2003

Signs of Intelligence: The Self-Aware Textuality of James Joyce

Andrew V. McFeaters
THE FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

SIGNS OF INTELLIGENCE:
THE SELF-AWARE TEXTUALITY OF JAMES JOYCE

By

ANDREW V. MCFEATERS

A Thesis submitted to the
Department of English
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

Degree Awarded:
Fall Semester, 2003

Copyright © 2003
Andrew V. McFeaters
All Rights Reserved
The members of the Committee approve the thesis of Andrew V. McFeaters defended on August 20, 2003.

_____________________
S.E. Gontarski
Professor Directing Thesis

_____________________
R.M. Berry
Committee Member

_____________________
Andrew Epstein
Committee Member

Approved:

_____________________
Hunt Hawkins, Chairperson, Department of English

_____________________
Donald Foss, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences

The Office of Graduate Studies has verified and approved the above named committee members.
For my parents,
who gave me the freedom
to explore who I am.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. METEMPSYCHOSIS OF WATER AND WORD</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. THE DELEUZIAN MUSEYROOM</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. INTERMISUNDERSTANDINGS OF ANTICOLLABORATORS</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. LANGUAGE GAMES AND WAKEAN DIALECTICS</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCLUSION</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFERENCES</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABSTRACT

A discourse on the language of James Joyce’s *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*, this thesis engages the roles of particular words in these texts for the purpose of demonstrating Joyce’s later poetics. Often these words communicate their own senses, perform their own definitions, and these senses and definitions amount to the subversion of stable meaning. Ultimately these words are a part of language games and Wakean dialectics which constantly outmaneuver reader expectations while simultaneously promoting those expectations. In a manner of speaking, these texts read their readers and, for every hermeneutic a reader attempts to graft onto these texts, the texts say with a smirk, “Yes. I’ve thought of that already. Guess again.”
INTRODUCTION

In his “Ulysses Gramophone: Here Say Yes In Joyce” Jacques Derrida speaks of *Ulysses* as an “overpotentialized text,” as a text which has “already [. . .] anticipated [. . .] the scene about academic competence and the ingenuity of metadiscourse” (281). *Ulysses* anticipates its own exegeses, anticipates whatever hermeneutics are developed to systematize and contain its meaning productions, and, because of this anticipation, *Ulysses* evades comprehensive understanding. *Finnegans Wake* shows the same behavior. In both these works there are multiple textual maneuvers which lead to overpotentialization: portmanteau words, structural and semantic intratextual references, metatextual words and passages, language games which subvert their own rules, and dialectics which produce confusion and multiple meanings instead of clarity. Collectively these maneuvers create a kind of metatextual atmosphere wherein the text seems to be not only talking about itself, to be showing a textual self-awareness, but seems to be reading its reader and addressing its reader. For every move the reader makes to pigeonhole the text, there is the countermove, by the text, which signifies “Yes. I’ve thought of that already. Guess again.”

The title of this thesis uses the words *signs of intelligence*, and it does so for two reasons. First the word *signs* should be taken at its most basic meaning, as a part of signification. Second the word should be taken in its idiomatic context, as though we are in the process of analyzing an alien life-form to see if it is intelligent, self-aware. The first chapter of Derek Attridge’s *Joyce Effects* is titled “Deconstructive Criticism of Joyce.” He discusses the genitive *of* within this title. In which direction does the genitive reach for possession? Does it refer to a body of Joycean criticism which begins with authors like Jacques Derrida, or does it speak of the deconstructive currents working within Joyce’s own writing? Attridge plays with both these meanings. So we
would like to incorporate this duplicity into our own genitive. We would like to discuss the intelligence of signs in James Joyce’s *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*.

According to Margot Norris’ *Decentered Universe of ‘Finnegans Wake’: A Structuralist Analysis*, it is impossible to contain *Finnegans Wake* within a system of metalanguage. As Norris remarks, “By writing *Finnegans Wake* as he did, Joyce confirmed the impossibility of metalanguage, that is, the impossibility of making a critique in language of the epistemology embedded in language. This problem applies also to commentary on the *Wake*” (140). If we are to understand the term *metalanguage* in its more ambitious and traditional definitions—this is to say, as a language which affords a stable understanding of language, which circumscribes language—then we are in complete agreement with Norris’ contention. However, if we instead understand metalanguage as simply a language which talks about language, which is what *Decentered Universe* does, then we are free to explore the ramifications of Attridge’s double genitive. We are free to discuss Joyce’s signs without surrendering ourselves to purposelessness. This engagement is not intended to circumscribe Joyce’s signs; rather it is intended to illuminate some of the textual operations they perform for the purpose of speaking about themselves.

The present discourse is divided into four chapters. The first discusses the roles that *metempsychosis* and *met him pike hoses* play in *Ulysses* and is a kind of scaffolding for the following three chapters which will take the language of *Finnegans Wake* as their subject. Chapter one focuses on the contextual permutations of *metempsychosis* in *Ulysses*, on its own changing form—as *met him pike hoses*—and on its unique position within local and total textual conditions. The word not only communicates its own sense, but communicates a poetics of the entire text. It exceeds the understanding of Bloom and of Joyce’s readers and points to itself through the changeable understandings of its readers. It is an example of some of the textual behaviors of *Ulysses*, and the totality of these textual behaviors mark this text as one which begins to read its readers.

