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*Ulysses: Burlesque Modernism
and Antipodean Parallax*

The very idea of modernism is itself based on a temporal premise, implying as it does a categorical differentiation between old and new. The question of how modernism might also be considered a geographically contingent term has also recently been much discussed, with Ian Tyrrell commenting on how the transnational turn needs to be correlated with temporal as much as spatial boundaries, since it cuts against conventional spatiotemporal markers across both axes: “the transnational,” writes Tyrrell, “changes time as well as space.”¹ In their 2005 critical anthology *Geomodernisms*, Laura Doyle and Laura Winkiel suggested that expanding the circumference of modernism from Anglo-American to global horizons necessarily involved an acknowledgment of how these “histories are multiple and interconnected in surprising, unforeseen ways,” while in a 2008 *PMLA* essay on “The New Modernist Studies,” Douglas Mao and Rebecca Walkowitz described how a new emphasis on transnational exchange was “widely seen as crucially transformative” within this field.² In her 2010 essay “Planetarity: Musing Modernist Studies,” Susan Stanford Friedman related modernism to a variety of global locations, including Europe, Africa, Latin America, China, Arabia, Hindu India and Bengal India, but Australia and New Zealand were conspicuously absent from this list.³ Eric Hayot, the American Comparative Literature scholar who has done important work to

¹ Ian Tyrrell, “In the Shadow of the Nation? Space and Time in the Practice and Problems of U.S. Transnational History,” in *Transnational American Studies*, ed. Udo J. Hebel (Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter), 81.

² Laura Doyle and Laura Winkiel, “Introduction: The Global Horizons of Modernism,” in *Geomodernisms: Race, Modernism, Modernity*, ed. Laura Doyle and Laura Winkiel (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005), 14; Douglas Mao and Rebecca K. Walkowitz, “The New Modernist Studies,” *PMLA* 123.3 (2008): 738.

³ Susan Stanford Friedman, “Planetarity: Musing Modernist Studies,” *Modernism/modernity* 17.3 (2010): 471-99. This essay forms the basis for Chapter 2 of Friedman’s book *Planetary Modernism: Provocations on Modernity across Time* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015), 47-80.

disestablish what he calls the “Eurochronology” of modernism, also overlooks Australasia completely, with his main alternative disciplinary compass being directed towards East Asia.⁴ Lynn Hunt, among others, has written of a need to “de-Occidentalise history” and uncouple it from Western modernity, but there has often been relatively little sense of how such a “*transformational* planetary epistemology,” in Friedman’s term, might work in practice.⁵ My point here is not so much to add yet another geographical arc to the ever-expanding spatial circumference of modernism, nor simply to drive another stake through the well-mangled but still unquiet corpse of Eurocentrism. What I want to suggest instead is that an engagement with antipodean dimensions can be seen fundamentally to change the orbit of modernism itself, particularly in the way its temporal formations are projected. The idea of “antipodes,” as Bernard Smith observed in *Modernism’s History*, involves “not a place but a relationship, in this case a spatial and cultural relationship between north and south.”⁶

In this sense, it bears significant structural resemblances to the notion of burlesque, which was similarly invested in ideas of reversal and transposition. Burlesque was, as Michael North has observed, “a key term . . . in the history of literary modernism,” not only because it sought to demystify and bring low the paragons of genteel Edwardian culture, but also because it flirted with the obscene and thus illuminated, through the mechanisms of censorship, how institutional parameters sought to define and guard themselves. Gilbert Seldes, in *The Seven Lively Arts* (1924), described how Picasso, Stravinsky, and other modernist artists used burlesque forms for iconoclastic purposes, while, as North says, T. S. Eliot’s use of jazz rhythms and fragmented urban images in *The Waste Land* (1922) appeared shocking to a generation accustomed to regard the monuments of Western civilisation with more reverence.⁷ There has been surprisingly little theoretical work on the art of burlesque, but E. E. Cummings

⁴ Eric Hayot, *On Literary Worlds* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 6.

⁵ Lynn Hunt, “Globalisation and Time,” in *Breaking Up Time: Negotiating the Borders between Present, Past and Future*, ed. Chris Lorenz and Berber Bevernage (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2013), 211; Friedman, “Planetarity,” 474.

⁶ Bernard Smith, *Modernism’s History: A Study in Twentieth-Century Art and Ideas* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 344.

⁷ Michel North, *Reading 1922: A Return to the Scene of the Modern* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 152, 145.

published an intriguing essay in a 1925 issue of *Vanity Fair*, where he linked it to a process of systematic inversion and the juxtaposition of contraries:

For in burlesk, we meet with an echo of the original phenomenon: "opposites" occur *together*. For that reason, burlesk enables us to (so to speak) *know around* a thing, character, or situation. To put it a little differently: if the art of common-or-garden painting were like the art of burlesk, we should be able to see—impossibly enough—all the way around a solid tree, instead of merely seeing a little more than half of the tree (thanks to binocular parallax or whatever it is) and imagining the rest. This impossible knowing around, or nonimagining, quality, constitutes the essence of burlesk and differentiates it from certain better-understood arts.⁸

Burlesque, in Cummings's formulation of this conception, involves geographical circumference ("knowing around") as well as temporal belatedness, since its method of reading backwards calls attention to the process of "temporal splitting" that is, as Heather Love has argued, at the heart of all "[a]esthetic modernism."⁹

Burlesque, in other words, interrogates received narratives of sequential progress, and in this sense it overlaps with the "inversion hypotheses" that, as Ann Stephen and others have written, have proved "persistent" as "an explanation of the peculiar quality or dynamic of Australian art and culture."¹⁰ When he visited Australia in 1940, English conductor Sir Thomas Beecham described it as "much the most backward portion of the Empire," in the sense that he took the country to be "too complacent and self-satisfied even to begin to

⁸ E. E. Cummings, "You Aren't Mad, Am I? Being Certain Observations anent the Extremely Modern Art of 'Burlesk,'" in *A Miscellany, Revised*, ed. George J. Firmage (New York: October House, 1958), 127.

⁹ Heather Love, *Feeling Backward: Loss and the Politics of Queer History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009), 6.

