews, hiding, a runaway in blighted treeforks from the hue and cry. Knowing no vixen, walking lonely in the chase." (*Ulysses* 193) Pride protects his ideals from the corruptive forces of reality, from the contingencies of time. Yet it paradoxically forces him deeper into isolation and sterility.

It is here, with the notion of time and contingency, that we have the metaphysical crux of Hamlet and Stephen's dilemnas. Time represents the gap between potentiality and actuality. It separates the infinite possiblity and flawless perfection of the ideal from the limited and imperfect condition of the real. Yet time is the element within which, if ever, the possibility of reconciliation must be realized and a sense of harmony and identity in the individual restored. Both Hamlet and Stephen are awestruck and anxiety-ridden when they confront this necessity. They realize the need to act and make commitments but can only speculate on the burden and incomprehensibility of the task at hand. Hamlet's famous soliloquy, "To be or not to be-that is the question: Whether tis nobler in the mind to suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune, or to take arms against a sea of troubles, And by opposing end them... Thus conscience does make cowards of us all, And thus the native hue of resolution is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought; And enterprises of great pith and moment with this regard their currents turn awry and lose the name of action." (*Hamlet* III i) ponders this issue. And Stephen's own soliloquys, "Ineluctable modality of the visible and audible," "That in space which I in time must come to," "Had Pyrrhus not fallen by a beldam's hand in Argos or Julius Caesar not been knifed to death... can those have been possible seeing that they never were? Or was that only possible which came to pass? Weave, weaver of the wind," express the same doubt and anxiety. And doubt and anxiety can be said to be manifestations of a deeper imbalance. For in the effort to embrace and understand their dilemnas, Hamlet and Stephen have perhaps embraced too much and understood too prematurely. They have been too quick to take the burden of the whole world upon their limited and finite selves. Their problem dilates into a cosmic one causing them boundless frustration, isolation, and cynicism. Hamlet's words, "What a piece of work is a man, how noble in reason, how infinite in faculties... And yet to me, what is this quintessence of dust; man delights not me" (*Hamlet* II ii), "What should such fellows as

I do crawling between heaven and earth," voice this sense of sterility and cynicism. And when they do bring themselves to action, it is often in a rash and incoherent manner. Hamlet's slaying of Polonius, Stephen's altercation with the soldiers for example, are manifestations of this state of imbalance. The key to reconciliation lies, as we have observed, in a coming to terms with time and, in working through its limitations, finding one's identity and freedom. Hamlet and Stephen are both more and more conscious of this as they go along. In the last act, the young prince is a different man, now balanced and composed, no longer unpacking his heart with words or whipping himself into anguished frenzy. He but speaks the majestic words: "If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all." He has learned and accepted the boundaries within which judgement and action are enclosed and he no longer seeks to foreknow or to avoid what is to come. There has been, to be sure, a compromise, but one tending towards a condition of true freedom. For mind and body, impulse and action, will and fate are now keenly atoned with one another. Hitherto, Hamlet had tried to act beyond this. "The time is out of joint. O cursed spite/That ever I was born to set it right!" represents his view towards everything and he becomes hostile, paranoid, and overly demanding of all those around him. Suspecting a conspiracy, he antagonizes Ophelia, reprimands his mother, lashes out at Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, and plays God even with King Claudius whom he, after having exposed, now decides to spare for a more damnable occasion. In the last act, he has learned the limits of human judgement and endeavor and comes to take things as they are, and as they come.

A similar pattern of maturation is intimated in Stephen. At the close of *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man,* Stephen is at the height of his arrogance and idealism, proclaiming his own exile from home, fatherland, and church into the freedom of an artistic life, dedicated to forging in the smithy of his soul the uncreated conscience of his race. The words ring sinisterly false however, for Stephen has declined engaging and mastering that very element within which his art and freedom must be grounded if they are to be meaningful. The martyr-Deity stance which he has assumed is but a means of disguising his own inability to come to terms with life. It brings not mature understanding, but only a deeper sundering of the soul. At the beginning of *Ulysses,* Stephen is aware of this and no longer seeks

