"TWO NOTES IN ONE THERE": COUNTERPOINT AS PARADIGM IN JAMES JOYCE'S

ULYSSES

by

FRANCES VICTORIA LOVELACE

(Under the Direction of Adam Parkes)

ABSTRACT

In this study of James Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922) I discuss the limits and dangers of using analogies between musical and literary works without firmly understanding the musical model that is being brought into comparison with the novel in question. Conversely, I show that a musical paradigm such as counterpoint, if properly defined, can be a very useful method by which to read and understand Joyce, since the syntax of music is as important to (and ever-present within) the world of *Ulysses* as that of the English language. I demonstrate that a contrapuntal reading of the often-overlooked "Wandering Rocks" episode serves to uncover some darkly ironic questions about Anglo-Irish politics, and that while the fugal structure that Joyce claimed for "Sirens" is a deeply suspect analogy, a reading of the musical notation within the episode leads to a new understanding of Leopold Bloom in relation to his wife, Molly.

INDEX WORDS: James Joyce, Music and Literature, Counterpoint

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated with grateful thanks for all the support to my family and friends,

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

James Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922) is encyclopedic in its scope, containing detailed references to everything from Irish history to astrology, but it is simultaneously the story of just one day in just one city: Dublin on June 16th, 1904. Although Joyce's portrait of the city and its citizens is punctuated by the obscure and the arcane, *Ulysses* is a narrative that emerges from the reality of Dublin as Joyce saw it, and the language of the novel is the language of the Dubliners who inhabit it. One vital element that contributes to this language is music. Not only do Joyce's characters allude constantly to songs, operas, performers and performances, but Joyce includes musical notation within the text itself. Gregorian chant follows Buck Mulligan from his first intonation of "*Introibo ad altare Dei*" – the first speech uttered in *Ulysses* – to an actual interpolation of an early-music stave within the text as Mulligan enters the library in "Scylla and Charybdis."

Understanding Joyce's novel is a far more achievable task in the twenty-first century than it was in the early twentieth century, thanks to the many books of identification and explication that have emerged since the publication of *Ulysses*, but there remain many rich veins of allusion that have not yet fully been mined. The critical mining of such veins allows Joyce's reader access to areas of knowledge from which he or she may otherwise have been excluded, in some cases even going so far as to translate other languages – Italian, Latin, Greek – into English.

Music, too, is a language that needs to be translated so that those who do not naturally "speak" it can learn to understand it. A great deal of scholarship has gone into this task, some of

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the best of which (Zack Bowen's *Musical Allusions in the Works of James Joyce*, for example) seeks to annotate the text with notes on the music within, to which the reader can refer as and when it becomes necessary. Other scholarship has followed this vein of *Ulysses* further in order to examine the way in which music forms and shapes the narrative itself. This second area of scholarship has its dangers, however, its own wandering rocks and sirens to be avoided. The most often-encountered danger is the attempt to make music act as more than an enlightening metaphor or model for the narrative. A critic who states, for example, that he hopes "to uncover why and how there is music in the words and whether the result is music or is a novel" (Shockley 8) is sailing perilously close to such dangers, particularly in his suggestion that *Ulysses* could actually *be* music. It is important to acknowledge the limits that exist around a reading of any novel in musical terms, while simultaneously stressing the benefits of such a reading to an understanding of the narrative as a complete work of literature.

This present study of musical counterpoint in Joyce's *Ulysses* follows the second route outlined above, with an eye ever alert to the dangers of such a voyage. In my first chapter I address the casual use critics generally make of the term "counterpoint" in relation to the narrative and the character interactions within Joyce's individual episodes and *Ulysses* as a whole, arguing that in order for counterpoint to become a truly useful paradigm it needs to be properly defined both as a musical technique and as a narrative model. I then perform a reading of the "Wandering Rocks" episode through the sharply-defined lens of musical counterpoint in order to emphasize the benefits of such an approach, showing how an awareness of the technique can lead to the emergence of certain relationships and ironies within the text that might otherwise remain hidden. In my second chapter I turn my attention to "Sirens," showing the limitations of Joyce's own (misleading) designation of *fuga per canonem* as the musical model for the episode

while arguing for counterpoint – the primary technique of both fugue and canon – as a more successful musical-literary paradigm. Reducing the scope of the voices in "Sirens" from that of a literary fugue to that of a contrapuntal composition allows the two most important characters within the episode, Leopold Bloom and Blazes Boylan, to emerge as counterparts, and strengthens a reading of Bloom as complicatedly complicit in the extra-marital encounter between his wife, Molly Bloom, and Boylan. Finally, in my conclusion, I discuss the ways in which the musical technique of counterpoint could be usefully employed in order to uncover further subtle connections within *Ulysses*, as well as the ways in which further characteristics of musical counterpoint, such as key tonalities, can also be brought into the discussion, if done carefully and with clear definition.

  Musical counterpoint is one of the most often-used and least-defined of all musical-literary metaphors, but in relation to Joyce's *Ulysses* it is also one of the most useful. As such, I hope that this study will serve to establish the limitations but also the possibilities of counterpoint as a lens through which to read Joyce, and promote the musical technique to the position of a true paradigm rather than a weak and ill-understood model.

CHAPTER ONE

MUSIC, MODERNISM, AND "WANDERING ROCKS"

I

That music was a highly important aspect of James Joyce's life and work is a well-established critical truism. Though his technical skills have been called into question,[1] the author of *Ulysses* was no base barreltone: his "fine tenor voice" famously gained him entry as a young singer to the "tenor competition at the *Feis Ceoil*, or National Festival," which he failed to win, unfortunately, "only…because of his inability to sight-read" (Worthington 321). Despite these technical shortcomings, however, Joyce's appreciation and appropriation of various musical forms is unwavering throughout his œuvre, with evidence to suggest that he continued to improve his understanding as he worked. While in exile in Zurich, for example, Joyce found himself living next door to Philip Jarnach, who taught composition and counterpoint at the conservatory. Through Jarnach, who clearly thought highly of the author, Joyce also became acquainted with an American-German music student named Otto Luening. Luening, who later became a composer and a pioneer of electronic music, joined Joyce's amateur theatre group, the English Players, and held many conversations in cafes throughout the city with Joyce, talking about music.[2]

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[1] Joyce "had trouble reading musical scores and was not very adept with the guitar and piano," according to Otto Luening (Grandt 76)

[2] "Through [Philip] Jarnach and especially Luening," asserts Jürgen E. Grandt, "Joyce became better acquainted with musical notation in general and the compositional technique of counterpoint in particular, providing him with a new approach to language. Exiled first from Dublin and then Trieste, Joyce now [from 1917 onwards] began to exile himself from the English language, crafting a new language as the musical counterpoint to his native English" (75). See also Timothy Martin and Ruth Bauerle's "The Voice from the Prompt Box: Otto Luening Remembers James Joyce in Zurich."

The yoking together of biography and music in order to penetrate the difficulties of

Ulysses is thus a tried-and-true way into the labyrinth, but once there critics tend to turn in one of

two directions: either the study of internal form, particularly the influence of musical techniques

on Joyce's linguistic experimentation (the path that Grandt follows); or the study of content, the

mapping of tales told in opera and folk-song onto the narrative journeys of Joyce's characters, in

order to flesh out their lives before, during, and after the 16th of June 1904.[3] An important part of

this wider musical-narrative overview is the consideration of external form, or genre: can the

novel be successfully compared to an opera, an oratorio, or a sonata? Each of these branches of

inquiry has in the past proved very fruitful, but ultimately, if kept separate, such pathways can

only circle back on themselves. The musical forays into structure and internal form naturally

center on the "Sirens" episode (Joyce's schema for which lists the episode's presiding organ as

ear, art as music, and technique as *fuga per canone[m]* [Gifford 3, 290]), occasionally venturing

outside to discuss the form of other episodes but, more usually, staking their claim to originality

at the bar and remaining there to defend it. Examinations of operatic narratives, meanwhile, are

largely indebted to such early critical works as Vernon Hall's excellent 1951 essay, "Joyce's Use

of Da Ponte and Mozart's *Don Giovanni*," in which Hall underlines the importance of the

opera's seduction plot to the Molly Bloom-Boylan Blazes-Leopold Bloom love triangle and the

significance of Bloom's misquotation ("*voglio*" for "*vorrei*") as an inescapable "symbol of

Molly's willingness" to betray him (81). Once the major operatic influences have been identified

and expounded as narrative analogues and character counterparts, critics turn more and more to

the minor musical echoes in the text, sometimes to an extent that seems untenable. An example is

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[3] Zack Bowen's *Musical Allusions in the Works of James Joyce* does an excellent job of summarizing the critical work that has been done on these character counterparts. In particular, critics such as Vernon Lee and Mabel Worthington have found analogous relationships between the characters in *Ulysses* and those in Mozart's *Don Giovanni*, Friedrich von Flotow's *Martha*, and the folk song "The Croppy Boy."

Zack Bowen's rather unconvincing claim that Bloom's truncated sentence "Sheet kindly lent" [*U* 64] could be "a parody of the hymn," *Lead Kindly Light*, because the "'ee' sounds in 'lead' and 'sheet' are similar, as are the 'l' sounds in 'lead'[4] and 'lent'" (Bowen 88). Everywhere, the danger of a Dublinesque entrapped circularity looms, leading to the potential paralyzing of these avenues of scholarship.

One remedy, as I intend to show, can be found in an opening up of the ways: a connecting of the different paths, so that form, technique, and content can sound together; a foray into areas of *Ulysses* that exist beyond "Sirens" and echoes of *Don Giovanni*; and the connection of music to other arts besides (and alongside) Joyce's linguistic virtuosity. I will argue further that the musical technique of counterpoint, an overused yet often misunderstood term when appropriated by literary critics, has the potential to be among the most revealing and generative of all musical-literary metaphors, especially in relation to Joyce.