¹⁰ Ann Stephen, Andrew McNamara, Philip Goad, "Introduction," in *Modernism and Australia: Documents on Art, Design and Architecture 1917-1967*, ed. Ann Stephen, Andrew McNamara, Philip Goad (Melbourne: Miegunyah Press, 2006), 19.

understand its actual condition.”¹¹ Donald Horne, in *The Lucky Country* (1964), similarly castigated Australia as an “imitative country,” resplendent with “triumphant mediocrity.”¹² But all of these terms—backward, imitative, mediocrity—are loaded, implying as their corollary a state of originality and progression that only ever comprised half of modernism’s story. As Gordon Tapper remarks in the context of Hart Crane’s poem *The Bridge* (1930), one section of which is set in a New York burlesque theatre, Crane’s “backward vision,” based around the poet’s “unequivocal enthusiasm for burlesque,” has the capacity to reveal a burlesque dimension that remains implicit but suppressed in all modernist art.¹³ American Marxist critic Mike Gold wrote in 1926 of how art should be “no longer snobbish or cowardly” since it “teaches peasants to use tractors” or “writes burlesque for factory theaters,” and the association of modernism in Australia not so much with elite writers or musicians but with popular culture—jazz, urban architecture, department stores—lent it from the beginning a demotic tinge, so that interest in Australian Modernism and modernity, high and low cultures, have always been coterminous.¹⁴ Andreas Huyssen influentially argued in 1986 that Western modernism attempted to define itself through “a conscious strategy of exclusion, an anxiety of contamination” by mass culture; but this was never the case in Australia, even though the tenacious hold of Leavisite orthodoxy in Australian university English departments throughout most of the middle part of the twentieth century meant that academic interest in popular forms tended to be deflected toward Cultural Studies.¹⁵ In his work on American burlesque performances, Robert C. Allen has suggested that burlesque appeared “disturbing and threatening”

¹¹ Richard White and Hsu-Ming Teo, “Popular Culture,” in *Australia’s Empire*, ed. Deryck Schreinder and Stuart Ward (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 339.

¹² Donald Horne, *The Lucky Country*, 3rd edn (Ringwood: Penguin, 1971), 48, 22.

¹³ Gordon Tapper, *The Machine that Sings: Modernism, Hart Crane, and the Culture of the Body* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 70; Hart Crane, *The Bridge* (1930), in *The Poems of Hart Crane*, ed. Marc Simon (New York: Liveright, 1986), 87.

¹⁴ Mike Gold, “America Needs a Critic,” in *Mike Gold: A Literary Anthology*, ed. Michael Folsom (New York: International Publishers, 1972), 130.

¹⁵ Andreas Huyssen, *After the Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Postmodernism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), vii. On the ways in which a Leavisite orthodoxy was “fully entrenched” in English departments of Australian universities by the 1950s, see Lynne Strahan, *Just City and the Mirrors: Meanjin Quarterly and the Intellectual Front, 1940-1965* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1984), 84.

because it presented “a world turned upside down and inside out in which nothing was above being brought down to earth,” where “things that should be kept separate were united in grotesque hybrids.” Given such an intellectual provenance, there is a significant sense in which the structural position of antipodean modernism—distant in space, and belated in time—speaks in compelling ways to the spatiotemporal unconscious repressed by modernism’s grander designs. In this way, the burlesque qualities of antipodean modernism productively hollow out what Allen called “the voice of moral and authorial omniscience” traditionally associated with the Western canon, and thus creatively realign its temporal coordinates.¹⁶ Antipodean modernism, then, should not be considered as synonymous merely with the literature or culture of Australia and New Zealand, since its spatiotemporal dimensions operate within a much wider planetary orbit.

James Joyce’s *Ulysses* (1922) has been recognized from the beginning as what Wyndham Lewis called “a *time-book*,” a work whose radical interrogation of an orthodox sense temporality was integral to its innovative modernist style. Lewis in *Time and Western Man* (1927) compared Joyce to Marcel Proust and Henri Bergson as authors obsessed with a similar kind of “time-fanaticism,” which from Lewis’s point of view drew *Ulysses* to an excessive immersion “between the earlier flux of Bergson, with its Time-god, and the Einsteinian flux, with its god, space-time.” Rather than attempting to shape a timeless classical monument, argued Lewis, *Ulysses* is too accommodating toward a “suffocating moeotic expanse of objects, all of them lifeless, the sewage of a Past twenty years old.”¹⁷ Fredric Jameson similarly argued that Joyce’s time-scale of a single day “radically interferes with the temporality of the older form which it effectively cancels,” with what Lewis called this “*nature-morte*,” representing a twenty-four-hour cycle, implicitly differentiating itself from realist teleologies of progressive naturalist sequence.¹⁸ One of the many paradoxes associated with *Ulysses* is that it looks back in its title to a Homeric model, adducing parallels

¹⁶ Robert C. Allen, *Horrible Prettiness: Burlesque and American Culture* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), 28-9.

¹⁷ Wyndham Lewis, *Time and Western Man* (1927), ed. Paul Edwards (Santa Rosa, CA: Black Sparrow, 1993), 81, 83-4, 89.

¹⁸ Fredric Jameson, *The Antinomies of Realism* (London: Verso, 2013), 150; Lewis, *Time and Western Man*, 100.

between classical Greece and Dublin in 1904, while altogether refusing the position of satirical superiority that such a neoclassical templates might invite. Richard Ellmann's claim in 1977 that Joyce imitates styles of media production only to upbraid "modern capitalism," targeting "the newspaper" as "wasting the spirit with its persistent attacks upon the integrity of the word, narcotizing its readers with superficial facts," not only seems oddly unresponsive to Joyce's humour but is also characteristic of an earlier method of modernist criticism, one that situated high art antithetically against the demeaning detritus of popular culture.¹⁹

Such critical assumptions have long been superseded, of course, with David Trotter having traced structural overlaps between the growth of technology in what he calls the "first media age"—between 1927 and 1939, when telephone, radio, cinema, and phonography became more widespread—and the cultural narratives of English modernism.²⁰ It is, perhaps, interesting to observe that *Ulysses* was published in the same year as the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) began its operations, since the wireless was of course linked to the consolidation of the empire, particularly through its World Service station which began broadcasting in 1932. Indeed, the boast of first BBC general manager Lord Reith that radio would "cast a girdle round the earth with bands that are all the stronger because invisible" is mirrored in the universalist temper of *Ulysses*, which also seeks to exploit new media technologies to inscribe an alternative vision of global unity. But the BBC was committed to national and imperial standardization: it first broadcast in 1924 its Greenwich pips time signal, devised by astronomer royal Frank Watson Dyson, with Reith boasting that this would bring the "crofter in the north of Scotland" and "the agricultural labourer in the west of England" into synchronic spatiotemporal unity.²¹ *Ulysses*, on the other hand, evokes a radically different universalist narrative, one based not upon the subordination of margins to imperial centre, but around stylistic heterogeneity and a continual interpenetration among different points on the compass. Reith

¹⁹ Richard Ellmann, *The Consciousness of Joyce* (London: Faber, 1977), 78.

²⁰ David Trotter, *Literature in the First Media Age: Britain Between the Wars* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2013), 1-2.