transcendant visions and impersonal objectivity. His thoughts focus on the nature of life in time. His words, "Hold to the now, the here, through which all future plunges to the past." (*Ulysses* 184) are like those of Hamlet's, "If it be now, 'tis not to come...the readiness is all." And he dwells on the meaning of Aristotle's concept of "entelechy": "It must be a movement then, an actuality of the possible as possible," "The soul is in a manner all that is: the soul is the form of forms" (*Ulysses* 27), "Take all, keep all. My soul walks with me, form of forms" (*Ulysses* 45), "But I, entelechy, form of forms, am I by memory because under everchanging forms..." (*Ulysses* 187), "That in space which I in time must come to, ineluctably" (*Ulysses* 214), "Had Pyrrhus not fallen by a beldam's hand in Argos or Julius Caesar not been knifed to death...Time has branded them and fettered they are lodged in the room of the infinite possibilities they have ousted. But can those have been possible seeing that they never were? Or was that only possible which came to pass? Weave, weaver of the wind" (*Ulysses* 26). That Stephen does so is significant for it represents an awareness that man cannot achieve true understanding of life as a detached observer. Fulfilment lies in the act of becoming, in the processes of time, in the acceptance of fate. In acknowledging this, Stephen looks forward to his own fulfilment in time and acceptance of life. Hitherto, he too had attempted to embrace too many of the infinite possibilities too prematurely. Hence, his great impatience, his brooding cynicism, his endless anxiety, and his unrealistic demands on others-his disillusionment and misanthropy when they were not fulfilled. He rejects his mother, who brought him first into the world, carried him first in her body, whose love is the only real thing in the world (words of Cranly in *Portrait*), on the mere grounds that she cannot understand him. He baffles and saddens E.C. (Emma Clery) in the same cruelly mischievous manner that Hamlet destroys Ophelia. And he tells perhaps his only friend, Cranly, in effect, to go to hell. Like Hamlet, Stephen feels that "silence, exile, and cunning" are his only means of survival. And in the case of both, they are as well the very things which doom them to their alienation and impotence. Bur here in *Ulysses* are the beginnings of a more thoughtful and human Stephen. "Fabulous artificer," "God of creation" were inflated and premature, he realizes. He must begin to accept the world for what it is-"Take all, keep all" (*Ulysses* 45), to accept experience as it comes-"Speech, speech. But act...Be acted on" (*Ulysses* 208), "That lies in

space which I in time must come to, ineluctably" (*Ulysses* 214) and, working through the limitations of space and time, attain to the fulfilment and freedom of his entelechy. To ponder the mystery of the human condition-what seems limited now that it has happened, the Caesars and Pyrrhuses and what seems infinite in possibility ere it has come is really to miss the essential nature of the processes of life. Essence, fruition, and freedom all lie in the doing, are all forged through time. As Hamlet says, "There is a divinity that shapes our ends, Rough-hew them how we will." (*Hamlet* V ii). Patience, engagement, and acceptance of the here and now bring a fine poise and unity to the being: "Take all, keep all. My soul walks with me, form of forms." And here, Stephen, or Joyce, makes the remarkable suggestion that to bring oneself to the fulfilment of these conditions, one begins to apprehend life in its unity and totality, to achieve a vision of an essential continuity in change and of the transcendant mutuality which connects all things. In the library, Stephen begins quoting Shelley, "In the intense instant of imagination, when the mind is a fading coal," then goes on to say, "that which I was is that which I am and that which in possibility I may come to be. So in the future, the sister of the past, I may see myself as I sit here now by reflection from that which I shall be." (*Ulysses* 192) This is what Stephen means in Proteus when he says, "I, entelechy, form of forms, am I by memory because under everchanging forms," "My soul walks with me, form of forms. "And in understanding and accepting things for what they are, we come to view them with true objectivity, to embrace them with universal empathy. As Stephen says, "Every life is many days, day after day. We walk through ourselves, meeting robbers, ghosts, giants, old men, young men, wives, widows, brothers-in-law. But always meeting ourselves." (*Ulysses* 210) This is a central theme in Stephen, the key to the reconciliation of his "sundering," and to his attainment of freedom in life, objectivity in art. As Mr. Deasy notes, "To learn one must be humble. But life is the great teacher." (*Ulysses* 36) As this conditiom is fulfilled, the burden of ignorance recedes and a mature vision of the self, and of life in all its continuity and totality is reached. This is the state of illumination which Stephen's aesthetic theories concerning "kinesis" and "stasis" seek to define, which his complex argument on the relationship between Shakespeare and *Hamlet* seeks essentially to clarify, and which he in life, in the fated meeting with Bloom, moves steadily closer towards. And life in its continuity and

totality itself looms as a kind of ultimate principle, and perhaps the only controlling principle for the sprawling, shapeless myriad of impressions and events that is *Ulysses*.