<div align="center">II</div>

Recent scholarship on Modernism and modernity has taken great pains to emphasize the multifaceted nature of the period whose beginning coincides roughly with the start of the twentieth century. Michael Levenson's *Modernism* (2011) argues that the rise of an "oppositional culture" spanning all of the arts is what distinguishes the era, rather than the fact that certain works, authors or artists were particularly shocking or difficult:

> There was no Modernism without individually audacious artifacts, but equally there was no Modernism without relationships among artists, their works, and the institutions and audiences that encircled them. [...T]he tumultuous events of cultural modernity appeared not merely as a succession of disturbing artifacts or critical provocations but as

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[4] I believe that this is a misprint in Bowen's book, and that he means here to contrast "light" and "lent," but even this correction would only serve to marginally strengthen a very tenuous argument.

constituents of an oppositional social milieu, as a radically alternative practice that

presented a counterhistory for modernity. (8, 12)

This scholarly impetus towards a conception of Modernism as artistically cross-disciplinary is

echoed by Simon Shaw-Miller, who argues specifically for a greater position for music in the

critical discussion: "Many accounts of modernism have a literary or visual bias. They fail to

acknowledge the profound interaction between the arts, and to recognize the leading role music

played as both a technical model and an ideological paradigm for emerging modernist

sensibilities." Music, in fact, according to Shaw-Miller, "became modernism's guiding

legitimizing principle, its primary symbolic image" (Brooker *et al*., 600). This is because music

has been seen, since the (Romantic) beginnings of musicology, as something separate and above

the quotidian, self-contained, able to evoke the reality that lies behind the world of ideas without

the necessity of representation or mediation, as Arthur Schopenhauer formulates it: "Our world is

nothing but the phenomenon or appearance of the Ideas…music, since it passes over the Ideas, is

also quite independent of the phenomenal world, positively ignores it, and could, to a certain

extent, still exist even if there were no world at all, which cannot be said of the other arts" (qtd.

in Brooker *et al*., 601). Yet the paradox of music is that it cannot be completely devoid of ties to

the phenomenal world, however much it might stand apart; music, if it be something other than

noise, is created within "a system of rules" (603), though these rules exist outside of language,[5]

relating to the harmony of the part to the whole. The essence of music must be contained within

a strict form, at least as far as musicology (the study of the "real classical," as Lydia Douce

would say) is concerned, and this fact leads Shaw-Miller into a discussion of what he sees as the

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[5] To a certain extent, that is. Alan Shockley flags up another paradox in the introduction to his study of counterpoint and the novel, *Music in the Words*: "The impulse to link words with music is irresistible. Even the 'experts' cannot escape – the whole field of musicology is founded upon using words to understand music" (1). Theories of form, structure, and performance have long been passed on through a combination of wordless emulation and wordy publications.

two dominant "streams" of Modernism, "both generated from music"; his so-called "formal modernism" and "contextual modernism" (604).

Formal Modernism, according to Shaw-Miller, is that which considers the arts as distinct, autonomous, "pure," concerned greatly (as its name suggests) with form and structure. We might relate this stream to the critics who discuss the elements of musical technique in Joyce's work. Contextual Modernism is more interested in narrative, in music as discourse and as an "exemplar of connectivity" (604). This is the stream traversed by those critics who seek to understand the relationships and connections between Stephen Dedalus and Bloom, Bloom and Molly, through the models of opera and ballad. As he does with music in relation to the other arts (music clearly rises to the position of most important of all Modernisms in the trajectory of his essay), Shaw-Miller initially counterpoints his streams, only to argue that formal Modernism is by far the most Modernist of the two:

> The rise of kitch, popular culture, entertainment industries, "low" culture, and the vernacular is central to modernity. But modernism's response to it…was not uniform; it could be celebratory, or at least inclusive (contextual) or combative and exclusive (formal). What I am characterizing as my limited definition of modernism is the dominance of the formal paradigm, which specifically rejects the embrace of "low" culture by "high" culture. (605)

Shaw-Miller acknowledges that the discursive, the connective, the "low," are not entirely lacking from Modernist aesthetics, though he believes that they relate more to the art of the eras that precede and follow. He argues, however, that formal Modernism "aims to remain pure [and] resist…contamination" (605), a point of view that rings true with the often scathing words of Theodor W. Adorno in the introduction to his *Philosophy of New Music* (1949).

Adorno calls the period around World War I "the heroic decade" for new music, as this was the decade in which "radical music" emerged as "the antithesis to the spreading of the culture industry into its own domain." He likens such music to modern painting, whose "aversion to figurative representation, which in art marks the same breach as does atonality in music, was an act of defense against mechanized art merchandise, primarily photography," but claims that since that heroic time the history of music "has as a whole been a history of decline, of involution to the traditional" (9). For Adorno, the contamination most to be feared is that of the commercialization and popularization of mass culture, through which the "numerically small group of connoisseurs was displaced by all those who could afford the price of a ticket and wanted to prove to others they were cultured" (11). The taste of these newly-cultured masses decides the commercial viability of music, to the detriment, Adorno states, of the art; history is a nightmare for musicians too, since "what held good prior to the breach [that is, the heroic decade], the constitution of a musical nexus by tonal means, is irretrievably lost" (9). Composers cannot survive by creating atonal, complex works that few consumers want, and so often fall back instead on the creation of "bad" art that harps back to a tradition whose relevance has been entirely lost:

> When [the new consumer-listeners] think they comprehend the music, they only perceive an inert, empty husk of what they treasure as a possession and what was already lost in the moment in which it became a possession: an indifferent show-piece, neutralized and robbed of its own critical substance. In fact, all that the public grasps of traditional music is its crudest aspects: easily remembered themes; ominously beautiful passages, moods, and associations. […] For them, the harmony that Viennese classicism won, at a heavy

price of renunciation, and the eruptive longing of romanticism have become objects of

consumption for home decoration. (12)

Adorno's scorn is directed at those who dismiss new music (Schoenberg's work in particular) as

overly intellectual and difficult while the radio engulfs them in repetitious waves of well-known

music they have already "understood" and assimilated, and at those whom he sees as falsely

appropriating now-empty, outmoded "categories of form." He contends that the "fury felt toward

the avant-garde" exists because "art today, to the extent to which it has any substantiality,

intransigently reflects and forces on the mind all that it would like to forget" (15). The outmoded

forms and tonalities are not themselves empty or lacking in intellectual content: "As far as new

music in its pure shaping reflects again on the logic of [the objective rigor of musical thought], it

stands in the tradition of the art of the fugue, the tradition of Beethoven and Brahms." The

problem for Adorno is that "the culture industry has trained its victims to avoid all effort in the

leisure hours allotted them for cultural consumption," and that such listeners will thus never be

otherwise than passive in their musical habits (14).

<center>III</center>

There is no question that a reading of *Ulysses* through the lens of formal Modernism is

both possible and useful; as I have suggested above, the area of criticism that relates to the

formal linguistic innovation and subsequent intellectual difficulty of Joyce's work belongs to this

stream. A reading solely on these terms, however, would have to strenuously avoid not only the

scatological and masturbatory elements of the text, but also the importance throughout Joyce's

writing of Dublin's (and by extension, Ireland's) culture of amateur and semi-professional

concerts. Such a concert as the one in which Molly will perform "*La ci darem* with J. C.

Doyle…and *Love's Old Sweet Song*" (Joyce 63) would surely contribute to (as well as

<center>10</center>

exemplify) Adorno's "collapse of all those criteria for distinguishing good from bad music that were initially sedimented in the early bourgeois period" (10). But this concert (along with all of the minor concerts and allusions to folk songs that act as counterparts to it as the day progresses) forms one of *Ulysses*'s major thematic strands. To return to Shaw-Miller's apologia for his terminology, it becomes evident that Joyce's novel is "at least inclusive" of popular culture and entertainment industries (even if the inclusion can be read as ironic), rather than strictly "combative and exclusive." If such streams as formal and contextual Modernism do actually exist, then Joyce certainly allows them to run into one another.[6]

Much of the best criticism that has been written on the contextual musicality of *Ulysses* – the narrative, discursive appearance of music within and without the text – focuses on alternative analogical figures for the protagonists, beyond the Homeric. Two essays of particular importance in this area are Hall's previously mentioned article on *Don Giovanni*, in which the analogues between Boylan and the eponymous villain, Molly and Zerlina, and Bloom and Masetto become troubled and unstable, so that Bloom is himself occasionally cast as Don Giovanni, Zerlina, or the supernatural *Commendatore* at the feast,[7] and Timothy P. Martin's "Joyce, Wagner, and the Wandering Jew," in which Martin traces the particular importance of Richard Wagner's 1843 opera *Der fliegende Holländer* (*The Flying Dutchman*) through Joyce's entire career. Martin sees

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[6] It would be interesting, in a longer study of musical and literary Modernism, to look at the implications of Joyce's blending of formal and contextual Modernism in relation to Irish cultural regeneration, as discussed by Harry White in *Music and the Irish Literary Imagination*: "At every turn throughout the nineteenth century, Irish music, or more precisely an image of Irish music, presented itself as a definitive expression of Irish identity… 'The more we foster modern music the more we help to silence our own', was the musical byword of Irish cultural regeneration in the nineteenth century" (5). Such a discussion belongs alongside the study of Joyce's attitude to the Irish Literary Revival, which this present paper unfortunately does not have space to include.

[7] "The major characters in *Ulysses* have been equated with the characters of the *Odyssey*. The same thing can easily be done for *Don Giovanni* and *Ulysses*. Don Giovanni is Hugh E. (Blazes) Boylan; Zerlina is Molly Bloom; Zerlina's bridegroom, Masetto, is Leopold Bloom. But Joyce does not stop here. He recognizes that in the love drama one man can play different parts at different times – even simultaneously. So in relation to the Zerlina of Martha Clifford, Bloom is Don Giovanni. This gives rise to much irony. It is as if in the Da Ponte-Mozart opera it were Masetto, not Leporello, who dressed in the Don's clothes in the famous balcony scene. Even at times Bloom is the *Commendatore*, and once or twice, to his shame, Zerlina" (79)

the figure of the Dutchman, doomed to wander the seas without touching shore for seven years at a time until a woman's love can save him, as the counterpart to various Joycean wanderers – from Eveline's lover Frank in *Dubliners*, through Stephen, D. B. Murphy, and Bloom in *Ulysses*, to HCE in *Finnegans Wake* – displacing another Wagnerian analogue, Siegfried, "whose presence in Joyce's canon culminates in Stephen's attack on Bella Cohen's lampshade with the cry of '*Nothung'*" whereas the Dutchman "reflects not only Joyce's increasing interest in passive and equivocal heroes like Bloom, HCE, and the deflated Stephen Dedalus of *Ulysses*, but also his decreasing interest in unmixed heroes like Siegfried" (70).

Both of these essays are notable for their use of operatic analogy to highlight the complexity of Joyce's characterizations. James Penny Smith, whose 1968 dissertation addresses a wide range of musical allusions in *Ulysses*, concludes his study with the observation that "Joyce employs the musical allusions just as he does the other more noticeable patterns to contribute to the mosaic-like fashioning of his characters and, more significantly, to establish and elaborate his major thematic concerns" (142). Another such noticeable theme-establishing pattern, which is equally tied to contextual musical Modernism, is that of the potential correspondence between external musical form and literary narrative structure, and in discussions of *Ulysses* there are two such forms to which critics regularly return; sonata form and the fugue.

Joyce himself gave the impetus to generations of critics to analyze *Ulysses* through the lens of fugal form when he listed the technique of the "Sirens" episode as *fuga per canonem*. The fugue, however, provides something of a bridge between external and internal form due to its highly regulated technical structure, and is often discussed in terms of the latter. Sonata form, on the other hand, is fundamentally quite simple; in his wonderfully accessible *Understanding*

Music, Antony Hopkins points out the similarities between the "structural basis of a sonata-form movement" and the tune of a folk song such as "The Bluebells of Scotland": "we have a first section which is repeated, a central section developing or extending the initial idea, and lastly a reprise of the opening…in sonata-form terms, [the first section plus repeat] would be called the Exposition, [the central section] the Development, and [the reprise] the Recapitulation" (70). In a more complex sonata-form composition, the exposition would consist of separate themes, which then play against each other to create the tension in the development and are resolved in the recapitulation.