²¹ Charlotte Higgins, *This New Noise: The Extraordinary Birth and Troubled Life of the BBC* (London: Guardian Books-Faber, 2015), 15, 183-4.

went on after his stint at the BBC to run Imperial Airways, with a similar remit to bind the British Empire into a global unity through new communications technologies, but the momentum of Joyce's work is centrifugal rather than centripetal in the way it situates localized events within a variegated planetary orbit. Franco Moretti is right to suggest that one characteristic of *Ulysses* is its "systematic refusal to assume *one* style as the privileged vehicle of expression," thereby altogether repudiating the centralized authority that Reith assumed to be vested in the BBC.²² Moreover, as Leo Bersani has observed, the "farcical" elements in *Ulysses*—exemplified most obviously in the "Circe" episode set in Nighttown, but embedded throughout the narrative—operate "as the sign of a desublimated discourse," through which all mystifications of truth claims are subjected to "the lightness and unconstrained mobility of farce."²³ In this sense, burlesque becomes integral to Joyce's work, not only through the ways in which the novel's sexual shenanigans unravel the pomposities of everyday life—there is an interesting parallel between Joyce's brothel scene, where Bloom becomes a female impersonator in the play "Vice Versa" and is subjected to transvestite transformation through ritualistic exchanges with Bella/Bello, and the sadomasochistic scenarios in Proust's *Time Regained*—but also through the book's concatenations of intertextual parody, through which every distinct position is counterpointed with an alternative: "Dreams goes by contraries" says Florry during this Nighttown scene.²⁴ Joyce himself described *Ulysses* in a 1920 letter to Carlo Linati as "a kind of encyclopaedia," but, as Paul K. Saint-Amour has noted, Joyce's book "calls on encyclopaedic form to model comprehensiveness without coherentism, a view of the whole that insists on the partiality of synoptic viewing."²⁵ It is important to the structure of *Ulysses* that it aspires towards a global reach, but it is equally important that all of its fictional

²² Franco Moretti, *Signs Taken for Wonders: Essays in the Sociology of Literary Forms*, trans. Susan Fischer, David Forgacs, David Miller (London: Verso, 1983), 206.

²³ Leo Bersani, *The Culture of Redemption* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990), 166.

²⁴ James Joyce, *Ulysses*, ed. Hans Walter Gabler with Wolfhard Steppe and Claus Melchior (New York: Random House-Vintage, 1986), 466. Subsequent page references to this edition are cited in parentheses in the text.

²⁵ Stuart Gilbert, ed., *Letters of James Joyce* (London: Faber, 1957), 146; Paul K. Saint-Amour, *Tense Future: Modernism, Total War, Encyclopaedic Form* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 225.

protagonists achieve only partial, fragmented perspectives on the world around them.

Saint-Amour himself links this putative universalism to the constant discussion in the 1920s of a state of world war, and he usefully suggests that this decade should be seen not so much as a festive “interwar” era but as a time when, in the aftermath of World War One, the prospect of another “total war” was regarded with foreboding. He also remarks on “growing resemblances between metropolitan and colonial spaces” in this first media age, something that makes “the stark binarism of metropole versus colony on which much ... early postcolonial criticism relied” less than wholly credible.²⁶ It is important to remember that *Ulysses*, though set in 1904—well before the 1916 Easter Uprising in Dublin—was actually published eighteen years after the events of the novel are dated. Naturally enough, the political circumstances surrounding the time of *Ulysses*’s publication were very different. When Joyce’s wife Nora was visiting Galway with their children in April 1922, barely two months after the book’s publication, she got caught up in the violent conflict between Free State troops and the IRA that followed Eamon de Valera’s refusal to accept the agreement ratified by the Dail on 7 January 1922, through which Ireland would come formally into being as a self-governing entity with Dominion status. Nora and the children fled to Dublin on a train that was fired upon by both factions, with Joyce in Paris attempting desperately to arrange to send an aeroplane to Galway to evacuate them, and all of this would only have heightened the author’s disinclination to revisit the fraught circumstances of his homeland.²⁷ When the Irish Minister of Information asked him around this time if he “intended to return to Ireland” after the change of government, Joyce replied laconically: “not for the present.”²⁸

In this sense, Enda Duffy’s likening the “shock tactics” of *Ulysses* to the “terrorism” of an IRA bomb, or his classification of *Ulysses* as “the text of

²⁶ Saint-Amour, *Tense Future*, 28, 183, 227.

²⁷ Richard Ellmann, *James Joyce*, 2nd edn (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), 549.

²⁸ James Joyce, letter to Stanislaus Joyce, 20 March 1922, in *Letters of James Joyce*, Volume III, ed. Richard Ellmann (London: Faber, 1966), 61.

Ireland's independence," seems only partially useful.²⁹ What Sarah Cole has called the "promise, as well as the limits, of enchanted violence" that is apparent in W. B. Yeats's poem "Easter 1916" is entirely absent from *Ulysses*, and indeed by back-dating his novel to this pre-Revolutionary period Joyce represents a state of something like bathetic anti-climax, one that eschews both the "potential cataclysm of violence" and the prospect, as in Yeats's romanticization of the Easter Uprising, of apocalyptic renewal.³⁰ There is also perhaps a subtle distinction to be made between Jameson's description of *Ulysses* as "an epic set in a city under foreign military occupation" and Ezra Pound's comment in February 1922 on how Joyce had "presented Ireland under British domination."³¹ Pound is emphasizing how Ireland has been permeated by British culture (language, consciousness) rather than by the more overt instruments of state repression, and it is the subversion of British ways of thinking rather than its military might that is the main concern of *Ulysses*. It is true that the problematic relation of Dublin provincialism to a classical or modernist centre is one overarching preoccupation of the novel, but when Joyce ascribed to his fictional alter ego Stephen Hero his own perception of Ireland as the "afterthought of Europe," or when the author suggested in his 1907 lecture "Ireland, Island of Saints and Sages" that Ireland was "a country destined by God to be the everlasting caricature of the serious world," it is by no means self-evident that he was thereby implicitly recommending his native land should aspire instead towards a more elevated national status.³² From an artistic point of view, this apprehension of Ireland's backwardness, its spatiotemporal position as an "afterthought," fitted well with Joyce's interest in tracing lines of continuity between local and planetary geographies, and it was part of the author's aesthetic design to seek both personal and geographical distance on such proximate landscapes.

²⁹ Enda Duffy, *The Subaltern Ulysses* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 10, 1.

³⁰ Sarah Cole, *At the Violet Hour: Modernism and Violence in England and Ireland* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 148, 134.

³¹ Fredric Jameson, *A Singular Modernity: Essays on the Ontology of the Present* (London: Verso, 2002), 103; Duffy, *Subaltern Ulysses*, 18.

³² James Joyce, *Stephen Hero*, ed. Theodore Spencer, rev. edn (London: Granada, 1977), 52; James Joyce, "Ireland, Island of Saints and Sages" (1907), in *The Critical Writings of James Joyce*, ed. Ellsworth Mason and Richard Ellmann (London: Faber, 1969), 168.