As we have noted, all the speculation concerning Shakespeare and Hamlet, father and son, life and art, sundering and reconciliation, etc. leads up to and finds its realization in the meeting of Stephen with Bloom. Improbable as it may seem, Bloom, for all his lackluster mediocrity, does possess a certain kindliness, patience, and optimism which endear him to us and make him, for Stephen, "in the world without as actual what was in his world within as possible" (*Ulysses* 210). Bloom moves through his day, facing his ordeals with a passive wisdom, a seemingly infinite capacity for endurance and acceptance. He confronts the death and dejection of the graveyard, then emerges with thoughts of life. He withstands the constant snubbings of his fellow men. He acknowledges the inevitable passage of time which makes him old and separates him from past happiness. And he manages to reconcile himself to Molly's blatant infidelity. And he feeds the birds in the street, helps a blind man across the road, visits Mrs. Purefoy at the hospital, mourns Paddy Dignam at his funeral and protects young Stephen who has been struck down by the soldiers in Nighttown. He accepts frailty and suffering as a necessary condition of human existence, then goes on to affirm and embrace all in compassion. It is not inappropriate then, that he is repeatedly associated with Moses, Christ, Elijah, and Messiah. And his compassion and humanity will, in the meeting with Stephen, perhaps prove to be Stephen's long-awaited salvation. The symbolic dynamics of such a meeting are complicated. Literally, Stephen' s growing awareness of the need for real engagement in life is certainly reinforced, and in some sense realized in his contact with Bloom. The Apocalyptic destruction of the chandelier, the "communion" of cocoa and bun corroborate this symbolically. "The Son striving to be atoned with the Father" (*Ulysses* 20), Haines' remark in the first chapter, now comes true. Bereft father and dispossessed son in real life, and symbolic Father, Christ-God and symbolic Son, mankind, become one with each other. For discovering the humanity of Bloom, Stephen discovers his own humanity. He now possesses the maturity of understanding which will enable him to live freely and create objectively. And in achieving his impersonal creation, the artist-as-man finally assumes the stature of the "God of creation...invisible, refined out of existence, indifferent" (*Portrait*

244) anticipated ever since the close of *Portrait* but hitherto unattainable. Thus, artistic Father passes his personality on to the consubstantial Son of his artistic creation. He becomes "the father of his race" (*Ulysses* 205), his personality "all in all" (*Ulysses* 210), in infinite variety everywhere in the world he has created" (*Ulysses* 209), and "a voice heard only in the heart of him who is consubstantial with the father" (*Ulysses* 194). Here then, in the fated and fateful meeting of Stephen and Bloom, we have the sense of a resolution of Stephen's quest for mature art and life, of Bloom's search for a son, and of the whole mystery of the Trinity, the consubstantiality of Father and Son, as it relates to Stephen and Bloom's lives and to Stephen's theory of art.

Bloom is not without his many problems. Stephen's theory of *Hamlet* concerns him to a great extent. There has been a "sundering" in his life as well. For his only son Rudy died in infancy as did Shakespeare's son Hamnet. The pain of the loss has resulted in a psychological wound in Bloom-"Thou lost one...Cruel it seems. Let people get fond of one another: lure them on. Then tear asunder. Death. Explos. Knock on the head..." (*Ulysses* 237), "All gone. All fallen...Last of his name. I too, last my race. Milly young student. Well, my fault perhaps. No son. Rudy. Too late now...Soon I am old" (*Ulysses* 280)-so acute that he has since been incapable of resuming sexual relations with Molly. In the meantime, and as if in compensation, Molly has had one adulterous affair after another, the latest with Blazes Boylan. Bloom's anguish is likened to that of Shakespeare, bereft and cuckolded in Stephen's theory: "Belief in himself has been untimely killed...he will never be a victor in his own eyes...No later undoing will undo the first undoing" (*Ulysses* 149), "The soul has been stricken mortally...He goes back...an old dog licking an old sore...His beaver is up. He is a ghost, a shadow now" (*Ulysses* 194). As in the case of King Hamlet-Prince Hamlet-Shakespeare in Stephen's theory (the three are mutually associated with one another), there has been a cuckolding and usurpation of Bloom. The weight of an injunction "to set things right" is upon him. Yet, since the death of little Rudy, "Belief in himself has been untimely killed," and instead of summoning up the will and courage to face his problem, he strays errantly in apparent evasion of the task, struggling to put his anxieties to rest but finding them painfully re-awakened at the sight or mention of Blazes Boylan. Most pathetic of all, Bloom runs the errand of purchasing *Sweets of*