This structure obviously has much in common with a simple literary plot (the introduction of characters; complication of their relationships; resolution of differences), and has been used as a stratagem to explain literary form since it came into common use in the mid-eighteenth century. Don Noel Smith, in his article "Musical Form and Principles in the Scheme of *Ulysses*," points out that as early as 1922, Ezra Pound remarked upon the resemblance between Joyce's novel and sonata form, allotting it a place within "*la grande classe de romans en forme de sonate*," and that Harry Levin followed this identification by denoting Stephen and Bloom the introductory and main themes respectively (qtd. in D. N. Smith 81). Smith allows that the sonata form as organizing principle for a critical reading of *Ulysses* must therefore be fairly obvious, but demarcates his own position in the discussion by arguing for a reading in which Joyce's characters are subjects "in relation to whom various themes accrue" (82). He then goes on to divide the novel into exposition ("Telemachus" through "Hades"), development ("Aeolus" through "Circe"), recapitulation ("Eumaeus" and "Ithaca"), and coda, which gives "a greater sense of finality to the piece" ("Penelope" [83-4]). For Smith, a reading of the novel's structure

as sonata form highlights the internal rhythm of parts within the whole, allowing for a sense of movement that might otherwise be lacking:

> Joyce is more concerned with repetition, variation, and elaboration than with what happens next…Edmund Wilson provides a pointed observation: "There is a tremendous vitality in Joyce, but very little movement…he is symphonic rather than narrative. His fiction has its progressions, its developments, but they are musical rather than dramatic." (85)

Smith's reading of Bloom and Stephen as the primary subjects of this expanded literary sonata-form movement[8] is particularly interesting since it positions Bloom as a representative of contextual Modernism, while Stephen represents the formal stream:

> Stephen's problem, which Joyce implies is peculiar to masculine kind, is a too exclusive conception of beauty, or what he conceives to be pleasing and appropriate order. He projects dichotomies upon his world, then chafes when they victimize him. As the young artist he has engaged in a histrionic insistence on schisms. To mix a metaphor, he would create in the smithy of his soul a music exclusive of vulgar, constraining reality. He finds himself not in key, out of tune, for he would place himself and his art outside God's octave. (87)

Don Noel Smith comes to a similar conclusion as James Penny Smith, both critics suggesting that by the end of the novel Bloom-the-father is in a position to help Stephen-the-son better connect personally and artistically to the world in which he lives, an argument that positions contextual Modernism above formal Modernism in Joyce's work.

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[8] Sonata form is different from the composition that as a whole is known as a Sonata; this latter is a series of movements, some of which may well be composed in sonata form, but others of which may be, for example, fugues or dances.

If Bloom and Stephen make up one pair of musically connected subjects in *Ulysses*, it is also necessary to acknowledge Joyce's careful counterpointing of Bloom and Boylan in his emphatically musical episode, "Sirens." Scott J. Ordway attempts to break new ground in relation to this episode by deliberately positioning himself against a reading of fugal structure in favor once again of sonata form. He argues that "the first sixty-three lines [should be read] as an introduction and the period from line 64 to the time Bloom enters the Ormond Hotel as the exposition. Boylan's journey from the hotel to Eccles Street encompasses the development, and the remainder of the episode serves as the recapitulation" (88). Ordway makes some valuable points in the course of his essay, stating that if the reader looks "beyond the surface of the episode to its emotional core, it is clear that the tension between Bloom and Boylan provides the real substance" (95). He suggests that Boylan can be read as the dominant key to Bloom's tonic (the fifth and the first notes of a chord; the sounding of the dominant is a necessary precursor to the return of the tonic [see Hopkins 36]), but his argument is weakened by the fact that he falls into his own highlighted trap of loosely using musical metaphor as a guiding principle for literature. Although the tonic-dominant connection is an important point,[9] Ordway's essay highlights nothing else that cannot be found in the text through an entirely non-musical reading, and therefore fails to establish sonata form as a more worthy paradigm than Joyce's declared fugal form for the episode. Ordway's very insistence on finding an external musical form to replace that of the fugue is based on misconceptions about fugal structure and its most defining feature, counterpoint, that are by no means his alone, and that are long overdue a proper consideration.

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[9] This is the usual relationship between the opposing themes of a sonata form's exposition, and therefore serves to emphasize the connection between Boylan and Bloom.

"Fugue" and "counterpoint" are both terms that complicate the division between internal and external form. Since the fourteenth century, "fugue has served…both as a genre designation for a piece of music and as the name of a compositional technique to be introduced into a piece of music," and it wasn't until the early eighteenth century that musicians came "to prefer its use as a genre distinction" (*GMO* "Fugue"). The problem with fugal form as an organizing principle for "Sirens," as far as Ordway is concerned, is that the "interdependence of form and meaning is missing from the fugue, when applied to literature, making it an imperfect model for understanding Joyce's episode," and he therefore dismisses the genre out of hand (88). This lack of connection need not occur, however, if we return to the fourteenth-century conception of fugue as a technique (a justifiable return, in light of Joyce's well-documented interest in early music[10]), in which case the episode's "meaning" is intricately connected to its form. The variation of form, diverging from – but remaining grounded in – the overall structure of the work, highlights the importance of the episode's content rather than concealing it. As wary as we need be about the accuracy of Joyce's definition of the "Sirens" episode as a *fuga per canonem* (a question I shall address in my second chapter), ignoring the idea completely only serves to prematurely close down a potentially revealing avenue of inquiry, even if it is not a primary one.

Since counterpoint is the primary defining feature of a fugue, it is unsurprising to find that it, too, has the potential to exist as both internal and external form, though the latter is rarer

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[10] Martin and Bauerle cite Luening on Joyce's musical taste: "Luening reports…that Joyce once told him that there were only two composers, Palestrina and Schoenberg; but Luening now concedes that in mentioning Schoenberg Joyce may have been testing him… The affection for Palestrina, Luening feels, was more sincere, since it was firmly grounded in Joyce's Catholic background and in his love of Gregorian chant, which he would often sing. Luening explains Joyce's odd conjunction of these composers by the contrapuntal qualities of their work, an aspect of music about which Luening, as a student of the contrapuntist Jarnach, could – and did – tell Joyce a good deal" (43).

in musical composition.[11] In literary analysis, the term has become a common metaphor, but, as Harry Levin points out, it is "rarely more than a loose metaphor" (99). For Joyce scholars in particular – due no doubt to the author's musicality and repeated use of character counterparts – the analogy of musical counterpoint to Joyce's organization of action and narrative is seemingly unavoidable, although the parameters of the paradigm are remarkably indistinct.[12] The effect of such haziness is that a term which has the potential to affect the way in which we read and understand *Ulysses* is reduced to an often throwaway word that simply gives the reader a vague sense of breadth. This is the way that the term is used by both Jack W. Weaver and Ruth H. Bauerle, who discuss the wider, contextual way that counterpoint can be seen at work in the novel:

> Since Joycean texts become increasingly cumulative, *Ulysses* includes and echoes all previous works. Though the inclusions are most often allusive and rhetorical, they still perform in a musical manner. Each work has its own basic materials (primary notations) but these are often expanded in a harmonizing or countrapuntal [sic] manner by the inclusion of echoes from previous works (secondary notations). (Weaver 48)
>
> The small bits [of music that Joyce] weaves into his prose at point after point…provide wonderful comic moments and enrich the texture of his language, to be sure. But [the] broad allusions to a song, an opera, or both at once, provide counterpoint and harmony to deepen the effect of the story. (Bauerle 3)

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[11] Some examples of compositions entirely "devised according to the principles of counterpoint" are given in *Grove Music Online*: "Vincenzo Galilei's *Contrapunti a due voci*, 1584, or the *contrapuncti* of J.S. Bach's *Art of Fugue*"
[12] Some critics have compared the polyphony in *Ulysses* to Bakhtin's theory of narrative polyphony rather than musical polyphony or its close relative, counterpoint (see Weaver 49), but this comparison presents some major problems; as the Johns Hopkins Guide to Literary Theory and Criticism states, in "the polyphonic work there is no overall structure or pregiven outcome." The ending of *Ulysses* is famously inconclusive, as I shall discuss in my second chapter, but Joyce's structuring of his work is of immense importance.

What both Weaver and Bauerle mean to effect through their use of the term

"counterpoint" is a sense of familiarity by which the reader can better understand *Ulysses*

through mentally comparing the action to another Joycean work, or to the plot of an opera or

song. While this is a functional model for reading Joyce, it is a rather weak use of their chosen

term; true counterpoint should work note against note within a system of rules that clearly ties

the parts to one another, while the allusions referred to above are rather loose echoes. Both critics

also make a distinction between harmony and counterpoint that, again, weakens the impact of the

latter term by undermining it:

> The assumption that the theory of counterpoint deals with the horizontal and that of
>
> harmony with the vertical dimension of music is as trivial as it is misleading. In the study
>
> of harmony, it is not just the structure of chords but also their progressions that must be
>
> dealt with; and similarly, in the theory of counterpoint it is a question not only of melodic
>
> part-writing but also of the chords formed by the parts. (*GMO*, "Counterpoint")

In making such a distinction between harmony and counterpoint – or between the vertical and

the horizontal – Weaver and Bauerle are inadvertently suggesting that by itself the term

"counterpoint" would not work as a model of interconnectedness, since any subjects so

counterpointed would simply follow one after another without ever touching. At the risk of

oversimplifying a complex musical technique, we can briefly consider here the two most sharply

distinct types of counterpoint, in neither of which is harmony lacking, since "for music to be

truly contrapuntal there must always be a balance between independence and interdependence"

(*OCM*, "Counterpoint").

Counterpoint emerged as a discrete form of church music in the fourteenth century, and

in its initial permutation was a two-part vocal technique. The voices would sing notes of equal

value that differed by very strictly regulated intervals; certain intervals were considered consonances and others dissonances, and the use of dissonant intervals was only allowed under specific circumstances. Over the centuries, more voices were added and the rules governing dissonance and note-value (that is, the length of the notes in one voice in relation to those in the other voices) were relaxed. This version of counterpoint, originating in vocal religious music, is composed or improvised around a *cantus firmus* in the tenor voice (*tenere*, "to hold"), the theme or melody from which the other voices take inspiration. Joyce's own vocal range and love of Giovanni Pierluigi Palestrina's music strongly suggest that he was very well acquainted with this version of counterpoint.[13] The second form of contrapuntal writing, familiar through the structure of the fugue, is that in which "the distinct voices use the same material in close proximity," overlapping and imitating one another. Regardless of the version under composition, counterpoint is "the quality that best fulfills the aesthetic principle of unity in diversity" and as such is unsurprisingly attractive to literary "composers" and critics alike. It has the potential also to link successfully the streams of form and content, useful as an analogy to critics concerned with Joyce's language (such as Grandt, who argues that Joyce uses Standard English as "a kind of *cantus firmus* on which [from 'Sirens' onward] he imposed contrapuntally a new language" [80]) and those concerned with character development and interaction alike. Most importantly, however, counterpoint is exemplary of the interplay between movement and stasis, dissonance and consonance, and it is for this reason that it works as a valuable lens for discussing literature, and *Ulysses* in particular.