Saikat Majumdar's work on ways in which banality becomes its own positive aesthetic force is relevant here, with Majumdar usefully drawing a parallel between Katherine Mansfield's short stories and Joyce's *Dubliners* as texts in which "colonial disempowerment" becomes a "groundbreaking narrative mode." According to Majumdar, both Mansfield and Joyce are interested in chronicling "the affective texture of life far from the metropolis," and indeed their narratives gain resonance from this sense of spatial distance.³³ In "Ireland, Island of Saints and Sages," Joyce mocked the narrowly conceived jingoism of the Gaelic League, whose members insist on writing "to each other in Irish," leaving "the poor postman, unable to read the address." Instead, Joyce flatly declared "[a]ncient Ireland" to be "dead just as ancient Egypt is dead," and this again suggests how he conceives of Ireland as an actively oppositional force in only a wary and limited fashion.³⁴ It is true that Joyce exposes the power plays involved in how the British exploited Ireland in a top-down manner for colonial purposes, and all of his work is engaged at some level in remapping his native land in relation to the rest of the globe, thereby producing a counternarrative of cosmic cartography. In this sense, the provision in Joyce's fiction of what Jon Hegglund calls "a range of scales," something made explicit through Stephen Dedalus's positioning of himself in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* in relation to ever expanding concentric circles—"Stephen Dedalus / Class of Elements / Clongowes Wood College / Sallins / County Kildare / Ireland / Europe / The World / The Universe"—is epitomized as well by the trajectory of *Ulysses*, which traces an arc between the local and the planetary.³⁵ Taking their term from *Finnegans Wake*—"Fullstoppers and semicolonials, hybrids and lubberds"—Derek Attridge and Marjorie Howes argued in 2000 for a "semicolonial Joyce," suggesting that his writings "evinced a complex and ambivalent set of attitudes, not reducible to a simple anticolonialism but very far from expressing approval of the colonial organizations and methods under which Ireland had suffered during a long history of oppression." Elements of this capacity to think

³³ Saikat Majumdar, *Prose of the World: Modernism and the Banality of Empire* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), 7, 69.

³⁴ Joyce, "Ireland, Island of Saints and Sages," 156, 173.

³⁵ Jon Hegglund, "Ulysses and the Rhetoric of Cartography," *Twentieth Century Literature* 49.2 (Summer 2003): 184; James Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916; rpt, London: Penguin, 1960), 15-16.

“constantly in terms of oppositions and that which dissolves (or reverses) oppositions” resonate, I would suggest, through the antipodean dimensions that provide a creative infrastructure for Joyce’s fictional narratives.³⁶

Despite all the scholarship around the turn of the twenty-first century on Joyce and postcolonialism, it is noticeable how Australia and New Zealand have generally been excluded from this equation. Karen R. Lawrence’s collection *Transcultural Joyce* contains essays on Joyce’s relation to Latin America and India, for example, but nothing at all on Australasia, while Vincent J. Cheng claims, in simple representational terms, that Joyce reverses the “derogatory analogies” commonplace throughout the nineteenth century, whereby the Irish were linked to Maoris, Aborigines, and other “barbarian” races.³⁷ My argument here, however, is that antipodean parallax functions in *Ulysses* less as a thematic than as a formal principle, through which alternate spatiotemporal orbits are brought into focus, and that this realignment of space and time crucially affects the ways in which we understand the novels’ universe. Rather than positing an administrative discourse at the centre of English modernism, whereby (in John Marx’s formulation) subjugated countries in “Africa and Asia were assimilated into Britain and simultaneously excluded from it,” it might be suggested that Joyce evokes a virtual antipodean space to reimagine the world in terms not of linear prefiguration and fulfilment, but according to a system of spatial and temporal juxtaposition where transverse patterns criss-cross the local environment.³⁸ Hence, through this parallactic alignment of contrary vectors, Dublin on 16 June 1904 becomes a microcosm of the spinning globe. Kaya Ganguly has commented in general terms on “the dearth of rigorous theorizations of time within mainstream postcolonial criticism,” but the radical force of *Ulysses* lies precisely in the way it systematically interrogates what Ganguly calls “the normative temporality of clock and calendar associated with

³⁶ Marjorie Howes and Derek Attridge, “Introduction,” in *Semicolonial Joyce*, ed. Derek Attridge and Marjorie Howes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 2-3; James Joyce, *Finnegans Wake* (London: Faber, 1939), 152.

³⁷ Karen R. Lawrence, ed., *Transcultural Joyce* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Vincent J. Cheng, *Joyce, Race, and Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 27, 200.

³⁸ John Marx, *The Modernist Novel and the Decline of Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 10.

Western modernity.”³⁹ In this way, antipodean parallax can be seen as embedded within the crucial structures and planetary interfaces that *Ulysses* categorically outlines.

Jameson remarked that another aspect of *Ulysses*’s “new kind of temporality” involves the way it incorporates night, sleep and “dream material” into the diurnal rhythm, drawing on a Freudian model whereby “events of the previous day” become the starting point for interactions between the conscious and subconscious mind.⁴⁰ Molly’s monologue in the novel’s final chapter, with its startling absence of punctuation, thus epitomizes the way in which thoughts, like words, are all jumbled together. There are also geographical correlatives to this stylistic heterogeneity, with Molly dreaming of a former lover—“he went to India he was to write the voyages those men have to make to the ends of the world and back” (627)—and noting how she and her husband sleep with their bodies facing in opposite directions: “never embracing me except sometimes when hes asleep the wrong end of me not knowing I suppose who he has any man thatd kiss a womans bottom Id throw my hat at him” (639). The point here is to correlate what might appear sexually “unnatural” with the rotation of the globe, with Molly remarking on how “theyre just getting up in China now” (642). Joyce himself explained how this “Penelope” section of the novel “turns like the huge earthball slowly surely and evenly round and round spinning, its four cardinal points being the female breasts, arse, womb and cunt expressed by the words *because*, *bottom* (in all senses bottom button, bottom of the class, bottom of the sea, bottom of his heart), *woman*, *yes*.”⁴¹ Besides the explicit association between the female human body and planetary rotation, it is no surprise to find Joyce here drawing such attention to the multiple meanings of *bottom*, since that deflationary impulse, mixing sexuality with an ontology of burlesque, is one of the compulsive forces driving *Ulysses*. Gilbert Seldes described *Ulysses* as a “burlesque epic” in a review shortly after the book’s publication in 1922, and its burlesque style of modernism speaks not only to the

³⁹ Kaya Ganguly, “Temporality and Postcolonial Critique,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Postcolonial Literary Studies*, ed. Neil Lazarus (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 177, 162.

⁴⁰ Fredric Jameson, *The Modernist Papers* (London: Verso, 2007), 179.

⁴¹ James Joyce, letter to Frank Budgen, Aug. 1921, in *Letters of James Joyce*, ed. Gilbert, 170.

alleged obscenity that was one of the most controversial aspects of Joyce's work, but also to its explicitly global circumference, whereby the reader is drawn, as in Cummings's theoretical justification of the art form, to see "all the way around" particular objects.⁴² In the second episode of Joyce's novel, Stephen Dedalus responds to Mr. Deasy's question about "the proudest word you will ever hear from an Englishman's mouth" by replying: "That on his empire ... the sun never sets" (25), and while this is obviously relevant to the theme of British imperialism, it also speaks to the novel's global trajectory of multiple decentrings, both geographically and rhetorically. This process of unmooring the English language from its nationalistic roots through stylistic mash-ups of various kinds becomes analogous to similar dislocations across terrestrial space.