Sin, a pornographical novel, for the adultery-minded Molly and indulges in perversities with Gerty MacDowell at approximately the same time as Molly's act of adultery. To heap insult upon injury, Bloom must endure the annoying slights and snubbings which mark his social exclusion. In short, it is "The note of banishment, banishment from the heart, banishment from home" of Stephen's speech which characterizes Bloom's particular dilemna. That Shakespeare is referred to as having been a commercial traveller (*Ulysses* 494) and a Jew (*Ulysses* 202) and Bloom as agent for an advertising firm and "The Wandering Jew" (*Ulysses* 215) further corroborates the analogy.

There are a number of important themes relating Ulysses to Hamlet which we shall presently consider. Death is a recurrent theme in both *Ulysses* and *Hamlet*. Stephen's mother has recently died and her ghastly apparition haunts his thoughts in the very first scene of *Ulysses* much as King Hamlet's ghost appears at Elsinore to reveal to Hamlet his tale of horror. There are Stephen's obsessive thoughts on the drowned man whose "puffy face" is "salt white" and whose "human eyes...scream out of the horror of his death" (*Ulysses* 46) echoed by Bloom's revery turned nightmare on Agendath Netaim:" A barren land, bare waste. Volcanic lake, the dead sea. no fish...No wind would lift those waves, grey metal, poisonous foggy waters...A dead sea in a dead land, grey and old...the grey sunken cunt of the world" (*Ulysses* 61). There are morbid contemplations of suicide on the part of both Stephen (*Ulysses* 46) and Bloom (*Ulysses* 95, 113). There is the pervasive decay imagery, the bloated carcass of the dog on the beach (*Ulysses* 45), sea decay in Proteus-"Bag of corpse gas sopping in foul brine... Dead breaths I living breathe, tread dead dust, devour the stench of his leprous nostril snoring in the sun" (*Ulysses* 51), and earth decay in Hades-"the soil would be quite fat with corpse manure, bones, flesh, nails, charnelhouses. Dreadful. Turning green and pink, decomposing. Rot quick...begin to get black, treacle oozing out of them" (*Ulysses* 107). And finally, there is the entire graveyard scene of Paddy Dignam's funeral which bears great resemblance to the graveyard scene in Hamlet in its design, its macabre irony, and its epiphanic ponderings of the cosmic cycle of life and death. In two literary works which concern themselves to a great extent with the essential mysteries of human existence, death, decay, and mortality, the greatest mysteries of all, are a constant preoccupation. In *Hamlet*, they remain a profound and provocative mystery. In *Ulysses*, they are eventually

accepted and assimilated into the vaster patterns of cosmic life and cyclic change.

The graveyard scene in Ulysses is linked to and brings forth another key theme. The scenes of doomed animals, dead streets, decaying canals, unweeded gardens, grey corpses, dark sepulchres, solemn burial, and the conversation on suicide are all objective correlatives for the deep sense of frustration and isolation which imprisons each of the characters of Ulysses in a kind of private hell. Bloom of course, confronts his own loneliness and despair in thoughts of his father's pathetic suicide, his son's untimely death, his wife's unfaithfulness, and in the awareness of his social exclusion because of his race and because of his cuckoldry. But the other three figures in the carriage, Martin Cunningham, Jack Power, and Simon Dedalus, each mired in thoughts of his personal frustrations, are also desparately unhappy and hopelessly cut off from one another. In short, Joyce's characters seem to inhabit a world in which satisfactory human connections have been excluded. Alienation is an essential psychic condition in a universe where father becomes distanced from son, husband from wife, man from family, exile from home, Jew from society, artist from motherland, Dubliner from Dubliner, present from past, and dreams from realization. It is not insignificant that Stephen talks of ghosts, shadows, darkened understandings, fadings into impalpability, and banishment over and over again in his speech. They are the metaphoric correlatives of this condition. (The use of the word "shadow" recurs in the speech and throughout the narrative of the chapter-"Russell oracled out of his shadow" (183), "of which this vegetable world is but a shadow" (184), "A player comes on under the shadow" (186), "A shadow hangs over all the rest" (191), "the events which cast their shadow over the hel of time" (192)-and brings to mind certain associations with dejection and futility. (For example, "Life's but a walking shadow...that struts and frets," "I am but a shadow of myself," lines of Shakespeare, and Plato's ideal realm, of which the world is but a shadow, doomed to imperfection.)