This said, *Ulysses* never separates itself entirely from conventional narrative. The discursive cues that mark the representation between interior monologue, external dialogue and external referentiality frequently remain intact. Boundaries between object and subject are often reinforced. *Finnegans Wake*, on the other hand, dissolves conventional narrative, for even when
some sense of subject-object dialectic surfaces, that sense soon dissipates into the fabric of Joyce’s so-called dream language. Because of this new poetics, words, whether in conventional form or neologistic form (portmanteau words, etc.) always perform multiple meanings. There are, however, differences of textual behavior among these words, such as when we find words which signify signification–as lithographs, as television screens, as radios, as Shem or Anna Livia Plurabelle’s letter. These are the plays within the play of *Finnegans Wake*. Other words, such as *morph* and all its permutations take on metatextual behaviors which stand out from the typical multivalence of the language of the *Wake*. While chapter two and three largely focus on portmanteau words and on intratextual and metatextual behaviors of *Finnegans Wake*, this is chiefly done on the level of the word.

Chapter four engages the language games and dialectics of *Finnegans Wake*. There is, literally, a theatric production within *Finnegans Wake* (Chapter I of Book II). The play, “The Mine of Mick, Nick, and the Maggies,” develops into its own work of games and riddles (*FW* 219.18–9). Glugg, Chuff, Izod and the Maggies play a game which derives from a game called *Angels and Devils*. Glugg must guess the color of a girl’s undergarment. He is confronted by a series of riddles, games within this game, all of which are connected to more games. However, riddles are left unsolved and games lead to confusion and irresolution. Similarly, passages of dialogue within *Finnegans Wake* have the same result. Participants either misunderstand each other, speak to themselves, or come to antagonism. Between the speakers a consensus over the purpose of conversation is frequently lacking. *Finnegans Wake* is the game and the dialectic which evades hermeneutic understanding. For every move the reader makes to understand the *Wake*, there is the countermove, by the text, to refute stable understanding. If a telos is the object of reading, then stalemate is the continuous outcome with regard to the *Wake*. However, if a reader approaches the *Wake* in the same way that the animals race in circles in Lewis Carroll’s *Alice in Wonderland*–at different paces, without beginning or end, and stopping and starting at whim–then the game is a new kind of game, one with changing rules and with no conclusion.

Through all of these riddles without answers, games without rules, dialogues without communicative sense, through all the metatextual and multivalent words and word clusters of *Finnegans Wake*, the reader is confronted by instability of identity not just in relation to
*Finnegans Wake*, but in relation to language in general and therefore to self-identity. Such as it is, the *Wake* repeats the reader’s questions back to the reader. There is always the feeling of being watched, the sensation that one is encountering an awareness not one’s own. Such is the reading experience produced by the self-aware text of *Finnegans Wake*.

Above we compared Lewis Carroll’s caucus-race to a kind of textuality. This comparison we draw from Gilles Deleuze’s *Logic of Sense*. He does not speak of *Finnegans Wake* in this context, nor is he saying what we are saying, but in the following chapters (except chapter one) we turn to some of his ideas and his way of speaking; for these seem expressly useful in discussing the *Wake*. In fact, we are inclined to speculate that some of Deleuze’s ideas come from Joyce, from the ‘deconstructive criticism of Joyce’—to borrow Attridge’s title. In speaking of the *Wake*, Deleuze declares that “This unformed chaos, the great letter of *Finnegans Wake*, is not just any chaos: it is the power of affirmation, the power to affirm all the heterogeneous series” (*Logic and Sense* 260). He calls it a “Great Work” (260). And according to Deleuze, the “modern work of art” is not a work which carries simply “different points of view on one story supposedly the same”; rather it consists of “divergent stories, as if an absolutely distinct landscape corresponded to each point of view” (260). The same enthusiasm can be found in Jacques Derrida’s discussions of Joyce’s work. In the opening of his lecture, “Two words for Joyce,” Derrida says that “It is very late, it is always too late with Joyce” (145). He alludes, again, to the overpotentialization of Joyce’s work; and yet, as with so many philosophers, theorists and Joyceans, the discussion continues. For the student of Joyce, this is intimidating. However, we, too, can’t resist talking about Joyce, even if he has already talked about our talking.
“Who’s he when he’s at home?” Molly asks Leopold (U 4.340). The reply: “Metempsychosis, he [says], frowning. It’s Greek: from the Greek. That means the transmigration of souls” (4.341-2). Bloom’s answer is inadequate, as he himself demonstrates in his preoccupation with this word throughout the course of his day. His definition is textbook, and wanting. The word persists in the back of his mind and on the tip of his tongue. New meanings present themselves in new contexts. Perhaps a more appropriate answer to Molly’s question would be that “he” (metempsychosis) is never home; nor is he anywhere else. He is between places, or, like an electron orbiting a nucleus, is in different places at once, is at several homes, thereby negating the idea of home. In fact, neither is there a nucleus around which this homelessness circulates.