Internal musical form, such as counterpoint, is the structure upon which a composition is built. "Rather than hinging on a plot like most previous novels," Alan Shockley claims, "*Ulysses* relies on other structural elements" (48). If we take plot to be that which traditionally drives a

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[13] See Grandt 78-9.

narrative forward, a novel that replaces its plot with an alternative structuring must also find a new method of propulsion. Music, even at its most basic harmonic level, is formed through the necessary impulse of tension and release, thereby providing a useful paradigm for a plot-less structure that nevertheless pushes forward to its resolution. But Shockley's statement is not fundamentally true; Joyce may weaken the current of his plot so that it cannot carry a reader easily through the lives of his characters and beyond into forgetfulness, but he does not discard elements of traditional plot structure entirely. The crux of the action in *Ulysses* is adultery, Molly's betrayal of Bloom with Boylan, and throughout his book Joyce reminds his readers that illicit sex is the topic of novels that are, in fact, nothing *but* plot, from *Ruby: the Pride of the Ring* to *Sweets of Sin*. Joyce, however, is concerned with hyper-reality, and in life occasional moments of importance and crisis are surrounded by many more instances of seemingly meaningless action, or stasis. Joyce's slow, gentle plot-current works both horizontally – a progression of action providing the work's rather sparse *cantus firmus* – and vertically – the division of the day into episodes in which different voices are more or less simultaneously present – and is therefore specifically connected, once again, to the technique of counterpoint, since, as Daniel Albright asserts, "counterpoints [can] be so precisely synchronized and adjusted that the ear [can] choose to constitute them either horizontally, as independent lines, or vertically, as a succession of chords" (5). Joyce complicates his counterpoint by inverting it, however; it is the way in which the vertical chords or voices sound against one another, whether consonant or dissonant, that gives the impetus to his *cantus firmus* plot, rather than the other way round.

Counterpoint, then, is an important model for such interdependent binaries as movement and stasis, dissonance and consonance, the horizontal and the vertical, *nacheinander* and

nebeneinander. This last duality is intriguingly addressed by Albright in his book *Untwisting the Serpent* (2000), wherein he outlines the *"Laocoön problem"* – "Are the arts all one art, or are the arts diverse?" (8). Albright traces the argument for the distinctness of individual art-forms from Gotthold Ephraim Lessing's *Laokoon* (1766) through the work of Irving Babbitt, Clement Greenberg, and Adorno during the first half of the twentieth century, while considering Modernist artistic collaborations from a "vertical" point of view, "in search of the fundamental units of the mixed arts – *figures of consonance*, one might call them, in the sense of presupposing a deep concord among artistic media" (6). In the course of his explanation of the *"Laocoön problem"* Albright outlines the distinction, made famous by Lessing, between such visual arts as sculpture and painting – those arts which impress a sense of spatiality upon the viewer, who experiences them as distinct, complete works – and artistic compositions such as poetry and music, which necessarily unfold in time. This is the distinction between *nebeneinander* and *nacheinander*, a division that Stephen is pondering as he walks along Sandymount Strand at the beginning of the "Proteus" episode of *Ulysses*. As befits a protean narrative, though, Joyce's *nacheinander* and *nebeneinander* cannot stay distinct; Lorraine Wood points out that "Joyce indicates in the "Proteus" episode that language can only be fully understood in terms of both sight and sound […while] in "Sirens" he frames music in the same terms, asserting that we experience it through the interplay of the visible and the audible. […T]he perception of music, like that of language, requires a synchronization of simultaneity and sequence" (67). Where Joyce best achieves this synchronization of the audible and the visual, the temporal and the spatial, the simultaneous and the sequential, though, is not in "Proteus," nor is it in "Sirens"; it is in the often passed-over episode of the "Wandering Rocks," arguably the most contrapuntal of all the episodes of *Ulysses*.

V

Critics generally take it for granted that "Wandering Rocks" itself is a brief interpolation in the wider text of *Ulysses*, a macrocosm of the interpolations that insert themselves into each of the nineteen sections that punctuate the episode. Looking at two substantial and influential works on music in *Ulysses*, written more than thirty years apart, we can see the same assumptions and conclusions perpetuating themselves.

Both Anthony Burgess and Jack W. Weaver, writing in 1965 and 1998 respectively, locate the episode outside the main narrative; for Burgess, highlighting the fact that the "Symplegades, or Wandering Rocks" were navigated by Jason and the Argonauts but avoided by Odysseus and his men, Joyce's readers "are outside the Odyssey for a space; we are looking down on a model of the total structure" (133). Weaver acknowledges the position of the chapter as "number 10 of 18, [and therefore] necessarily central to the work," but considers it a "microcosm of the whole," which would seem to preclude it from being part of that whole unless he is suggesting an overall structure analogous to Chinese boxes (68). Both Burgess and Weaver identify the two main "rocks," between which the Dubliners of the episode sail, as Church and State, but while Weaver shows representatives of these institutions wandering "in different directions," Burgess figures them as "calm, fixed shores between which the citizenry wanders." Neither critic considers the two establishments to be substantially concerned with one another.

Finally, both Burgess and Weaver briefly touch upon the musicality of the episode:

In this "Wandering Rocks" episode Joyce has been essaying a sort of counterpoint, trying to achieve a kind of simultaneity of action in a medium that, being time-bound, fights against it. (Burgess 137)

As many have also noted, Joyce's attempts to escape sequential narration by giving the illusion of simultaneity are suggestive of musical counterpoint. (Weaver 69)

Simultaneity is hardly unique to this one episode, however, even if it is very pronounced here. Simultaneity of action has been occurring within *Ulysses* at an unavoidably recognizable level from the moment the reader had to mentally turn the clock back at the beginning of the fourth episode, "Calypso." Without venturing further into the idea of counterpoint, then, both Burgess and Weaver dismiss the importance of musical structuring in "Wandering Rocks" as anything more than a prelude to "Sirens":

> [M]usic has been *trying* to dominate the chapter. The band plays; there is a significant conversation in Italian between Stephen and his teacher, Almidano Artifoni, about the sacrifice of Stephen's (or Joyce's) voice; even Father Conmee thinks of a song about the joy-bells ringing in gay Malahide. The cavalcade and the loud band take us straight into the next chapter, which *is* dominated by music. (Burgess 137, emphasis mine.)

Burgess does at least allow that "Joyce is remembering, despite all [his] perverse-seeming ingenuities, to carry on with his story" in this episode (134), but like most critics he hurries through as though the Symplegades were threatening to clash upon him and arrest his progress for good. In hurrying so, readers of this chapter are denying themselves the pleasure of some of Joyce's subtlest ironies and connections, all of which can be brought to light by a sustained reading through the lens of musical counterpoint.

The first section of the nineteen that make up "Wandering Rocks," as is fitting, sets up many of the themes that repeat throughout the episode. Father John Conmee's watch almost precedes him at the beginning of the section, since he is putting it away as he walks down the steps. Immediately, time is established as one of the major themes of the episode. Time here is

exact and mechanical, but it will be complicated later by a more natural and ancient timekeeping as Father Conmee rushes through the nones he "should have read…before lunch" (224) in order to reorder ecclesiastical time. Clocks and watches repeat constantly throughout the sections, forming one kind of consonance through moments of tonal centering that show the action as interdependent and familiar, while suggesting the underlying rhythm upon which individual voices play. Mechanics is the art of the episode, and the mechanization of time through clocks is one of the subtler ways in which the art is here established; but clocks also strictly keep to Greenwich Mean Time, and the theme of Anglo-Irish politics is thereby inherent in the otherwise religious opening from the start.

If Father Conmee's watch sets a rhythm for the episode, the notes growled by the onelegged sailor set one of the many individual voices sounding. As we shall realize in section three, this too is a political voice, growling of England and duty. His voice will give impetus to others, particularly in sections eight and twelve, and the thread of Anglo-Irish politics will hold firm throughout the episode. This thread can be construed in musical terms as one of four parts that, contrapuntally, snake through "Wandering Rocks"; the other three are nature (often in relation to machinery), religion, and adultery, and all four are intricately interconnected. Religion is the dominant thread in Father Conmee's section, as is to be expected, but through this thread the others enter. The question of adultery first arises as Father Conmee, feet firmly on the ground in Dublin, "walk[s] and move[s] in times of yore," musing against the rhythm of time on sexual secrecy:

> Who could know the truth? Not the jealous lord Belvedere and not her confessor if she
> had not committed adultery fully, *eiaculatio seminis inter vas natural mulieris*, with her

husband's brother? She would half confess if she had not all sinned as women did. Only

God knew and she and he, her husband's brother.

Father Conmee thought of that tyrannous incontinence, needed however for men's

race on earth, and of the ways of God which were not our ways. (223)

Father Conmee's thoughts are shrouded in religion, but they are more prurient than intellectual

since he is not attempting to puzzle out any deep theological dilemma;[14] as Gifford points out, he

"sidesteps a much-questioned crux: If sexual satisfaction was sinful not only outside of wedlock

but even in wedlock when the intent was not expressly that of procreation, why were human

beings given such powerful sexual impulses and desires?" (264). The priest avoids the wandering

rock of intellectual dissonance and continues enjoying the "charming day." Nature, too, is

entwined with religion through Father Conmee's eyes, as he espies "breadths of cabbages,

curtseying to him with ample underleaves" and "a flock of small white clouds going slowly

down the wind" through the "lychgate of a field" (Joyce 224). A field, as Gifford once again

shows, might have a gate and a fence, but wouldn't have a lychgate "or lich gate, a roofed

gateway to a churchyard, originally a place where the bier could pause on its way to the grave"

(264). Father Conmee's interactions with the world, whether temporal or spatial, are always

double.

Finally, all four parts sound together at the close of the section, as a "flushed young

man"[15] emerges with a young woman, twigs clinging to her skirt, "from a gap of a hedge":

"Father Conmee blessed both gravely and turned a thin page of his breviary. *Sin: Principes*

persecute sunt me gratis: et a verbis tuis formidavit cor meum" (Joyce 224). The suggestion of

sex in natural surroundings combines with the recognizable word "sin" to echo back to the

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[14] Joyce confirms as much by renaming the priest "Don John Conmee" immediately afterwards.
[15] Revealed in "Oxen of the Sun" to be Vincent Lynch, Stephen's friend.

priest's former musings on adultery, but also to evoke Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. This, however, is a false consonance, since "*Sin* is the Hebrew letter that heads the twenty-first section of Psalm 119…Latin: 'Princes have persecuted me without a cause: but my heart standeth in awe of thy word'" (Gifford 265). The theme of persecution by royalty belongs to those voices singing the part of politics, and it is only through a realization of dissonance that all four parts sound together.