Thus, Bloom and Stephen wander, the heartbreak and dejection which they feel never consoled or communicated through any fruitful interaction with others. It is as if the "stricken soul," the "untimely killed belief" which separates them from happiness separates them as'well from others. The "sundering" which Stephen talks about seems to be at the metaphysical

heart of the *Ulysses* universe, denying mutuality and investing all human possibilities with the assurance of failure. It is the sense that we get from Hamlet's speech: "I have of late, but wherefore I know not, lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises: and indeed it goes so heavily with my disposition, that this goodly frame the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory," "But thou would not think how ill all's here about my heart. But it is no matter." And it is very much the peculiar, lamentable, inexplicable condition which characterizes twentieth century life. Bloom inadvertently sums it up in his misquote of Shakespeare, "Doomed for a certain time to walk the earth." And this is essentially what the characters in *Ulysses* do. Wandering Aengus and Wandering Jew are errant and forlorn drifters, like celestial particles, merging indiscriminately for a brief communion, then parting just as abruptly to resume their solitary peregrinations. Yet here at the end of the book, Joyce does a wonderful thing in likening Bloom and Stephen to astral wanderers in interstellar space (*Ulysses* 688, 712). That is, the human drama becomes projected against the vastest of spacial frameworks: "Ever he would wander, self-compelled, to the extreme limit of his cometary orbit, beyond the fixed stars and variable suns and telescopic planets, astronomical waifs and strays, to the extreme boundary of space, passing from land to land, among peoples, amid events..." (*Ulysses* 712) The loathsome creature which Hamlet once likened to a "quintessence of dust" has now literally become that, but instead of loathsomeness, is now endearing. For across the vast distances of space, all the trials and tribulations, obsessions and rivalries, mortality and alienation lose their harshness and take on a certain aura of innocence, charm, and mystery. The use of this effect goes back to Stephen's thoughts on Shelley's poem in *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*: "Art thou pale for weariness/of climbing heaven and gazing on the earth, /Wandering companionless...? He repeated to himself the lines of Shelley's fragment. Its alternation of sad human ineffectiveness with vast human cycles of activity chilled him and he forgot his own human and ineffectual grieving" (Portrait 99). Human forlornness achieves poetic universality and personal suffering dissolves into cosmic empathy. We gain a perspective that is comforting. It is something of a paradox, perhaps, that only in the broadest bounds of space do we find the shelter and security that is comforting. But it is very much a part of Joyce's sense of essential relativity, of dilating and contracting space in the universe-"Allspace in a

notshall" (*Finnegan's Wake*). And it does represent a basic human impulse. Ithaca comes to an end with only the words: "Womb? Weary? He rests. He has travelled."

Throughout Ithaca, narrative and imagery have combined to produce this effect of detachment and depersonalization. Just when dramatic tension has accumulated and risen to a high, vision begins to supplant drama. Action becomes abstraction. Yet Joyce has prepared for this. He has, after all, intimated the possibility of an awakening and maturing Stephen and a restored and content Bloom at the end of the day. And he has presented life of a day in Dublin in all the richness of its rhythms and textures, in the variety of its interrelated detail, and in its continuity and totality, something which gives this final lyrical distancing an underlying solidity and meaningfulness and makes it more than an artificial abstraction. Moreover, Joyce's roving numerical speculations ranging the scale from infinite to infinitesimal space and time, his sudden shifting of viewpoints from microscopic to macroscopic and back, and his description of water in this chapter are a climactic presentation of the notions of essential relativity, of parallax, and of flux which have been developed throughout the novel They invest the new viewpoint that Joyce has introduced with a fascinating and frightening complexity. The universe is made to seem like a moving and changing, contracting and dilating organism in which all events are mutually inclusive and mutually interpenetrative. It is Blake's "heaven in a wild flower," "eternity in a grain of sand." It is the "web of mirrors" which depicts ultimate reality in Mahayana Buddhist ontology. It is Einstein's space-time continuum.