Metempsychosis is a word which appears, in one form or another, in several textual locations in Joyce’s Ulysses. It appears directly, appears in variant form, *met him pike hoses*, or appears through thematic association. The word also crops up here and there in Joycean criticism— from the early criticism of Stuart Gilbert’s *James Joyce’s ‘Ulysses’* (1930) to the recent criticism of John S. Rickard’s *Joyce’s Book of Memory: The Mnemotechnic of ‘Ulysses’* (1999). In *The Joycean Labyrinth: Repetition, Time, and Tradition in ‘Ulysses,*’ Udaya Kumar explicates the term *metempsychosis* as “A word that semantically signifies a play of identity and difference” (21). Thus we modify Bloom’s definition: *metempsychosis* means the transmigration of words in meaning production. “O, rocks. . .Tell us in plain words” Molly replies to Bloom’s statement of definition (U 4.343). Our reply to this is that there is no word more plain and honest in meaning, as it is a word aware of its instability of meaning. Perhaps Molly fails to understand it because she is too close to its sense.
Metempsychosis, μετεμψυχωσις, whose prefix is μετα, (meta-), infix from ἐν (in), and whose root derives from psyche (soul), is a word which, in the context of Ulysses, cannot be reduced strictly to its etymological origins. The Oxford English Dictionary breaks down the prefix as such: “[meta-] is joined chiefly to verbs and verbal derivatives; the principal notions which it expresses are: sharing, action in common; pursuit or quest; and, especially, change (of place, order, condition, or nature), corresponding to L. trans—. Metempsychosis is a change of the psyche (soul/mind) in “place, order, condition or nature.” Metempsychosis is a faculty of the mind: “Singular, communed the guest [Bloom] with himself, the wonderfully unequal faculty of metempsychosis possessed by them, that the puerperal dormitory and the dissecting theatre should be the seminaries of such frivolity. . .” (U 14.897-99). Citing this section from the “Oxen of the Sun” episode, Rickard’s Joyce’s Book of Memory indicates that, “Bloom adapts his definition of metempsychosis to apply to changes in one psyche through time” (103). This adaptation is really one more attempt by Bloom to understand its meaning. He reflects upon the changeable faculties of those who sit around him in a room in the National Maternity Hospital of Dublin. Though he speaks of frivolity as the result of this faculty of metempsychosis, this frivolity is the expression of banter between academics. In the matrix of the National Maternity Hospital, of the “Oxen of the Sun” episode, people and words are born, develop, and change. The episode itself is a tour de force of evolving language, evoking styles of communication from the classical to those contemporaneous to Joyce’s day. Ultimately we shall find, from the above quoted passage (from Ulysses) and several others, that metempsychosis is a faculty of the mind which is the field of changing language and of identity in play. Metempsychosis will come to mean a changing of meaning in “place, order, condition, or nature.” More than this, because metempsychosis is a word whose contextual meaning is itself in flux, the word performs its own meaning, thus becoming self-textual.

Of course, metempsychosis does not only permute in meaning production based on context and the intratextual links between its occurrences, but also alters in form. Met him pike hoses—Molly’s misreading—suggests itself as a kind of portmanteau word. However, unlike a traditional portmanteau word—a neologism formed by the combination of two or more words—met him pike hoses works in an indirect manner. A critical difference is that its relation to
metempsychosis is contextually dependent. We call it an indirect portmanteau word because, though it does not appear to be a portmanteau word on paper, it succeeds as one in meaning production—as we read it, as we think it. The reader knows of the met him pike hoses/metempsychosis relation based on Bloom’s recollection of Molly’s mispronunciation: “Met him pike hoses she called it till I told her about the transmigration. O rocks!” (U 8.112-3). Typographically met him pike hoses consists of four words, yet we read it as four and as one at the same time. Once a grouping is recognized by the reader, the phrasing further ramifies into other meanings based upon a given combination of the four words and the one word they together designate. Finally, the plausibility of a given meaning production is weakened or strengthened based upon its textual location within Ulysses.

In the “Sirens” episode, in a conversation with Father Cowley and Bed Dollard at the Ormond Bar, Mr. Dedalus quips, “Ay, ay [. . .] Mrs Marion Bloom has left off clothes of all descriptions” (11.496-7) and separate narrative voices continue:

Jingle jaunted down the quays. Blazes sprawled on bounding tyres.
Liver and bacon. Steak and kidney pie. Right, sir. Right, Pat.
Mrs Marion. Met him pike hoses. Smell of burn. Of Paul de Kock
Nice name he.
–What’s this her name was? A buxom lassy. Marion. . .?” (11.498-502).