From the very first section of "Wandering Rocks," then, reading through the lens of counterpoint allows connections to emerge between wider themes that might otherwise remain undiscovered. But Joyce does not just suggest the external form of counterpoint for this episode; he also uses the internal technique from the outset, bringing the idea of counterpoint within his work more dramatically to light:

> On Newcomen bridge the very reverend John Conmee S. J. of saint Francis Xavier's church, upper Gardiner street, stepped on to an outward bound tram.
>
> Off an inward bound tram stepped the reverend Nicholas Dudley C.C. of saint Agatha's church, north William street, on to Newcomen bridge.
>
> At Newcomen bridge Father Conmee stepped into an outward bound tram for he disliked to traverse on foot the dingy way past Mud Island. (222)

Point against point the characters repeat inversely, antitheses of one another. Characters throughout the episode are briefly joined with a deft touch, even as they wander separately around the city, whether through Joyce's technique of interpolated passages, repetition, or parody. Even so, to read the overall structure of "Wandering Rocks" as fugal or imitative counterpoint – one voice taking over from another in each section – is to apply the musical term fairly weakly, since the characters rarely actually meet. This episode, rather, is comparable to the

form of counterpoint initiated in the church tradition (again, an apt origin for an episode that

begins with religion) in which the voices play around and against a *cantus firmus*; and the *cantus*

firmus to be found here, in this temporally obsessed episode, is Dublin between 3 and 4 p.m.

As both Weaver and Burgess have noted, the most obvious way in which Joyce

counterpoints his characters and their themes is through his use of interpolations. The author

complicates the temporal, sequential narrative – the *nacheinander* – by showing through

interruptions of extraneous action that the nineteen sections of the episode's narrative occur

simultaneously, the voices layered upon one another. But these interpolations also act as

moments of tonal centering – the *nebeneinander* – chords that allow us to map who is where,

when. The majority of the interruptions connect the protagonists of each section to one another,

but certain of them concern Dubliners who only exist within the interpolated sentences; these are

the moments that firmly anchor the various wanderings within Dublin itself. The old woman,

herself conjuring up wider echoes of Ireland (*Shan Van Vocht* that she is[16]), who appears only in

interpolations in the central two sections of the episode is just such a character. Fictional though

she is, what she observes is historically accurate:

> An elderly female, no more young, left the building of the courts of chancery, king's
>
> bench, exchequer and common pleas, having heard in the lord chancellor's court the case
>
> in lunacy of Potterton, in the admiralty division the summons, exparte motion, of the
>
> owners of the Lady Cairns versus the owners of the barque Mona, in the court of appeal
>
> reservation of judgment in the case of Harvey versus the Ocean Accident and Guarantee
>
> Corporation. (236)

Gifford has found reports of each of these cases in Dublin newspapers from June 16, 1904 (272).

But the elderly woman of Dublin, though she exists only in interpolation, is nevertheless

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[16] The "'Poor Old Woman,' a poetic name for Ireland" (Worthington 323).

connected to Bloom through his immediately preceding thoughts of "Young! Young!" (236), just as the historically accurate cyclists named during an interpolation in section eleven are connected to Stephen through the Highland band he observes disembarking a tram in section six ("Sport opened with the Half-Mile Bicycle Handicap, and from that the events were rattled off in good order. The band of the Second Seaforth Highlanders was present during the afternoon" [Gifford 272]). Dublin, then, is ever present, not only as the background but intertwined and interacting with the voices that sound around it.

Those interpolations that harmonize the distinct voices into one another's sections can behave either as consonant or dissonant chords. Dissonance belongs more to the first-occurring interruptions; the initial jolt over to "Mr Denis J. Maginni, professor of dancing, &c." (220), and the juxtaposition of the awkward man in the train and the awkward man at the altar-rails, both observed by Father Conmee, are unnerving to a first-time reader. In later sections, too, an interruption can still have the power to clash dissonantly, as in section eight:

> --Certainly, Ned Lambert said. Bring the camera whenever you like. I'll get those bags cleared away from the windows. You can take it from here or from here.
>
> In the still faint light he moved about, tapping with his lath the piled seedbags and points of vantage on the floor.
>
> *From a long face a beard and gaze hung on a chessboard.*
>
> --I'm deeply obliged, Mr Lambert, the clergyman said. I won't trespass on your valuable time… (230, my emphasis)

In general, though, the interpolations sound more consonantly the further the episode progresses. In part, this is because we as readers become more used to the technique; in part, it is a matter of familiarity as we recognize the extracts from sections previously read; but it is also, on a subtler

level, a matter of themes accumulating, whether between individual characters or within the four wider musical "parts" identified above.

Often an interpolation that began as a dissonance will find itself resolved in a later section, such as the auction house's bell that sounds in sections four ("—Barang!" 226) and eleven. The voices of these two sections are intimately connected, belonging to the members of one family, but they are also part of the greater theme of nature *versus* machinery through their concern with starvation and money.[17] Religion, politics, and adultery, meanwhile, intertwine through interpolations and echoes from section one, through eight, to ten. The contrapuntal highlighting of sex and sin at the end of the first section resounds in eight, where the interpolation "The young woman with slow care detached from her light skirt a clinging twig" (231) brings an overtone of extra-marital sex into surroundings that are haunted by rebellion against English rule, counterpointing sexual incontinence with political infidelity. The recurrence of an italicized, capitalized "*Sin*" at the conclusion of episodes one and ten, meanwhile, subtly underlines the theme of adultery in relation to Molly and Boylan, a thread that has been emerging continuously through the interpolation of Bloom in section five, Boylan's section ("A darkbacked figure under Merchants' arch scanned books on the hawker's car" [227]), and the discussion of Molly's charms in section nine. It seems only fitting that a mistranslation should nevertheless amount to a very real concern for Bloom.

Even the deliberate lack of interpolations is contrapuntally important in "Wandering Rocks." Section seventeen contains none – in general, the interruptions become fewer towards the end of the episode – and can be read as a parody of Stephen's detachment from the world: politics, sex, nature, religion, and all. His ironic counterpart, Cashel Boyle O'Connor

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[17] Money can be allied with machinery in the same way that clocks are, as a method of formal organization. Both systems of economy have their counterpart in the more "natural," primitive, agricultural world.

Fitzmaurice Tisdall Farrell, wanders through his part of Dublin "with stickumbrelladustcoat dangling" (249), a mockery of Stephen who is "swaying his ashplant in slow swingswong from its midpoint, lightly" (228), passing by the oculists and dentists who remind us that Stephen's eyes and teeth are in bad repair, before growling his "*Coactus volui*" (250). Having been forced, Farrell accepts his contrapuntal position (Gifford 282), in opposition to Stephen, who rather forces his escape from his sister Dilly, lest she and the rest of his familial connections drown him in poverty and despair.

Thematically, then, a contrapuntal reading of "Wandering Rocks" can serve to highlight relationships and ironies that might not otherwise be clearly apparent. In fact, it seems difficult *not* to pay attention to the episode's counterpoint, since it is so very noisy. Machinery does not just sound thematically throughout the episode; it also *sounds*, clanking and rattling its way through the sections, locating them in space along with the variously echoed bells, coins, and music. One of the most subtle occurrences of auditory contrapuntal positioning occurs through the echo of "*Baraabum,*" from the music of the Highland band (254), in the almost-homophonic "Barabbas" spoken by musically-gifted Ben Dollard (245), and other examples include the growling of the onelegged sailor as he crutches through various sections, drowning out the "gay sweet chirping whistling" of Molly Bloom (225) and inspiring her to throw down a coin, thereby giving impetus to another vitally important form of counterpoint in the episode; visual counterpoint.

Molly's act of charity is seen from three staggered angles, the first in section two: "a generous white arm from a window in Eccles street flung forth a coin" (225), and the second in section three:

The blind of the window was drawn aside. A card *Unfurnished Apartments* slipped from

the sash and fell. A plump bare generous arm shone, was seen, held forth from a white

petticoatbodice and taut shiftstraps. A woman's hand flung forth a coin over the area

railings. It fell on the path. (225-6)

Finally, Molly's identity is confirmed in section nine: "A card *Unfurnished Apartments*

reappeared on the window-sash of number 7 Eccles street" (234). Joyce repeats this technique of

visual staggering elsewhere in "Wandering Rocks," most strikingly at the end of section twelve

("A cavalcade in easy trot along Pembroke quay passed, outriders leaping, leaping in their, in

their saddles" [241]), and it is reminiscent of nothing so much as the art of the Futurists and the

Cubists, particularly of such works as Marcel Duchamp's *Nude Descending a Staircase, No. 2*

(1912), in which *nacheinander* and *nebeneinander* coexist. Joyce combines language and music

in *Ulysses*; it does not seem outlandish to identify elements of visual art within his work also. As

Albright states, paraphrasing Guillaume Apollinaire: "Cubism is a kind of visual polyphony, in

which the information of several different perceivers, scrutinizing an object from various angles,

is conflated into a single cunning, synthetic image" (264). Joyce's counterpoint is both temporal

and spatial; he "wrote ['Wandering Rocks'] with a map of Dublin and a stop-watch in front of

him" (Burgess 134), and an attentive reading of the episode in temporally *and* spatially

contrapuntal form causes some otherwise entirely overlooked visual puns and ironies to emerge.

The bawdiness of section five, Boylan's section, is heightened through a reading via the

lens of visual counterpoint, as the "fat pears" and "ripe shamefaced peaches" metamorphose into

the shopgirl's breasts:

Blazes Boylan looked into the cut of her blouse. A young pullet. He took a red

carnation from the tall stemglass.

> --This for me? he asked gallantly.
>
> The blond girl glanced sideways at him, got up regardless, with his tie a bit
> crooked, blushing.
>
> --Yes, sir, she said.
>
> Bending archly she reckoned again fat pears and blushing peaches.
>
> Blazes Boylan looked in her blouse with more favour, the stalk of the red flower
> between his smiling teeth. (228)

In the following section, the visual humor is more absurd; Stephen's music professor runs after the tram he is about to miss, an ineffectual conductor attempting to halt that which is being electrically conducted, ignored by musicians and machines alike:

> Almidano Artifoni, holding up a baton of rolled music as a signal, trotted on stout
> trousers after the Dalkey tram. In vain he trotted, signaling in vain among the rout of
> bare-kneed gillies smuggling implements of music through Trinity gates. (229)

The effectiveness of the joke lies in an understanding of the visual pun *and* the verbal one, counterpointed musically for best effect. Joyce uses the independent arts interdependently, as he does his Dublin voices, to represent faithfully the movement and stasis, successes and setbacks, that are part of any sustained action. He also, however, uses them viciously to critique his Dubliners.