To return to our topic of discussion, one other aspect marks the relevance of Stephen's preoccupation with *Hamlet* to the whole of *Ulysses* and connects it, in the broadest sense, to the peculiar problem which is so much at the heart of the modern conscience and modern literature. To quote Hamlet: "How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable seems to me all the uses of this world!...Tis an unweeded garden that grows to seed; Things rank and gross in nature possess it merely. That it should come to this..." "I have of late, but wherefore I know not, lost all my mirth forgone all custom of exercises; and indeed, it goes so heavily with my disposition that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory; this excellent canopy...why, it appeareth nothing to me but a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is a man!...the paragon of animals! And yet to me

what is this quintessence of dust? Man delights not me." It is this sense of the disintegration of traditional values because of the apparent destruction of their underlying philosophic bases that is implicit in *Ulysses* and in modern life. Skepticism and uncertainty have grown so widespread as to become the characteristic condition of our times, and has entered too deeply into our souls ever to be replaced by faith. We are wanderers then in another sense-wanderers between worlds, one dead and the other powerless to be born. It is in this context that Stephen's "ghosts," "shadows," "darkening," "fading," "exile," "banishment," and "sundering" take on the largest and most tragic dimension of their meaning. Yet somehow, we must continue to live with alienation. Wisdom lies not in seeking a means of escape which does not exist, but in conscious awareness of our plight, and in making what peace with it as we may. Hamlet, who poses the question, offers as well a prototypical answer. For he emerges in the last act with understanding of his plight and a way of living with it. The same sort of possibilities are suggested for Stephen and Bloom. Though the action stops at a moment which only suggests a resolution, the willingness of these two figures to engage their realities with such scrutiny and self-awareness, patience and resilience in the movement towards a mature and stable understanding of themselves and of the world-this in itself is meaningful and touching. The Homeric parallels, the many Graeco-Christian, Catholic, historical, philosophical, and aesthetic allusions constitute another plane of movement towards meaning and order. But to say that they bring order to Ulysses through a static imposition of past upon present is to be too simplistic. For they themselves are dynamic and integral elements in the world of *Ulysses* to be shaped and controlled in the modern conscience's probing, painstakingly self-aware effort to understand itself. What emerges from the juxtaposition is a sense of the true complexity of modern life, of the reassuring potential for order in the values and systems of the past, and yet of their often comi-tragic incongruity and inadequacy in dealing with the needs of the present. And we move towards some kind of balance between past and present, between skepticism and faith, between order and chaos, but a balance which, because of the nature of the modern dilemna, can never be static and simplistic. If there is a prevailing principle in Ulysses, it is that of a kind of ruthlessly efficient yet essentially benevolent and vivacious irony which does not preclude the possibility of resolution and order, but which insists on entertaining all the complexities and ambiguities

which are characteristic of our condition. Thus does *Ulysses* make its peace with the modern world and provide us with a means of living through it. As we have noted, however, Joyce does not ultimately dwell on these matters. The vitality, dexterity, and ingenuity of his narrative, the fluid rhythms, rich textures, and vivid details of his Dublin microcosm, and the cosmic view of its life in its multiplicity, continuity, and totality seem to speak for themselves in affirmation of this life and this world.

We have discussed a number of themes and character motifs which references to *Hamlet*, Stephen's theory of *Hamlet*, in particular, suggest, in the hope that it will enrich our understanding of *Ulysses* as a whole. Albeit, they represent but one thread in the vast tapestry of *Ulysses*' allusive pattern, yet our discussion seems to suggest that they are an important one. If the Homeric parallels provide a framework against which the events of *Ulysses* take on spacial breadth, historic contnuity, and mythic dimensions, then let us offer that the references to *Hamlet* enlarge its inner space and give it a kind of psychological and metaphysical shape and validity. Finally, our discussion has been an interesting comment on the internal development of literature-the adaption of literary archetypes. Just as the philosophically, psychologically rich and provocative work of Shakespeare's has, in this interplay, invested *Ulysses* with a certain degree of inner meaning and depth, so has *Ulysses* brought Shakespeare's work up to date and, to a certain extent, set it in tune with the modern temper.

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