In this context met him pike hoses carries sexual connotations. The wording that Molly has “left off her clothes” is a double entendre which indicates that she sold stage clothes to make money and that she engaged in extramarital sexual relations. Immediately following Mr. Dedalus’ quip the narrative eye turns to Blazes’ relatively nearby presence. He purchases liver, bacon, steak and kidney pie from Pat. Also seated in the Ormond bar is Bloom, though out of eyesight of the three speakers. The line, “Mrs Marion. Met him pike hoses. Smell of burn. Of Paul de Kock,” is likely to be the internal monologue of Bloom (though a neutral narration is also possible here). In the synchronous world of Ulysses, Bloom’s thoughts turn to his morning with Molly— to the letter from Blazes, the burning kidney, the seedy novelist of Molly’s taste (Paul de Kock). “Met him pike hoses” refers to Molly and Bloom’s conversation of metempsychosis, to the reference to stage clothing (i.e. hoses) Mr. Dedalus speaks of—and the sexual implications connected to this
reference—and, finally, *met him pike hoses* becomes linked to the inevitable tryst between Blazes and Molly—she meets him, his pike to her hoses. This last association is further strengthened in other passages in *Ulysses*, but does not solely relate to Molly and Blazes. Other combinations manifest themselves, as when Molly reflects in the “Penelope” episode:

> When he said I could pose for a picture naked to some rich fellow in Holles street when he lost the job in Helys and I was selling the clothes and strumming in the coffee palace would I be like that bath of the nymph with my hair down yes only shes younger or Im a little like that dirty bitch in that Spanish photo he has nymphs used they go about like that I asked him about her and that word met something with hoses in it [. . .] then he goes and burns the bottom out of the pan all for his Kidney. (18.560-8)

The “her” here most likely means the nymph in *The Bath of the Nymph* representation hanging over Molly and Bloom’s bed; but, in the whole of *Ulysses*, it resonates to suggest Bloom’s own infidelities, his epistolary flirtations with Martha, his desire to masturbate in the bath, “Also I think I. Yes I. Do it in the bath. Curious longing I. Water to water,” (5.503-4), and his masturbatory and voyeuristic encounter with Gerty MacDowell, an object of his nymphal fixation. In the “Nausicaa” episode, whose central event is this encounter with Gerty MacDowell, Bloom ponders women’s lingerie, “A dream of wellfilled hose,” (13.793) “Put them all on to take them all off. Molly. Why I bought her the violet garters,” (13.799-800) and later comes back to *metempsychosis* in the same episode: “What is that flying about? Swallow? Bat probably. Thinks I’m a tree, so blind. Have birds no smell? Metempsychosis. They believed you could change into a tree from grief” (13.1117-9). “They” refers to the Greeks. “Change into a tree from grief” is an allusion to the story of Daphne, a nymph and the object of Apollo’s desire. With this, *met him pike hoses*, having sprung from *metempsychosis*, now circles back to *metempsychosis*. (Don Gifford’s ‘*Ulysses ’ Annotated* also makes this connection to the story of Daphne and Apollo, pointing out that Bloom here has confused metamorphosis with metempsychosis. In our opinion this confusion accentuates the importance that connotation has over denotation with regard to ‘metempsychosis’ in the whole of *Ulysses*.)
Though the tryst theme that resonates from *met him pike hoses* points most directly towards Bloom’s preoccupation with Blazes and Molly, we see here that it is not restricted to this one sexual association. In the “Circe” episode, where men turn to swine (per implication from the *Odyssey*), where Dignam walks the earth as a ghost, “By metempsychosis. Spooks” (*U* 15.1226), where Virag (like King Hamlet) and Rudy wake from the dead, where the representational nymph becomes animate, where Bella transforms to Bello, and where a handheld fan inquires, “Is me her was you dreamed before? Was then she him you us since knew? Am all them and the same now me?” (15.2768-69), the machinery of metempsychosis is at work in its flux of identity. In “Circe” sexual scandal swarms around Bloom, Bloom participates in sadomasochistic games with Bella/Bello (she/he of shifting identity), and Bloom engages in masturbatory voyeurism again as he watches Blazes and Molly (who is or was in a bath) having intercourse: “(‘His eyes wildly dilated, clasps himself’) Show! Hide! Show! Plough her! More! Shoot!” (15.3815-6). The conjoining of *metempsychosis* to *met him pike hoses* is further enforced. The latter is one more expression of the former which is meaning in flux, and meaning in flux is the production of desire. The latter is an expression of desire and therefore becomes a reflection of the former. The word *metempsychosis* points to its own meaning through *met him pike hoses*. There’s an intratextual circularity between the words.

On a much grander scale, *metempsychosis* is word with metatextual significance, as it is a word which speaks about the entirety of *Ulysses*. There are many other intratextual echoes throughout *Ulysses*, based on identical typographical units, on variant formations (similar to *met him pike hoses* coming from *metempsychosis*), or associative resonances, but *metempsychosis* is a word which stands out to the point of achieving metatextuality. As a word which signifies signification in play, it draws attention to and gains attention from related sections of text. It is contained by the whole of *Ulysses*, as a subset, and yet acts as a superset which defines *Ulysses*. It also has unique significance in many of the episodes in *Ulysses*.