While counterpoint is clearly one of the temporal arts, the unwinding and entwining of thematic threads over time, it is also, as we have seen, intricately connected to the spatial arts. This connection comes as no surprise if we consider that the term "derives from the expression *punctus contra punctum*, i.e. 'point against point'" before coming to mean "note against note" (*ODM* "Counterpoint"). In section nineteen of "Wandering Rocks," Joyce transforms his

disparate wandering voices into points plotted on a map, as the contrapuntal action slows down almost completely. Instead, it is the viceregal cavalcade that moves through the section, resolving the many interpolations that have heralded it throughout the previous sections while inverting the contrapuntal form. In this spatial version of counterpoint, it is the *cantus firmus* that is lively while the voices around it stop, stare, watch, gaze, and salute. If Dublin from 3 to 4 o'clock is the temporal *cantus firmus* of the episode, the spatial equivalent is without a doubt the viceregal cavalcade. The procession does not appear in all sections of the episode, though it is in many of them, but if we look at the action of the hour as plotted on a map we can see that none of Joyce's Dubliners begin their wandering-in-space in advance of the cavalcade, Phoenix Park Gate being the most Westerly part of Dublin to be included in the episode. Equally, no character makes it as far East as the cavalcade, which moves in a fairly straight procession, slightly declining to the South, before arriving at the Mirus Bazaar. The different characters pause, equally distributed to the North and the South, around the strangely momentous spatial *cantus firmus*, and it is in this inverse counterpoint that the major irony of Joyce's episode can be discerned; in the final culmination of the political theme of Irish rebellion against English rule that threads through "Wandering Rocks," the citizenry of Dublin is paralyzed in space as William Humble Ward, second earl of Dudley and lord lieutenant of Ireland, "the representative of His Majesty," passes easily and authoritatively among them (252).

An active awareness of counterpoint, then, allows for nuanced readings of *Ulysses* that are not so readily available without the intimate connection of the temporal and the spatial, the audible and the visual, the kinetic and the static that the musical technique necessarily employs. The world of the early twentieth century is replete with dualities, contradictions, and unexpected

counterparts, and it is this world that Joyce represents in his *Ulysses.* Modernism is a dissonant

reaction to dissonant times, and it is such dissonance that, like a crisis in rhetoric, provides the

impetus for furthering the narrative action in Joyce's work.

CHAPTER TWO

JOYCE'S "SIREN[S]"

I

While "Wandering Rocks" can be read through the lens of formal, *cantus firmus*-based

counterpoint, "Sirens" is its fugally contrapuntal counterpart. Although such imitative

counterpoint is generally considered to be representative of motion in music, however, certain

critics have read this episode as particularly static. Richard Ellmann asserts that just as in

Homer's *Odyssey* the "theme is inaction, recognized as such only by Odysseus," so in episode 11

of *Ulysses* "Bloom is graduated […] to pregnant inaction." Ellmann's argument regarding the

Odyssey is straightforward enough: while Odysseus can hear the music, he is entirely powerless

to act on its urgings; his men, however, have full control of their actions, "but, with ears full of

wax, cannot know what the stimulus is" (103). The tale of the sirens in Homer seems tangential

to the frustrations in Odysseus's journey home, and can therefore also be considered to represent

a moment of inaction in the wider narrative. Joyce's "Sirens" episode might appear at first to be

as inert in relation to the narrative of which it forms a part as Homer's, confined almost entirely

to the bar of the Ormond Hotel after the physically contrapuntal movement of "Wandering

Rocks" and prior to the violence of "Cyclops," and as Ellmann points out Bloom himself (though

he is allowed to have graduated from "total disengagement" in the previous episode) here

performs no decisive act. This episode, however, is as layered with deception and disguise as any

of the opera plots to which it repeatedly alludes, and just as the hectic, dense overture of the first

page and a half reveals itself to be in actuality a mostly linear, becalmed account of drinking,

flirting and singing, so too do we discover that behind this text-bound account lies one of the

major driving forces of the narrative, the betrayal of Bloom by Molly. It is in these extra-textual

overtones that the overall action of *Ulysses* advances, at least as much as through the meetings

and partings and thrown biscuit tins of the neighboring episodes.

Bloom's "pregnant inaction" is itself deceptive. Joyce, according to Ellmann, "evidently

informed [Stuart] Gilbert that Bloom was the episode's tuning fork" (103). As such, Bloom is the

key-note against which the overtones sound and, indeed, it is his vacillation between the actual

(the surroundings of the Ormond Hotel) and the potential (Boylan's journey to and arrival at

Eccles Street) that propels forward the dramatic action. It is fitting that Joyce should choose a

tuning fork, with its twin tines vibrating continuously towards and away from each other and its

inharmonic overtones,[18] as a symbol of his Ulysses, considering the importance throughout his

work of counterparts, and in this chapter I will argue for a reading of the "Sirens" episode – with

its avowed technique of *fuga per canonem* – as further evidence of Joyce's paradigmatic use of

counterpoint to replace traditional plot techniques as the driving force behind the narrative action

of *Ulysses*.

II

Joyce's declaration, in a letter to Harriet Weaver on August 6th, 1919, that the "Sirens"

episode contains "all the eight parts of a *fuga per canonem*" (Rogers 263) has proved to be one

of the most powerful of all the siren-songs contained within *Ulysses*. A great deal of criticism

has been devoted to explaining this statement, beginning with the difficulty of defining what,

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[18] According to the "Tuning-Fork" entry of *Grove Music Online*, "[i]t is not easy to determine the pitch of the first upper partial [that is, primary overtone] by ear alone; but in the average fork it is about two octaves and a major 6th above the fundamental, which is the note used for tuning. It is thus incorrect to speak of the 'harmonics' of a tuning-fork, for the vibrations of its several tones are inharmonic."

exactly, a *fuga per canonem* might be. Under the entry for "Fugue" in *Grove Music Online*, we may read:

> Despite the prominence of fugue in the history of Western art music and its virtually continuous cultivation in one form or another from the late Middle Ages until today, there exists no widespread agreement among present-day scholars on what its defining characteristics should be. […] If all pieces called fugue were collected together and compared, no single common defining characteristic would be discovered beyond that of imitation in the broadest sense.

The fugal compositions of J.S. Bach, following the general pattern of Subject, Answer, Countersubject, and Episodes, have become since the eighteenth century the prime example of the genre (so much so, that Nadya Zimmerman's essay on Joyce in the *Journal of Modern Literature* includes as an illustrating figure two lines of Bach's C minor fugue ["48", book 1] without providing the name of either composer or composition – the only way to know what it is you are seeing is to be able to read music and recognize Bach's fugue as such), and it is usually this model that is followed by readers seeking to discern the form of a fugue in "Sirens." The term *fuga per canonem*, however, is a Joycean neologism, though it hasn't always been recognized as such;[19] although fugues and canons hold the common denominator of imitative counterpoint as their structural base, a canon is the "strictest form of contrapuntal imitation" (*GMO*, "Canon"), with the same melody repeated in different voices (sometimes as straight echo, sometimes with slight stylistic differences). A fugue that operated along these lines would

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[19] See, for instance, Andreas Fischer's "Strange Words, Strange Music" in *Bronze by Gold: The Music of Joyce* (Sebastian D. G. Knowles, ed.), in which he asserts that the term is in fact an "explicit reference to a well-defined musical form" (249). The confusion here arises from Fischer missing the irony in the quotation he is referencing: "According to Gilbert the chapter is not only a fugue but a fugue with invariable, congruent repetitions of theme!" (Bowen 25).

simply be a canon; that the fugue and the canon are themselves therefore inharmonious

counterparts has not, however, prevented critics from becoming ensnared in Joyce's terminology.

The usual way to attempt an escape from the snare is to ignore the *per canonem* entirely

and simply refer to the "Sirens" episode as a fugue, the basis for this being an alternative verbal

statement by Joyce to Georges Borach that the episode "is a fugue with all musical notations"

(Rogers 263). Those critics who follow this lead, however, can find themselves further

entangled, stunting themselves with demisemiquavers and "[f]iddlefaddle about notes" (Joyce

288), as is exemplified in Margaret Rogers's approach. Rogers is at her best when discussing the

different musical modes evident in Joyce's "Sirens" episode, pointing out that "[i]t is no accident

that Lydia, the Lydian mode, is ever so convivial and Miss Mina, the Aeolian [minor] mode, is

wistful" (269). While examining musical modes in Joyce's work can be enlightening, forming as

they do part of "the underlying structures of music" (268), Rogers draws dangerously closer to

her sirens by turning her attention to the "musical notations," which she identifies as being "the

letters that designate musical notes: *a, b, c, d, e, f,* and *g*. It is these letters that contain the

musical information Joyce encoded. […] 'B̲ronze̲ by gol̲d he̲ard the̲ hoofirons steelyringing,'

contains the following letter-notes: *Bebgdeadefeegg*" (265). For Rogers, then, the episode can

literally be translated into music – every demisemiquaver noted – but all that this leads to is a

vague awareness of the tone that might thereby be achieved, and the simplistic conclusion that it

is "*music* with its healing powers that restores the cuckolded Bloom to life and helps him deal

with his loss and hurt" (270-1).

Such a conclusion is exemplary of the problem identified by Eric Prieto in his book

Listening In: Music, Mind, and the Modernist Narrative (2002):

It is common to find critics so bewitched by the introduction of a musical metaphor into a

literary text – especially if the metaphor seems to govern the entire text […] – that they

content themselves with merely enumerating the points of comparison between the piece

and its musical intertext, often without sufficient regard for the semiotic specificity of the

two arts. […] Close analysis shows that even expert comparisons between literary texts

and their musical references are often founded on analogies that simply cannot justify the

need for a specifically musical intertext. (17-8)

The question of Joyce's fugue (and, by extension, my own question of Joyce's counterpoint) is

thus worth tackling only if it is accompanied by the question of the value of the metaphor: "The

question is not whether a metaphor is appropriate or not but where it can take us, how much it

can teach us" (23). Focusing on whether or not Joyce has actually composed a fugue in the

middle of *Ulysses* cannot, on its own, teach us very much; there can be no resonance unless

Joyce's techniques are examined in the context in which the episode sits, just as a tuning fork

vibrating in the air can sound no "[l]ongindying call" that reaches the ears of any but its handler

unless its base touches the furniture "(piano!)" of the bar (Joyce 256, 263). Viewing the episode

in terms of the imitative counterpoint that structurally forms a fugue, on the other hand, can be a

valuable way in which to examine Joyce's innovative creation of narrative action. Rather than

enclosing the episode in its own, determined fugal structure, an examination of counterpoint in

"Sirens" leads to new vital connections within and without the episode. The voices of a

contrapuntal composition – particularly one that employs imitative counterpoint – lead and

follow each other throughout the work of which they form a part, thereby providing its sense of

movement.

A similar confusion to that created by the *fuga per canonem* question arises from Joyce's assertion that there are eight parts in "Sirens." Like the form of the fugue, there is no consensus on what these eight parts might be, though they are usually identified as the voices of some (but by no means all) of the characters in the episode. Zimmerman, for example, states that the "'eight parts,' or eight distinct, major voices in the chapter consist of the sirens (Miss Douce and Miss Kennedy), Bloom, Pat the waiter, Simon Dedalus, Boylan, Lenehan, the blind tuner, and Ben Dollard" (Zimmerman 7), but she gives no justification for these assignations. Why the blind tuner but not Martha, who is present in the letter that Bloom writes before leaving the hotel as well as in the many allusions to her song-namesake? Why not Molly? Why not Bob Cowley, who certainly makes up one note of the pentatonic scale as the episode draws to an end ("First Lid, De, Cow, Ker, Doll, a fifth: Lidwell, Si Dedalus, Bob Cowley, Kernan and Big Ben Dollard" [Joyce 290])? And why must the sirens be grouped together, when they are so different in temperament (as evinced by their different musical modes)? The fact that this siren-number is eight, however, is worth examining. Eight is the musical number of wholeness; it is the number of notes in a scale, the number of modes in which music can be composed, the number of counts in a breve (the "longest written note we now use" [Hopkins 13]). "Numbers it is," says Bloom, musing on "Musemathematics." "All music when you come to think" (278) – yet Joyce uses this number of completeness most obviously within the episode with reference to the two characters who seem least to demand it: the deaf waiter and the blind piano tuner.