In "Ireland, Island of Saints and Sages," Joyce paid special attention to Vergilius Solivagus, the translator of Ptolemy, who "[i]n his tract on geography ... held the theory, which was subversive at that time, that the earth was round, and for such audacity was declared a sower of heresy by Popes Boniface and Zacharias." Joyce obviously empathized with this heretical scholar whose identification of the "round" globe incurred papal wrath, and it is also notable that this essay on Ireland, which contemporary scholars have tended to treat in an exclusively postcolonial context, has a more distinctive global remit. Joyce does remark here on the anomaly whereby "English historians ... salute the memory of George Washington and profess themselves well content with the progress of an independent, almost socialist, republic in Australia while they treat the Irish separatists as madmen." At the same time, he expresses scepticism about the polarizing aspects of national emancipation, noting how "[o]ur civilization is a vast fabric, in which the most diverse elements are mingled," while in other essays he expresses interest in how Ireland might be remapped differently in relation to the rest of the world.⁴³ He suggests, for example, that Aran might become a new "transatlantic port" facilitating lines of connection between Galway and Canada, while commenting on how the New Fenians had

⁴² Gilbert Seldes, "Ulysses," *The Nation*, 30 August 1922, 211; Cummings, "You Aren't Mad, Am I?," 127.

⁴³ Joyce, "Ireland, Island of Saints and Sages," 160, 163, 165.

“established a direct steamship service between Ireland and France.”⁴⁴ One of the earliest pieces by Joyce that has survived, an essay written in 1898 when he was a student in Dublin, expresses a sense of fatalism about the “subjugation” of “race over race” by relating it specifically to an antipodean context: “Among human families the white man is the predestined conqueror. The negro has given way before him, and the red men have been driven by him out of their lands and homes. In far New Zealand the sluggish Maoris, in conceded sloth, permit him to portion out and possess the land of their fathers.”⁴⁵ Though of course this essay predates his years of artistic maturity, it shows Joyce associating colonial domination with a certain “predestined” quality, and it was precisely this equation of conquest with a fatalistic, cyclical dimension that informs his remarks in “Ireland, Island of Saints and Sages” on how it is “rather naïve to heap insults on England for her misdeeds in Ireland,” since “the Englishman has done in Ireland only what the Belgian is doing today in the Congo Free State, and what the Nipponese dwarf will do tomorrow in other lands.”⁴⁶ Joyce’s political commentary is marked in general by a lack of faith in any prospect of redemptive purity or political agency that might lead to a utopian state of emancipation.

Joyce was also acquainted with New Zealand in later life through the experiences of his sister, Margaret, who emigrated from Ireland through joining the Sisters of Mercy, after Joyce himself had urged her to “do something really heroic and witness at the uttermost parts of the earth.” Margaret arrived in New Zealand’s South Island in 1910, and indeed she never returned to Ireland. But her brother always kept in touch, sending her an urgent telegram expressing concern after an earthquake had hit New Zealand in 1929 and corresponding all through the 1930s. As always with Joyce, there was a self-interested quality to his personal loyalty, and his letters included a request for Sister Mary Gertrude, as she then was, to send him the Maori words of the haka chanted at the beginning of each

⁴⁴ James Joyce, “The Mirage of the Fisherman of Aran: England’s Safety Valve in Case of War” (1912), in *Critical Writings*, 235, and “Fenianism: The Last Fenian” (1907), in *Critical Writings*, 191.

⁴⁵ James Joyce, “[Force],” in *Critical Writings*, 20-21.

⁴⁶ Joyce, “Ireland, Island of Saints and Sages,” 166.

All Blacks rugby game, together with an English translation, so that he could incorporate them into *Finnegans Wake*.⁴⁷ In this last work, Joyce characteristically merges the Duke of Wellington into Wellington, capital of New Zealand, as he punningly conflates war with the rugby haka:

Let us propel us for the frey of the fray! Us, us, beraddy!

Ko Niutirenis hauru leish! A lala! Ko Niutirenis haururu laleish! Ala lala! The Wullingthund sturm is breaking. The sound of maormaoring The Wellingthund sturm waxes fuercilier.⁴⁸

As Attridge observed, Joyce's puns coercively "enforce" rather than invite ambiguity, rendering a choice between alternative meanings "impossible," and by relating the Duke of Wellington here to his Maori counterpart, Joyce imposes an idiom of burlesque that demystifies the heroic pretensions of the English soldier and politician.⁴⁹ Hence the various antipodean references in *Finnegans Wake*—through which, for example, Tasmania is transposed into "Tosmania" and "van Demon's land"—speak to Joyce's figurative conception of a world upside down, one where opposites are brought disconcertingly into alignment.⁵⁰

Part of these global dimensions to Joyce's work relate to a universalizing impetus that is specifically related to a catholicizing idiom. Stephen Dedalus says in *Ulysses* that he is a "servant of two masters," the "imperial British state" and "the holy Roman catholic and apostolic church," and in his eyes the latter's ritualistic Latin—"et unam sanctam catholicam et apostolicam ecclesiam" (17)—betokens an all-embracing universality that cuts against the sectional interests of the British state. There are many references, particularly in *Finnegans Wake*, to China, India, and other Eastern cultures, with the "Sandhyas" chant that begins

⁴⁷ David G. Wright, "Joyce and New Zealand: Biography, Censorship, and Influence," in *A Companion to James Joyce*, ed. Richard Brown (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008), 224, 226.

⁴⁸ Joyce, *Finnegans Wake*, 335.

⁴⁹ Derek Attridge, "Unpacking the Portmanteau, or Who's Afraid of *Finnegans Wake*?" in *On Puns*, ed. Jonathan Culler (Oxford: Blackwell, 1985), 141.