With regard to what we’ve called “associative resonances,” it serves a purpose to consider the “Proteus” episode, to explore what other thematics oscillate to and from *metempsychosis*. Proteus, a sea divinity who has the power to metamorphose, presides over Stephen’s third chapter. The reader has not yet encountered Bloom, yet the aegis of
metempsychosis is present: “God becomes man becomes fish becomes barnacle goose becomes featherbed mountain” (3.477-9). As noted by ‘Ulysses’ Annotated, Stuart Gilbert’s James Joyce’s ‘Ulysses’ ‘Cites this as ‘a variant of the kabalistic axiom of metempsychosis,’” (Gilbert 128) and Gifford adds that it is also, “an allusion to the protean ebb and flow of living matter” (Gifford 65). But the “Proteus” episode is a text about reading: “Ineluctable modality of the visible: at least that if no more, thought through my eyes. Signatures of all things I am here to read, seaspawn and seawrack, the nearing tide, that rusty boot. Snotgreen, bluesilver, rust: coloured signs” (U 3.1-4). Stephen, the artist, always sees his seeing, and whatever phenomenologies which are present in his discourse, whatever structural aspects that come with these phenomenologies, the reading is protean for both Stephen and the reader of Ulysses. To this point it is worth drawing from a passage in Umberto Eco’s The Aesthetics of James Joyce: The Middle Ages of James Joyce: “Proteus thus takes us to the center of Ulysses and provides a basis of the world dominated by metamorphoses which continuously produce new centers of relations” (36). 

Metempsychosis thus expands outward to enfold the text as a continuous repositioning of relations which determine the play of signification. This play of identity is something of which Stephen is also aware: “Their blood is in me, their lust my waves. I moved among them on the frozen Liffy, that I, a changeling, among the sputtering resin fires” (U 3.306-8). Stephen speaks of his ancient ancestors, and past identity is always informing and informed by present identity. As Stephen asserts to himself, “You’re your father’s son. I know the voice” (3.229). More than this, the father is also the son because “Father and Son are consubstantial” (3.49-50). In the fabric of Ulysses, wherein Stephen is Telemachus, Bloom Odysseus, Molly Penelope, where generational roles are in flux between Stephen, Bloom, Mr. Dedalus, Molly, Milly, Shakespeare and Hamnet as King Hamlet and Prince Hamlet, all relations work on an equal plane, and desire is the mechanism behind these shifting identities. 

It is important to realize here that, though on the surface we are speaking or proper names, we are speaking first and foremost about identity in meaning production (i.e. the signifier’s relation to the signified). Character identity is the product of the construct of identity in meaning and here largely serves as a metaphor for identity in meaning production. In Ulysses the thematic development of metempsychosis (Dignam’s appearance, for example) is inextricably connected to the linguistic function of metempsychosis.
As we shall eventually see, this corollary between character and signifier becomes much closer in *Finnegans Wake*—to the point where character does not exist in any traditional sense.

Let’s consider another instance of associative resonance in relation to *metempsychosis*. In “Circe” there appears a “Lorry on which are the shaking statues of several naked goddesses, Venus Callipyge, Venus Pandemos, Venus Metempsychosis, and plaster figures, also naked, representing the new nine muses”² (15.1704-7). These statues appear from Bloom’s memory of his visit to the museum earlier in the day, where Bloom again acts as a kind of voyeur. In the “Lestrygonians” episode we read: “Beauty: it curves: curves are beauty. Shapely goddesses, Venus, Juno […] Can see them library museum standing in the round hall, naked goddesses” (8.920-2). As in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, where Stephen and Lynch discuss aesthetics and Lynch says, “You say that art must not excite desire […] I told you that one day I wrote my name in pencil on the backside of the Venus of Praxiteles in the Museum. Was that not desire?” (172), Bloom’s aesthetics (or should we say erotics?) is the product of desire. We find Bloom’s objects of desire constantly undergo metempsychosis–Venus Metempsychosis, the nymph, the ‘nextdoor girl’ in “Calypso”–“His eyes rested on her vigorous hips (U 4.148)–Martha, Gerty, Bella, Molly, and so on. His name cannot be penciled on the object because the object is always changing and, because of this, so does the meaning of the name of the object.

Here the associative resonances of *metempsychosis* reflect back upon themselves and, because of the related associative resonances of *met him pike hoses*, the semantic ties between these words are, again, further strengthened to produce a word–*metempsychosis*, as it is the word which links all these meaning productions—which communicates its own sense and which accumulates a metatextual role in *Ulysses*; which is to say, it acts as a defining superset to a set in which it appears as a subset.