Bloom, listening to Cowley's improvisation at the piano, dreams of silent music as he waits for pen, ink, and blotting pad:

Time makes the tune. Question of mood you're in. Still always nice to hear. Except scales

up and down, girls learning. Two together nextdoor neighbours. Ought to invent dummy

pianos for that. (278)

With scales in mind – both Bloom's and the reader's mind – a rhythmic improvisation on the

theme of the waiter follows: "Bald deaf Pat brought quite flat pad ink. Pat set with ink pen quite

flat pad. Pat took plate dish knife fork. Pat went" (278). The monosyllabic nature of these eight-

word sentences allies them to the sol-fa scale, complete with final cadence: "Pat went." The

voice sounding these (silent) scales is undetermined – it could be the narrator, but it could also be

Bloom, whose voice blends with that of the narrator throughout the episode. If the voice is

Bloom's, it supports a reading of the second riff on Pat's existence as also coming from Bloom –

a soothing use of rhythmic order in the face of marital disorder:

Wish they'd sing more. Keep my mind off.

Bald Pat who is bothered mitred the napkins. Pat is a waiter hard of his hearing. Pat is

a waiter who waits while you wait. Hee hee hee hee. He waits while you wait. While you

wait if you wait he will wait while you wait. Hee hee hee hee. Hoh. Wait while you wait.

(280)

Bloom, bothered in his own way, chases rhythmic rules; he performs his own *fuga* ("related to

both *fugere*: 'to flee' and *fugare*: 'to chase'" [*GMO,* "Fugue"]) *per canonem* ("Latin *canon* rule"

[*OED*, "Canon, *n*.1"]).

The blind piano tuner works his own way up to the number of wholeness, his cane

crescendoing until it taps an insistent eight (at the moment he passes Bloom? at the moment

Molly's betrayal is consummated – "One rapped on a door, one tapped with a knock"? [Joyce

282]), before dying away again as he reaches the Ormond Hotel (where, we are told, he "[does]

not see" eight times, "[n]or Ben nor Bob nor Tom nor Si nor George nor tanks nor Richie nor Pat" [290-1]). Here, in Joyce's ironic counterpointing of the musical language of completeness with a deaf man and a blind boy (not to mention the counterpoint of the blind strippling's taps and Boylan's "[t]ipping her tepping her tapping her topping her" [280]), we see the *scherzo* – the musical joke – inherent in the term *fuga per canonem*: fleeing the rules is the counterpart of following them. Behind the (invented) musical notation lies some thoroughly linguistic humor.

Joyce echoes this notational humor within the text of "Sirens" on three occasions, through the use of expression marks. The first instance belongs to the golden bar-siren, but is also a note to the reader:

> With sadness.
>
> Miss Kennedy sauntered sadly from bright light, twining a loose hair behind an ear. Sauntering sadly, gold no more, she twisted twined a hair. Sadly she twined in sauntering gold hair behind a curving ear. (258)

Mina Kennedy, of the minor mode, both performs sadly and is performed sadly in the vocal exercises that follow the notation. It isn't music, but it brings music to mind. The second example of a performance notation in the text is more subtle, and funnier – Lenehan, trying to charm a drink out of Simon Dedalus (Gifford 297), is lyrically, absurdly, puffing up Stephen, when the expression mark interrupts:

> -Greetings from the famous son of a famous father.
>
> -Who may he be? Mr Dedalus asked.
>
> Lenehan opened most genial arms. Who?
>
> -Who may he be? he asked. Can you ask? Stephen, the youthful bard.
>
> Dry. (Joyce 262)

Lenehan, without a drink, is dry, but the notation here is Simon's and the narrator's:

Mr Dedalus, famous fighter, laid by his dry filled pipe.

-I see, he said. I didn't recognize him for the moment. I hear he is keeping very select

company. Have you seen him lately?

He had.

-I quaffed the nectarbowl with him this very day, said Lenehan. In Mooney's *en ville* and

in Mooney's *sur mer*. He had received the rhino for the labour of his muse.

[…]

After an interval Mr Dedalus raised his grog and

-That must have been highly diverting, said he. I see. (262-3)

The third expression mark ("Strongly.") is a direction for Ben Dollard, and it suggests

that he may not be the most intuitive of performers (or that Joyce is mocking bass baritones),

since he seems to interpret it as "angrily": "-Go on, blast you, Ben Dollard growled" (271). All

four of the above fragments – *fuga per canonem*, "With sadness," "Dry," and "Strongly" – are

examples of musical notation, which is a term that "can be applied to any formal indication of

how sounds and silences intended as music should be reproduced" (*GMO,* "Notation"). Such an

all-encompassing definition calls into question Joyce's claim to have written "a fugue with all

musical notations," whether he meant "every notation" or "only notations." He seems, rather, to

be making the same joke inherent in *fuga per canonem*: readers – especially critics – may chase

after the laws of his fugue, but such surety will always flee from them. Here is a siren that will

keep you engrossed, but which you can never reach – the antithesis of inaction.

Musical notation lies somewhere in between music and words (since it can also, in its

most fundamental iteration, refer to notes on a stave), but, whether in lines of prose or a musical

score, those with the ability to read in tune will do so. The overtones of the music sound through the notations on the page. Conversely, the characters outside the saloon of the Ormond Hotel hear a "voiceless song [singing] from within," interwoven with the overtone-words of "Goodbye, Sweetheart, Goodbye" as the piano keys call "to a voice to sing the strain of dewy morn, of youth, of love's leavetaking, life's, love's morn" (Joyce 264). We, as readers, hear the musical overtones (if we happen to know the tune of "Goodbye, Sweetheart, Goodbye", that is) to the song-words, the linguistic overtones of which are caught by those listening to the piano in the saloon. The words and the music are woven together into the narrative, counterparts of each other. They exist together, contrapuntally, throughout *Ulysses*, but they are closest here; as Sebastian D. G. Knowles points out, they are embodied in the bar-sirens themselves: "Bronze is music, since Lydia Douce sings and Mina does not, trilling '*O, Idolores, queen of the eastern seas!*' Gold is text, since Mina Kennedy reads and Lydia does not, reading at the same time as Lydia is singing: 'Miss voice of Kennedy answered, a second teacup poised, her gaze upon a page'" (xxviii, quoting Joyce 261-2).

Yet, once again, the suggestion of music is deceptive – the overtones are inharmonic. "The sea they think they hear," thinks Bloom, watching Lydia and Lidwell's flirtation-by-seashell. "Singing. A roar. The blood is it. Souse in the ear sometimes" (Joyce 281). As Hugh Kenner says: "we may think we hear" the voices in *Ulysses*, whether singing or talking, but "it's we ourselves who silently supply them" (*Muse* 76). Kenner's wider point is that Joyce "forces us to confront printed pages, and make what we can of them" (69) – that *Ulysses* is self-consciously a written text.

The same is obviously true of the "Sirens" episode, though Joyce adds to his "mechanical […] arrangement of twenty-six letters" (Kenner, *Stoic* 47) the building-blocks of musical

meaning. For Joyce's Dubliners, as for the author himself (who "began noodling around on the piano at age three" [Weaver 3]), the aural world would have been created out of elements of music as much as elements of speech, and it therefore makes sense to include notationized scales and modes alongside letters and syllables and sentences in order to swell his text with so much more of Dublin's language. The irony inherent in Tom Kernan, one of a group of carousers, requesting "Our native Doric" (Joyce 282) is one such example; Gifford glosses this echo from the "Aeolus" episode as a dialect, "especially Scots dialect as opposed to English" (134), but it is also the ancient musical mode identified by Aristotle as "outstanding for its sedateness and manly ethos" (*GMO,* "Aristotle"). The group is in operatic disguise, playing a role.

<center>III</center>

The connection between "Sirens" and "Aeolus" has, unsurprisingly, become something of a critical commonplace. Besides the almost direct echo of "his/our native Doric," and the other modal connection of Aeolian Mina, it is worth noting that almost all of the songs that are sung or alluded to in the eleventh episode have already made an appearance in the seventh. The connection between words and music is thus further established, and it would undoubtedly be an interesting exercise, if time allowed, to compare the verbal rhetoric of the one episode to the musical rhetoric of the other. There is, however, one other important way in which the two episodes are linked: through Bloom, whose theme throughout "Sirens" is that of wind.

Bloom's windiness, by the end of the "Sirens" episode, is both obvious and disguised (at least, this is Bloom's aim) behind a well-timed tram and a well-placed silent text:

Fff. Oo. Rrpr.

<center>45</center>

Nations of the earth. No-one behind. She's passed. *Then and not till then.* Tram. Kran,

kran, kran. Good oppor. Coming. Krandlkrankran. I'm sure it's the burgundy. Yes. One,

two. *Let my epitaph be.* Karaaaaaaa. *Written. I have.*

Pprrpffrrppffff.

Done. (Joyce 291)

This is the *finale* of the episode, but Bloom's bodily windiness can be found from the beginning,

in the "overture" section, where it appears four times (from "Pwee! Little wind piped wee" to

"Be pfrwritt" [257]). Here at the beginning, too, we find Bloom's nominal windiness:

A husky fifenote blew.

Blew. Blue bloom is on the

Gold pinnacled hair. (256)

There is an echo of "air" in "hair," which suggests the somewhat aimless motion of Bloom prior

to seeing (and following) Boylan, and the play of homonyms on his name ties him both to the

wind and to the flowers blown on the wind. It also situates him firmly in the Ormond Hotel,

however, where he will later find himself; his windy note grows out of Simon Dedalus's

fifenote/pipenote, and blends into the bar-siren's hair, by way of the blue flowers on the tables.

Wind/air is Bloom's recurring theme throughout "Sirens," then, but it is not isolated here.

His role as a canvasser for advertising allies him with the windy rhetoric in "Aeolus," while

Molly in "Penelope" places his sexual preferences within the windy mode:

…of course hes mad on the subject of drawers thats plain to be seen always skeezing at

those brazenfaced things on the bicycles with their skirts blowing up to their navels…

(746)

But Bloom is just one of two characters whose theme in "Sirens" can be seen as extensions of their wider theme in *Ulysses*. The other is Blazes Boylan, whose sound is percussive, mechanical:

> Jingle jingle jaunted jingling.
>
> Coin rang. Clock clacked.
>
> […]
>
> Horn. Hawhorn. (256)

Again, this key-note is not contained solely within the "Sirens" episode; we have just seen Boylan keeping strict time and "rattl[ing] merry money" (227) in Thornton's before going on his way "jauntily" in "Wandering Rocks," eventually joining Molly for piston-like sex in "Penelope":

> …because he must have come 3 or 4 times with that tremendous beg red brute of a thing he has I thought the vein or whatever the dickens they call it was going to burst […] no I never in all my life felt anyone had one the size of that to make you feel full up he must have eaten a whole sheep after whats the idea making us like that with a big hole in the middle of us like a Stallion driving it up into you because thats all they want out of you with that determined vicious look in his eye… (742)

The singer performs percussively, mechanically, rhythmically[20]; but not musically.