⁵⁰ Joyce, *Finnegans Wake*, 416, 56.

the final section alluding to the Sanskrit word meaning the twilight of dawn, and “sanscreed” oscillating punningly between Sanskrit and sans (without) creed.⁵¹ But the Australasian dimension has a more pointed resonance than this, since it evokes a world that is always on the point of being inverted, of spinning on its axis. Coming across a stand of “glazed apples” on the Dublin street, Bloom thinks “Australians they must be this time of year” (125), and though of course this appears to be a throwaway remark, nothing in *Ulysses* is unplanned and this image implies the antipodean consciousness that underlies its narrative structure. Later, during the Wandering Rocks section, Bloom watches “a typesetter neatly distributing type. Quickly he does it. Must require some practice that. mangiD kcirtaP” (101). Bloom goes on to relate this inversion of Patrick Dignam’s name to the reading of Hebrew—“Poor papa with his haggadah book, reading backwards with his finger to me” (101)—but again this epitomizes the structure of backwardness that is endemic to *Ulysses*. We see this process of inversion again at Paddy Dignam’s funeral, where opposites collide, both metaphorically and topographically, with Bloom’s contemplation of how “In the midst of death we are in life. Both ends meet” (89) being mirrored in the confusion about the direction of Dignam’s corpse: “The mutes bore the coffin into the chapel. Which end is his head?” (85). In *Ulysses*’s first chapter, there is a citation of Whitman’s line from “Song of Myself”—“Do I contradict myself? Very well then, I contradict myself” (14)—and this mode of systematic contradiction is commensurate with a burlesque sensibility in which spirit and matter are always comically interpenetrating each other. It fits as well with the immersion of this book in music, with references in the text to (among others) Dowland, Handel, Rossini, Liszt, and Wagner, and musical notation rendered typographically through the transcription of songs in the “Ithaca” section (566-67). For Bloom, this musical round becomes emblematic of the roundness of the planet: “passing slowly, quickly, evenly, round and round and round the rim of a round and round precipitous globe” (557). Indeed, the idea of return that is foundational to the myth of Homer’s *Odyssey* is also embodied in the round of song within Joyce’s reworking of Homeric narrative. Listening to a minuet from Mozart’s *Don*

⁵¹ Joyce, *Finnegans Wake*, 593, 27. On Joyce’s representation of Asia, see Eishiro Ito, “‘United States of Asia’: James Joyce and Asia,” in *A Companion to James Joyce*, ed. Brown, 201-2, 212.

Giovanni, Bloom thinks of how “There’s music everywhere” and “Mere fact of music shows you are” (231).

There is also a consistent focus throughout *Ulysses* not just on telling the time but on mapping time, on the indication of how chronometry fluctuates from one time zone of the world to the next. Time stalks Bloom’s day, from the scene in Davy Byrne’s—“Pub clock five minutes fast. Time going on. Hands moving” (141)—to the appearance in “Nighttown” of a character called “The Timepiece” saying, repeatedly, “Cuckoo” (383). Bloom also thinks to himself in the “Calypso” section of a book by “sir Robert Ball” that, as we find out when it is referred to later in “Ithaca,” is entitled *The Story of the Heavens*, with Bloom having a personal copy in his library (582). The first time this is mentioned, Bloom thinks to himself: “Fascinating little book that is of sir Robert Ball’s. Parallax. I never exactly understood. There’s a priest. Could ask him. Par it’s Greek: parallel, parallax.” He also links this to how “Timeball on the ballastoffice is down” and to “Dunskink time” (126), with this temporal thread taken up again in Bloom’s mind a few pages later: “Now that I come to think of it that ball falls at Greenwich time. It’s the clock is worked by an electric wire from Dunskink” (137). According to geographical lines of longitude, Dublin time as recorded at Dunsink Observatory should strictly speaking have been twenty-five minutes behind Greenwich, and the imposition of homogenous London time upon its colonial neighbour testifies to the way in which, as Andrew Gibson observes, Ball’s work is “a Unionist text” that seeks to impose a centralized measure of imperial order.⁵² There are also derogatory references here to “Joe Chamberlain”—Joseph Chamberlain, an arch proponent of “Greater Britain beyond the seas,” was Colonial Secretary from 1895 to 1903—and the popular hostility to British imperialism is evident in cries here of “Up the Boers” (131).⁵³ Although the specific position of Ireland within a colonial political context is clear enough, the many references to parallax and astronomy later in the novel—

⁵² Andrew Gibson, *Joyce’s Revenge: History, Politics, and Aesthetics in Ulysses* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 229.

⁵³ The idea of reconstructing empire within a constitutional framework of “Greater Britain,” through which the constituencies of individual nations would be represented in the Westminster parliament, was much debated towards the end of the nineteenth century. See Duncan Bell, *The Idea of Greater Britain: Empire and the Future of World Order, 1860-1900* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007).

“Parallax stalks behind and goads them” (338), “What is the parallax of the subsolar ecliptic of Alderbaran?” (398)—addresses a planetary condition in which measurements of space and time vary according to the observer’s global perspective.

This chronometric theme is taken up most assiduously in the “Ithaca” chapter, which some readers have found the book’s most difficult section—Jameson called it “boring,” and Bersani “relentlessly tedious”—but which actually speaks in quite precise and poignant ways to the planetary framework within which *Ulysses* is deliberately situated.⁵⁴ This section starts by charting the “parallel courses” (544) of Bloom and Stephen across Dublin, thereby re-introducing the theme of parallel and parallax, and it goes on to explicate this environment in terms of various cartographies of time and space. The author chronicles how Bloom had given Molly a clock to interest her in “the principle of the pendulum, exemplified in bob, wheelgear and regulator, the translation in terms of human or social regulation of the various positions of clockwise moveable indicators on an unmoving dial” (569), and it scales up these domestic timepieces to cosmic “constellations”:

of Sirius (alpha in Canis Maior) 10 lightyears (57,000,000,000,000 miles) distant and in volume 900 times the dimension of our planet: of Arcturus: of the precession of equinoxes: of Orion with belt and sextuple sun theta and nebula in which 100 of our solar systems could be contained: of moribund and of nascent new stars such as Nova in 1901: of our system plunging towards the constellation of Hercules: of the parallax or parallactic drift of so-called fixed stars, in reality evermoving wanderers from immeasurably remote eons to infinitely remote futures in comparison with which the years, threescore and ten, of allotted human life formed a parenthesis of infinitesimal brevity. (573)

This radical displacement of temporal scale is mirrored in an equivalent displacement of spatial scale, through which Bloom’s native city is related to the

⁵⁴ Jameson, *Modernist Papers*, 137; Bersani, *Culture of Redemption*, 177.

engulfing nature of the planet. Bloom is described here as a “waterlover,” and, so we are told, what “in water” he most admires is:

Its universality: its democratic equality and constancy to its nature in seeking its own level: its vastness in the ocean of Mercator’s projection: its unplumbed profundity in the Sundam trench of the Pacific exceeding 8000 fathoms: the restlessness of its waves and surface particles visiting in turn all points of its seaboard: the independence of its units: the variability of states of sea: its hydrostatic quiescence in calm: its hydrokinetic turgidity in neap and spring tides: its subsidence after devastation: its sterility in the circumpolar icecaps, arctic and antarctic: its climatic and commercial significance: its preponderance of 3 to 1 over the dry land of the globe: its indisputable hegemony extending in square leagues over all the region below the subequatorial tropic of Capricorn... (549)

The references here to the Southern Hemisphere (“tropic of Capricorn”) are another example of Joyce’s idiom of reversal, through which the narrative doubles back upon itself. By reinscribing this modernist scene backwards, Joyce not only elucidates the arbitrary quality of spatiotemporal measurement but also implies how all linear models effectively involve retrospective projection, so that delineation of space and time always begin paradoxically from their end point and only then postulate a beginning. At the end of *Ulysses*’s first section, we witness Stephen looking at a ship setting sail for home, “homing, upstream, silently moving, a silent ship,” with the protagonist’s retrospective glance here—“He turned his face over a shoulder, rere regardant” (42)—encapsulating the backward vision that underlies this more extensive trajectory of departure and return. Indeed, if *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* is indebted artistically to the modernist notion of epiphany—an experience outside the flow of time that is attainable only through an aesthetic stasis—then *Ulysses* might be said to work through this contrary style of “rere regardant,” within which the flow of time is embedded within narrative representation, with all art necessarily looking backward.⁵⁵ Bloom’s fantasies about travelling east across the International Date

⁵⁵ On what made “the creation of the utopian epiphany so central for modernism,” see Andreas Huyssen, *Twilight Memories: Marking Time in a Culture of Amnesia* (New York: Routledge, 1995), 100.