In his article, “On Sense and Nominatum,” Gottlob Frege discusses the referentiality of two propositions: “The morning star is a body illuminated by the sun” and “The evening star is a body illuminated by the sun” (189). For Frege the nominatum is the object (referent), in this case being *Venus*. Though the two propositions carry different senses, they share the same designation. In *Ulysses* every occurrence of *metempsychosis* and *met him pike hoses* share the same referent, which is whatever common denominator definition can be found for these terms;
but the common denominator is *metempsychosis* as a word which means flux in meaning. It
determines indeterminacy, so to speak. In the “Lestrygonians” episode Bloom considers a new
word:

> Mr Bloom moved forward, raising his troubled eyes. Think no more about that.
> After one. Timeball on the ballastoffice is down. Dunsink time. 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. Met him pike hoses she
called till I told her about the transmigration. O rocks! (*U* 8.108-13)

This astronomical term, *parallax*, can be defined as an “Apparent displacement, or difference in
the apparent position, of an object, caused by actual change (or difference) of position of the
point of observation” (*OED*). Of course the association which Bloom makes between *parallax*
and *met him pike hoses* is Greek language, but the juxtaposition between the terms holds greater
interest for us. Let’s consider for a moment that the object of our parallax is not an astronomical
phenomenon, but a word-object, *metempsychosis*. Every time the reader encounters this word
from a different point of textual observation, there is an “apparent displacement” in its meaning
production. Now consider the first reading-encounter with *metempsychosis* as the nominatum of
every following appearance of its direct and indirect textual echoes, the latter being *met him pike
hoses*. If the first *metempsychosis* functions like *Venus* in its relation to *morning star* and *evening
star*, then a hierarchical formation of meaning presents itself; but, the idea of there being an
original sense to *metempsychosis* is specious. Any location of *metempsychosis* or *met him pike
hoses* can assume the function of the nominatum, the *Venus* designated by *morning star* and
*evening star*, which is to say, there is no nominatum. There are only series of changing senses to
*metempsychosis*, and, because of this changeability, the only constant to *metempsychosis* is its
indeterminacy of meaning as meaning.

Shortly before the above quoted appearance of *metempsychosis*, Bloom, upon crossing
the Liffey on O’Connell Bridge, ponders, “How can you own water really? It’s always flowing in
a stream, never the same, which in the stream of life we trace. Because life is a stream” (*U* 8.94-
95). Whether it is as Odysseus or Elijah—“A skiff, a crumpled throwaway, Elijah is coming, rode
lightly down the Liffey” (10.294-5); “And they beheld Him even Him, ben Bloom Elijah”
Bloom traces the waters of fluid meaning with no end in sight, for when we come to the end of *Ulysses* it is Molly’s voice which takes over and whose words flow without sense of beginning or end. As with her menstruation her words, “pour out of [her] like the sea” (18.1123). She associates lovemaking with the phrase, “O how the waters come down at Lahore” (18.1148) and “O that awful deepdown torrent O and the sea the sea crimson sometimes like fire and the glorious sunsets” (18.1597-9). Whether with relation to Stephen’s aesthetic reading of reality in “Proteus,” or with Molly’s menstrual discourse, the creative aspect of language is linked with fluid and fluidity.

In the “Scylla and Charybdis” episode, amid Stephen’s ad hoc lecture on Shakespeare, we find Stephen evoking the creative powers of water when he thinks “Flow over them with your waves and with your waters, Mananaan, Mananaan MacLir . . . .” (9.190-91). Mananan MacLir, a Celtic god of metamorphosis, appears again in the “Circe” episode, “(with a voice of waves)” saying, “Aum! Hek! Wal! Ak! Lub! Mor! Ma!” (15.2268). According to *Ulysses’ Annotated*, these utterances allude to George Russel’s *The Candle of Vision* in which Russel claimed to have “developed the mystical significance of the roots of human speech” (Gifford 491). Language, its creation, its existence, its power, is again associated with water, a substance whose behavior and properties are in turn associated with transformation. Finally, this transformative power of water is often linked to a feminine presence, as when Gerty becomes Bloom’s nymph, as when Stephen’s memory of his dying mother conjoins with Dublin Bay in the “Telemachus” episode: “The ring of bay and skyline held a dull green mass of liquid,” becomes associated with, “A bowl of white china [. . .] holding the green sluggish bile which [his mother] had torn up from her rotting liver by fits of loud groaning vomiting” (U 1.107-10). Death, too, is a transformation. The bile signifying Stephen’s mother’s death and the blood signifying Molly’s procreative abilities illustrate the ultimate transformations, and the nature of transformation, as metempsychosis, is always on Bloom’s mind. Though his constant exploration of the word indicates a dissatisfaction with his understanding, he does show various understandings. Molly, on the other hand, shows none. This is because she is too close to metempsychosis. She is an agent of metempsychosis.
In her essay, “Sorties,” Hélène Cixous connects the polyphonic discourse of the feminine voice to Molly’s final declaration: “What is feminine (the poets suspected it) affirms: . . . and yes I said yes I will yes, says Molly (in her rapture), carrying Ulysses with her in the direction of a new writing; I said yes, I will Yes” (582). This “new writing” will be the fluid discourse of Finnegans Wake. Cixous concludes her essay, “I am spacious singing Flesh; onto which is grafted no one knows which I—which masculine or feminine, more or less but above all living, because changing I” (584). This changing identity will be the innumerable voices of Finnegans Wake, and not only will they speak without beginnings or ends, as Molly does, but also in a language whose intratextualities and portmanteau words will explode into the furthest expression of metempsychosis. Finally, the illusion of the nominatum as a point of determinacy will be utterly dispelled. Though Ulysses begins to dismantle conventional reading practices, its remaining ties to conventional narrative completely fail to do so. For example, a given reader may still insist that the first appearance of metempsychosis is the nominatum for those that follow, that a hierarchy of meaning establishes itself—a simple prejudice towards linearity—but Finnegans Wake, without beginning or end because all recourse to constructs of chronology and traditional representation is abandoned and because the printed end is no end at all because its tail is caught within the mouth of the first line of the first page, negates the nominatum as a foothold for any complete reading.
We could begin this discussion with any number of textual innovations that come with *Finnegans Wake*. It is felicitous, however, to begin this chapter the same way we began our discussion of *Ulysses*—at the level of the word. As seen before, *met him pike hoses* establishes itself as a kind of indirect portmanteau word. The four words group together through a contextual association with *metempsychosis*. Nonetheless, *met him pike hoses* is not really a portmanteau word. A portmanteau word must show itself free of context. Moreover, when a neologism is formed out of two or more words, such as with “riverrun” (*FW* 3.1) or “tumptytumtoes” (3.21), is it necessarily a portmanteau word? Does it communicate a meaning which exceeds the combination of these words? As a case study we shall take a look at two words in *Finnegans Wake*: *museyroom* and *mewseyfume*. As we do so, the two words will develop an intertextual relationship and open some further discussions.