Blue Bloom and "Blazure's skyblue bow and eyes" (266) are clearly placed in contrapuntal proximity, independent yet interdependent, throughout "Sirens," and nowhere – apparently – so closely as in the "overture": "Jingle. Bloo" (256). The only other juxtaposition that occurs so determinedly within this section is that of the bar-sirens, "Bronzelydia by

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[20] David Ayers points out that "many at this time [early twentieth century] believed that jazz music and jazz dance were basically mechanical […] characterized by acidic harmonies and strident and lively rhythms which seem to turn their back on the pre-war ideal of concert music as the public expression of deep internal emotion" (84)

Minagold" (257), counterpointed always through their different modes, but concerting together to charm the patrons of their bar. But sirens are not always mythological bird-women, not always mermaids, nor the modern echo of such creatures: sirens are also mechanical instruments, played by the wind:

> Siren: A metal or cardboard disc with one or more rings of equally spaced perforations, which, when rotated in the path of a stream of air (by the air itself, by hand, or by a motor) interrupts it periodically to produce a note […] The siren's principle characteristics are its loud and penetrating quality (its loudness increases with the pitch) and the initial and final glissando caused by the acceleration of the disc to maximum speed when the motive power is applied and the corresponding deceleration when it is cut off. (*GMO,* "Siren")[21]

Joyce, in giving to Bloom the theme of windiness and to Boylan that of mechanical repetition, allows for the contrapuntal discovery of such a siren in his text; but where can this musical-literary metaphor take us? Bloom, our tuning fork, is the creator of the vibrations which, in turn, set this siren moving, and it is he who brings Boylan back into the narrative over and over again, his mind overturning and overtoning, unable to distract himself for long with the music around him. But, then, he doesn't quite want to distract himself entirely; he doesn't want to be "[a]ll ears. […] Dotty. […] Thinking strictly prohibited" (Joyce 288). He seemingly identifies with Boylan, vibrating towards and away from thoughts of the latter's assignation with Molly, giving in to the sensuousness of the music in a way that echoes suggestively:

> Bloom. Flood of warm jimjam lickitup secretness flowed to flow in music out, in desire, dark to lick flow, invading. Tipping her tepping her tapping her topping her. Tup. Pores

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[21] It is interesting to note that sirens were occasionally used as musical instruments in the early-jazz-infused orchestral music of the early twentieth century

to dilate dilating. Tup. The joy the feel the warm the. Tup. To pour o'er sluices pouring

gushes. (274)

As he writes to Martha, Bloom even takes on Boylan's theme, as though looking to him as a

model for seduction:

My poor little pres: p.o. two and six. Write me a long. Do you despise? Jingle, have you

the? So excited. Why do you call me naught? You naughty too? (279)

An enlightening counterpart to this is to be found firstly in the "Nausicaa" episode, where at the

point of masturbatory climax Bloom's mind (which has been wandering wildly) is back with

Molly and Boylan:

Funny my watch stopped at half past four. Dust. Shark liver oil they use to clean could do

it myself. Save. Was that just when he, she?

O, he did. Into her. She did. Done.

Ah!

Mr Bloom with careful hand recomposed his wet shirt. O Lord, that little limping devil.

Begins to feel cold and clammy. Aftereffect not pleasant. (370)

Again, in the "Circe" episode, the hallucinatory text stresses Bloom's voyeuristic desire to return

over and over again to the thought of Molly with Boylan:

BOYLAN

(*To Bloom, over his shoulder*.) You can apply your eye to the keyhole and play with

yourself while I just go through her a few times.

BLOOM

Thank you sir. I will, sir. May I bring two men chums to witness the deed and take a snapshot? (*He holds an ointment jar*.) Vaseline, sir? Orangeflower?…Lukewarm water?… (566)

Siren-songs of desire are to be heard throughout *Ulysses*, but the one that calls to Bloom is possibly the most uncomfortable. He is attracted to the thought of his wife having sex with another man at the same time as being disturbed by it. Lust is the driving force of this episode, but not just the lust of Boylan, the man who acts offstage. Boylan and Bloom are complicatedly counterpointed here not through the motions of leading and following so much as through lustily driving and being driven. Onstage, Bloom drives but is also driven by lust, out of the Ormond Hotel, where his mind is being kept off his counterpart Boylan *too* well, and on into the rest of the narrative.

Boylan, then, loud and penetrating, is the real siren of the episode for Bloom – but one that he himself creates. There is no evidence in the text at this point that Molly has committed adultery; the reader, however, should be aware of the connotations of the mechanical siren outlined above.[22] Such sirens are warnings, and there are a few to be heeded in this episode. The warning note of adultery is the clearest narrative one, but, having shown *fuga per canonem* to be a will-o-the-wisp, it is possible that the mechanical siren – created only through the contrapuntal communion of Bloom and Boylan – might also prove to be a perfect musical metaphor for the arrangement of the episode itself: the initial inflating glissando to be found in the "overture" section, and the final deflating glissando that of Bloom's wind finally escaping. The temporal,

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[22] An alternative musical clue to Molly's behavior with Boylan is provided by Adam Parkes in his *Modernism and the Theater of Censorship*: "While so much in [the 'Penelope'] episode insinuates that Molly fulfills the fantasy of liberated female sexuality, the narrative includes musical allusions that ask us to reconsider the common assumption that she actually has sex with Boylan. Don Gifford notes allusions to Charles K. Harris's ballad 'After the Ball' and to a duet in William V. Wallace's opera *Maritana*, both of which imply that female infidelity and betrayal are products of the jealous, self-deceiving male imagination… The intertextual method of 'Penelope' intimates that questions about Molly's sexuality, and about her fidelity to Bloom, are inextricable from the theme of male anxiety and fantasy" (103-4).

forward-thrusting technique of counterpoint furthers the action of the narrative as an alternative

form of structure, replacing the traditional plot of a traditional novel, and draws Joyce's

characters into an uncomfortable, enlightening proximity.

CONCLUSION

Musical-literary analysis such as I have been conducting in this study of James Joyce's *Ulysses* can be a very useful way of examining both the form and the content of a literary work, provided that a connection can be shown to exist between the two arts within either the text or (less securely) the author's life experience. A musical-literary approach to *Ulysses* is therefore doubly justified, since Joyce's knowledge of music and use of music within his text are equally well documented. In order for a musical metaphor to have any weight, however, the critic must not only clearly define the term, but must also show how an application of the metaphor to the text illuminates a facet of the work that might not otherwise be apparent. My study of counterpoint as narrative paradigm in the preceding chapters shows how a thorough understanding of the musical technique – of both its possibilities and its limitations – can open up new connections between themes and characters. Counterpoint, after all, is defined by the way in which its different voices connect and interact, and the independent yet interdependent action of Dublin's citizens on June 16th, 1904 is far more suggestive of contrapuntal movement than of either a traditional plot structure or narrative paralysis.

In focusing primarily on two central episodes, "Wandering Rocks" and "Sirens," the scope of this study has been contained both temporally – the narrative action occurring within just a few hours of the day, from 3 o'clock to 5 o'clock in the afternoon – and in terms of the characters it has been able to address. The most important contrapuntal relationship during this time, as I have demonstrated, is that between Leopold Bloom and Blazes Boylan; but the

musical-literary lens of counterpoint can be brought to focus upon other relationships with much

success, if it is extended into the wider reaches of the novel. As many critics have noted, the

relationship between Bloom and Stephen Dedalus can be seen not only as the primary

relationship in the novel, but also as one which is contrapuntally formed.[23] Both temporally and

spatially – *nacheinander* and *nebeneinander* – Stephen and Bloom lead and follow one another

throughout the text until they are finally given some sort of musical and rhythmic resolution

together in "Ithaca":

> What parallel courses did Bloom and Stephen follow returning?
>
> Starting united both at normal walking pace from Beresford place they followed
>
> in the order named Lower and Middle Gardiner streets and Mountjoy square, west: then,
>
> at reduced pace, each bearing left, Gardiner's place by an inadvertence as far as the
>
> farther corner of Temple street, north: then at reduced pace with interruptions of halt,
>
> bearing right, Temple street, north, as far as Hardwicke place.
>
> …
>
> Of what did the duumvirate deliberate during their itinerary?
>
> Music, literature, Ireland, Dublin, Paris, friendship, woman, prostitution, diet
>
> …
>
> Did Bloom discover common factors of similarity between their respective like
>
> and unlike reactions to experience?
>
> Both were sensitive to artistic impressions musical in preference to plastic or
>
> pictorial. (666)

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[23] See J.P. Smith's *Musical Allusions in James Joyce's* Ulysses, especially chapter two.

The musical connection between the two characters is placed in a position of immediate importance, within the first three questions of the "Ithaca" catechism.[24] Further, their "parallel" and "united" movement, and their "common factors of similarity" represented in these questions are set against each other in the fourth question and answer, in which their "views on some points" are revealed to be "divergent." A study of the movement from external to internal counterpoint that is thus enacted through the eventual meeting of Bloom and Stephen might well expose hitherto-unseen connections between them beyond that of father and son, particularly in relation to Molly Bloom.

Molly, who has been simultaneously present within and absent from the discussions of contrapuntal meaning in this study, is a further complicating voice, richly deserving of musical-literary analysis. With her eight long sentences in "Penelope," circling around from "Yes" to "Yes," Molly can be read as the "ultimate return. The octave" (504); in such a reading, it is she who represents the tonal key that ultimately connects all of the wandering strands of contrapuntal relationship. If she is the tonic – also known as the fundamental, the first and eighth note of a musical scale – then Bloom can be seen as the dominant, "the greatest possible ellipse. Consistent with. The ultimate return," trying to make his way home. The empty fifths that are created when only the tonic and the dominant sound, however, are dissonant and uncertain in their key, as when Stephen repeats them as a series at the pianola in the Circean whorehouse. As Antony Hopkins explains, "one needs a third note, a 'casting vote' to tilt the harmony in one direction or another" (35). Whether this third note is the replacement son or the adulterous lover, it is the counterpoint between dominant and third (or median) that leads to resolution between the tonic and the dominant, and ultimately to the harmonious, consonant, secure key.

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[24] Walking pace, or *andante*, is one of the most common tempo markings within a piece of music, and the first question of the episode is therefore as upfront with its connection to music as the following two.

The examples of Stephen and Molly, as briefly sketched as they are, demonstrate the versatility and applicability of counterpoint as a musical-literary paradigm, along with necessarily connected components of the technique, such as key tonality. Following strains of music is just one of many ways through Joyce's labyrinthine *Ulysses*, but it remains a fruitful one, and the contrapuntal workings of the text in particular continue to expose new connections along the way.

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