Line are consequently demystified by the planetary condition of a novel that, as Adam Barrows remarks, implicitly challenges the notion that temporal deviation and disjunction are purely Eastern phenomena, with the result that “Joyce reappropriates the radical temporal instability and contingency of the date line from its Eastern location and resituates it at the heart of modern Dublin.”⁵⁶ And what is true of the Date Line is even more true of the equator: by transposing longitude to latitude, North to South, Joyce effectively turns the world on its head, thereby revealing the burlesque impetus that lies at the heart of his version of cosmic modernism.

Justin Kiczek has written of the “double star” effect in *Ulysses*, where astronomical imagery serves to “shatter the illusion of our ‘centerness,’” and Joseph Valente has discussed “the usefulness of parallax” across a wide range of Joycean themes, embracing reversals of gender as well as spatial deterritorialization and the psychological displacement associated with “burlesque routine.”⁵⁷ Though “Ithaca” is formulated as a “catechism,” as Joyce himself put it, he was also particularly keen when writing this episode that it “should be read by some person who is a physicist, mathematician and astronomer,” and he was less concerned about “printer’s errors” than with scientific accuracy.⁵⁸ To suggest the question and answer format here resembles “a police interrogation,” as Duffy suggests, is to reduce this section of *Ulysses* to an episode in domestic politics, when its larger purpose is in fact to expose Dublin to much broader system of “surveillance,” one in which, as Joyce said in a letter to Frank Budgen, “[a]ll events are resolved into their cosmic, physical, psychical etc. equivalents.”⁵⁹ Australian critic S. L. Goldberg was much more perceptive on what he called the “cold, catechistic, ‘objective’ style of ‘Ithaca,’” suggesting how this sense of distance was a way “of suggesting obliquely what

⁵⁶ Adam Barrows, “Eastward Journeys: Literary Crossings of the International Date Line,” *Modern Language Quarterly* 73.2 (June 2012): 173.

⁵⁷ Justin Kiczek, “Joyce in Transit: The ‘Double Star’ Effect of *Ulysses*,” *James Joyce Quarterly* 48.2 (Winter 2011): 303; Joseph Valente, *James Joyce and the Problem of Social Justice: Negotiating Sexual and Colonial Difference* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 203.

⁵⁸ James Joyce, letter to Frank Budgen, February 1921, in *Letters*, ed. Gilbert, 159; letter to Harriet Shaw Weaver, 6 December 1921, in *Letters*, ed. Gilbert, 178.

⁵⁹ Duffy, *Subaltern Ulysses*, 181; Joyce, letter to Budgen, in *Letters*, ed. Gilbert, 159.

lies beyond accepted beliefs and attitudes,” thereby indicating the parallel structures of human life across many different times and places and hence “the *imaginative* propriety of such apparently non-imaginative commentary,” where the very absence of empathy encompasses its own creative integrity.⁶⁰ Though his characteristically Leavisite comments on Bloom’s “sane and mature spirit” (as opposed to Stephen’s “immaturity”) now appear very dated, Goldberg was one of the few twentieth-century critics to recognize how “Ithaca” is “one of the most moving sections of the book,” with its emotional impact deriving precisely from the sense of distance through which the idea of parallax that “haunts Bloom during the day” is expanded into a more abstract system through which, as the author himself put it, Bloom and Stephen “become heavenly bodies, wanderers like the stars at which they gaze.”⁶¹ It would be easy enough, of course, to indict Goldberg’s “classical temper” as an ethnocentric Western conception, but Joyce’s own partiality for “Ithaca”—as he wrote to Robert McAlmon, “I like the episode myself. I find it of a tranquilising spectrality”—arose from the way in which it shifts the localized narrative of *Ulysses* into another register.⁶² With Molly’s monologue in the final “Penelope” section Joyce attempted, as he said, “to depict the earth which is prehuman and presumably posthuman,” and similarly in this penultimate “Ithaca” he displaces his characters into a spatial and temporal orbit framed by the specter of parallax, where the diurnal round is correlated with “posthuman” planetary spheres.⁶³

As Attridge has observed, one reason early readers of *Ulysses* found the book so difficult to “conceptualize” was that they were “baffled by its unprecedented scale, its lack of an obvious centre.”⁶⁴ Although Joyce said as early as his 1902 essay on James Clarence Mangan that the “life of the poet” involves “taking into its centre the life that surrounds it and flinging it abroad again amid planetary

⁶⁰ S. L. Goldberg, *The Classical Temper: A Study of James Joyce’s Ulysses* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1961), 189, 208, 196.

⁶¹ Goldberg, *The Classical Temper*, 117, 78, 291, 153; Joyce, letter to Budgen, in *Letters*, ed. Gilbert, 159.

⁶² James Joyce, letter to Robert McAlmon, 6 November 1921, in *Letters*, ed. Gilbert, 176.

⁶³ James Joyce, letter to Harriet Shaw Weaver, 8 February 1922, in *Letters*, ed. Gilbert, 180.

⁶⁴ Derek Attridge, “Judging Joyce,” *Modernism/modernity* 6.3 (1999): 28.

music,” more conventional twentieth-century readings of Joyce preferred to emphasize his more domestic traits.⁶⁵ The “humanist and empiricist readings” grounded in Ellmann’s “powerfully orthodox” biography led directly to the consideration of Joyce’s relation to Irish national politics in the work of Ellmann’s student, Dominic Manganiello, and then on to the postcolonial treatments of his putatively oppositional relation to the British state.⁶⁶ Ellmann somewhat sentimentally empathized with Bloom’s expressed resentment of “violence and intolerance in any shape or form” (525), yet the architectonic structure of *Ulysses*, involving “the parallax or parallactic drift of so-called fixed stars” (573), is only in part Bloom’s book, and the colder astronomical eye that invokes “the independent synchronous discourses” of Galileo, Herschel and others (575) is also crucial to how this book positions itself in relation to what it calls “the proper perpetual motion of the earth through everchanging tracks of neverchanging space” (606).