*Museyroom*: a museum, a musing room, a room of muses, perhaps a matrix whose content flows from the chora of the muse. There is always the room, the scaffolding, the form that is producer and product of this musing force, and this conjoining of both the room and the musing is the conjoining of two meanings for the creation of a new meaning. Such is the function of the portmanteau word. But before we look at this *museyroom* in the contextual environment of *Finnegans Wake*, we shall ask ourselves whether we are taking something for granted in labeling it a portmanteau word.

“[Portmanteau words] are defined by their function of contracting several words and of enveloping several senses (‘frumious’ = fuming + furious)” writes Gilles Deleuze in *The Logic of Sense* (44). Unlike *frumious* or *Snark* (words which Deleuze draws from Lewis Carroll) *museyroom* overtly shows the elements comprising its compound: *muse* and *room*. *Snark,*
Carroll’s shark-like and snake-like creature, “Designates a fantastic or composite animal” (45). Of course, so does Lewis’ Jabberwocky, but part of the semantic ramifications of this word is divisible into jabber and walk, and so this portmanteau word shows a structure resembling Joyce’s museyroom. The question is whether museyroom designates an object in the same way as Snark and Jabberwocky. Moreover, must a portmanteau word carry a referentiality traceable to a single object? Certainly frumious does not have this kind of singular meaning. Does it have any singular meaning? (By ‘singular meaning’ we simply mean a connotation which takes precedence over other connotations, thus forming a hierarchy or structure of meanings.) Carroll explains: “If your thoughts incline ever so little towards ‘fuming,’ you will say ‘fuming-furious’; if they turn, even by a hair’s breath, towards ‘furious,’ you will say ‘furious-fuming’; but if you have the rarest of gifts, a perfectly balanced mind, you will say ‘frumious’” (Deleuze 36). Should we say, in this case, that we have a portmanteau word which designates an object; that this object is its new meaning; and, finally, that this new meaning has sprung from, though cannot be reduced to, two previous meanings (those of fuming and furious)? This is the case. So, does our museyroom not present its own new meaning? For the moment we shall assume that museyroom is a portmanteau word.

When we read museyroom, meaning branches into a cluster of meanings, and these meanings go only so far. (‘So far’ in terms of what can be justified through consensus.) Placing a portmanteau word into a context, however, may further multiply meanings. Deleuze points out that “The function of the portmanteau word always consists in the ramification of the series into which it is inserted. This is the reason why it never exists alone. It beckons to other portmanteau words which precede or follow it” (46-7). For Deleuze a series is a kind of thread of meaning production. In traditional narrative, the series of meanings is limited. For the sake of simplicity we shall say that the narrative moves forward—a then b then c, etc. One single story develops. It begins and it ends. In something like an allegory, though with the same linearity, we find more than one series of meaning production; the perfect allegory displays two series which are homogenous and converge at every point. There are no points of confusion or contradiction. In the chaosmos of Finnegans Wake, however, series diverge and converge in an ocean of meaning production and in a way which resists the linearity of traditional narrative. Every point, it would
seem, simultaneously persists in clarity and confusion. Every moment persists in a before and an after.