Given this global circumference, *Ulysses* positions itself directly against polemical or unidirectional positions, with its first section set in Martello Tower on Sandymount Strand outside Dublin introducing, in Michael Taussig’s words, “a seascape of mind flowing in and out of Western history in which the movement of the sea onto the shore, immense, restless, and mesmerizing, is the movement of the unconscious mind sifting images.”⁶⁷ For Taussig, this representation of the sea evokes “the spectacular ‘return’ of the archaic within modernity,” and this makes *Ulysses* come to seem more like *Finnegans Wake*, a work organized more overtly around an archipelagic principle whereby land is subsumed within a planetary flow—“Procreated on the ultimate ysland of Yreland in the encyclical yrish archipelago”—leading to “the regeneration of all man by affusion of water.”⁶⁸ Ariela Freedman has commented usefully on “evocations of water and waste in *Ulysses*—inflows and outflows,” including its

⁶⁵ James Joyce, “James Clarence Mangan” (1902), in *Critical Writings*, 82.

⁶⁶ Derek Attridge and Daniel Ferrer, “Introduction: Highly Continental Evenements,” in *Post-Structuralist Joyce: Essays from the French* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 6.

⁶⁷ Michael Taussig, “The Beach (A Critical Fantasy),” *Critical Inquiry* 26 (Winter 2000): 251.

⁶⁸ Taussig, “The Beach,” 271; Joyce, *Finnegans Wake*, 605, 606.

treatment of water supply and water closets in early-twentieth-century Dublin—but the sea shadows *Ulysses* in a more all-encompassing manner, with Bloom thinking during the “Eumaeus” section of “the enormous dimensions of the water about the globe, suffice to say that, as a casual glance at the map revealed, it covered fully three fourths of it.”⁶⁹ During this exchange with “a superannuated old salt,” Bloom wonders why he now stares “obliviously” at the sea: “Possibly he had tried to find out the secret for himself, floundering up and down the antipodes and all that sort of thing and over and under, well, not exactly under, tempting the fates. And the odds were twenty to nil there was really no secret about it at all” (515). Ulysses was of course himself a sailor, traversing the world’s seas, and Bloom here advances the novel’s project of radical desublimation through demystifying the customary romance of the sea and implying instead how its tidal patterns form part of the fluctuating process of everyday life. Rather than positing a romantic dichotomy between land and ocean, *Ulysses* suggests how this oceanic impulse becomes internalized within regular quotidian processes. In this sense, the “antipodes” cited here also becomes normalized: for Joyce, the upside down state, both of space and of time, becomes within this planetary circumference an everyday condition. Hélène Cixous described Joyce as “the Jesuit in reverse and hence the right way round as well,” but this mode of facing both ways becomes crucial to Joyce’s aesthetic ambit in every sense.⁷⁰ Rather than being merely a “Jesuit in reverse,” he imagines the world backwards, gaining new purchase through the manner in which he turns it inside out.

On a 1923 manuscript page of *Finnegans Wake*, Joyce scrawled the words “Hypotaxis” and “Parataxis”: the first word means lines “subordinate in construction,” and the second “the placing of propositions or clauses one after another without indicating by connecting words the relation (of co-ordination or subordination) between them.” This paratactical idiom is obvious enough in *Finnegans Wake*, where orthodox grammar is countermanded, but it also suffuses *Ulysses*, whose narrative style involves what David Hayman has called

⁶⁹ Ariela Freedman, “Did it Flow? Bridging Aesthetics and History in Joyce’s *Ulysses*,” *Modernism/modernity* 13.1 (2006): 854.

⁷⁰ Hélène Cixous, “Joyce: The (R)use of Writing,” in *Post-Structuralist Joyce*, ed. Attridge and Ferrer, 21.

“discontinuity” and “disequilibrium,” rhetorical structures that work constantly “to counter the equilibrating impulse at work within our minds” and thus to stack up “contradictory as well as complementary meanings.”⁷¹ The antipodean impulse, in other words, is integral rather than marginal to *Ulysses*, and indeed to Joyce’s work generally, involved as it is in a constant spiral of syntactic, spatial and temporal reversals. In *Finnegans Wake* this bathetic process is epitomized in the “Ondt and the Gracehoper” song, whose final couplet involves punningly transposing space and time into new configurations:

Your genus its worldwide, your spacest sublime!
But, Holy Saltmartin, why can’t you beat time?

The idea of “beating” time here is transposed from a Faustian bargain (transcending time) to a musical discourse (following the “beat” or rhythm of time).⁷² This in turn corroborates the *Wake*’s planetary round—“The urb it orbs,” “in that eoropean end meets ind”—and its regenerative cycle, whereby protagonists Shem and Shaun are continually recreating themselves in both punning and genealogical forms: “Time after time. The sehm asnuh.”⁷³ The antipodean dimension of *Finnegans Wake* manifests itself as the level of the individual word, through which an overturning of rhetorical units betokens the systematic inversions that signify Joyce’s textual apparatus of a “commodius vicus of recirculation,” where the end spirals back to the beginning.⁷⁴

In this way, Joyce’s burlesque modernism speaks not just to the power plays of empire but to the rotation of the planet. The allusions to Australia and New Zealand in *Finnegans Wake* evoke not merely another regional version of modernism, but a universalist perspective where every planetary situation becomes susceptible of reversal. One reason postcolonial approaches to Joyce have enjoyed only limited success is that the deliberately universalist compass of his work tends to resist categorizing political and psychological power in relation

⁷¹ David Hayman, “James Joyce, Paratactician,” *Contemporary Literature* 26.2 (Summer 1985): 155, 172-3.

⁷² Joyce, *Finnegans Wake*, 419.

⁷³ Joyce, *Finnegans Wake*, 598, 620.

⁷⁴ Joyce, *Finnegans Wake*, 3.

to any kind of fixed binary opposition between domination and subordination. Instead, Joyce's novels explore a systematic cycle of reversals where positions are constantly being exchanged, and hence the idiom of antipodean burlesque can be seen as a structural principle informing his work. Arguing against the conventional notion of modernity as involving linear "progress," Bruno Latour suggested that the very notion of "Copernican revolutions, epistemological breaks, epistemic ruptures" involves a contradiction in terms, where the notion of time as an "irreversible arrow" implies an elision of the very idea of the past that the notion of rupture itself signifies.⁷⁵ You cannot have rupture, in other words, without something being ruptured, so that all questions of modernity necessarily involve a double bind. *Ulysses* addresses precisely this kind of paradox, where the spatial and temporal parallax bringing together different times and places effectively creates a global imaginary, a world in which past and present, like proximate and distant, creatively interfere with each other, and where more domesticated versions of local history are turned provocatively on their head.

⁷⁵ Bruno Latour, *We Have Never Been Modern*, trans. Catherine Porter (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 68-9.