“This the way to the museyroom. Mind your hats goan in! Now yiz are in the Willingdone Museyroom,” says “mistress Kathe,” the “janitrix” to this museyroom (FW 8.8). McHugh’s Annotations to ‘Finnegans Wake’ cites janitrix as a “female doorkeeper” (McHugh 8), but Kate seems to be more than this; she seems to be also the tour guide, as she points out various scenes from the Battle of Waterloo—a series which overlaps another series concerning HCE (Willingdone), two maidens (jinnies), and three soldiers (lipoleums). This “Wallinstone national museum” is, in fact, the “mounding’s mass” (8.1) which is part of the sleeping giant, Finn/HCE, whose “brontoichthyan form [is] outlined aslumbered” in Phoenix Park (7.20-1). In actuality, there is no museum at Phoenix Park. There is the Wellington Monument: a 205 foot obelisk upon whose base are carved reliefs of the Battle of Waterloo. Kate holds the key to the door to the phallic structure (the museum) wherein is held/produced the cultural-historical artifacts, the products of the musing muse of psychic energy. Such might be one series in the network of developing series. To conclude this Museyroom tour, Kate says, “This way the museyroom. Mind your boots goan out” (10.22-3).

Mewseyfume: an echo of museyroom. Fumes. Fuming. A smoke, a vapor, an anger. And again, the museum, the musing, the muse, but also the mew and the mewing, the same and some altogether new associations, not the least of which is, for mew, “A place of concealment or retirement” (OED). Three hundred and twenty-five pages after (or three hundred and three pages before) museyroom makes its appearance, mewseyfume enters the text of Finnegans Wake, looking backward and forward to its sibling term. Kate enters the scene again: “Why, wonder of wenchalows, what o szesame open, v doer s t doing? V door s being. But how theng thingajarry miens but this being becoming n z doer? K?” (333.1-3). Kate, our doorkeeper, is sent by Anna Livia to retrieve HCE, to bring him to the bedroom. The text continues:

The aged crafty nummifeed confusionary [. . .] katekattershin clopped [. . .] back and along the danzing corridor, as she was going to pimpim him, way boy wally, not without her complement of cavarnan men, between the two deathdealing allied divisions and the lines of readypresent fire of the corkedagains upstored,
taken in giving the saloot, band your hands going in, bind your heads coming out,
and remoltked to herselp in her serf’s alown […] new uses in their mewseyfume.
The jammesons is a cook in his hair. And the juinnesses is a rapin his hind. And
the Bullingdong caught the wind up. Dip. (333.6-18)

Wally is our Wallinstone national museum, our Willingdone, our HCE. The “deathdealing allied
divisions” is a reference to the Anglo and Prussian forces in Waterloo. Kate “remoltked
[remarked] to herself […] new uses in their mewsyfume.” The mewseyfume here seems split into
two directions. If what follows the word is a list of new uses, then the mewseyfume is probably
the barroom of smoke and musing; however, the mewseyfume may also be the bedroom to which
Kate will summon HCE. Whatever the case, we soon find ourselves privy to a barroom
conversation between “Gladstone Browne,” (334.6-7) “Bonaparte Nolan” (334.9-10) and the
“cummal delimitator” (334.15) who “willingtone[s]” (334.13)--continuing links to the
Museum section. To further complicate these series, shortly before Kate leaves—“So the
katey’s came and the katey’s game”—the text reads, “the whole pub’s pobbel done a stare. On the
mizzatint wall. With its chromo for all, crimm crimms” (FW 334). They stare at a
chromolithograph which depicts a military blunder of the Crimean War—the war which provides
the narrative framework for Butt and Taff’s exchange in the next section of the chapter. (We
have no intention of delving into the associative connections between the Battle of Waterloo and
the Crimean War, except to say that, as with the Museum section wherein Kate shows us
representations of Waterloo, Kate is again within close proximity of another representation of
battle which is here linked to the mewseyfume.)

Finally, we would like to point to another link between the Museum section and the
Mewseyfume section, and this pertains to the functions of tip and dip. In the former section tip
carries a monetary association: “Penetrators are permitted into the museomound free. Welsh and
Paddy Patkinses, one shelenk! Redismembers invalids of old guard find poussepousse
pousseypram to sate the sort of their butt. For her passkey supply to the janitrix, the mistress
Kathe. Tip” (8.5-8). After this, the word Tip follows propositions which point out events
concerning Waterloo and Phoenix Park. If tip continues its monetary association, like a “shelenk”
(shekel or shilling) dropping into something and making a “tip” sound, then the following tips
could be gratuities given to Kate the tour guide. However, if this is the case, then *dip* of the Mewseyfume section either converges or diverges with this series of sense. *Dip* appears four times in the Mewseyfume section, not long after Kate shows herself as doorkeeper, and then after each utterance of the characters in the bar. The enunciations, in fact, mirror the sentence structures of Kate’s tour through the museyroom, most beginning with declarative pronouns. However, Kate does not act as a tour guide in the Mewseyfume section. She simply passes through, in and out of doors. *Dip*, confined to the series of the Mewseyfume section, fails to carry the semantic significance of *tip*. *Dip* is no more than an aural and structural device that further links the museyroom and the mewseyfume. Beyond this function, there is no convergence of meanings between *tip* and *dip*. The prospect that *dip* echoes *tip*, and therefore carries *tip*’s series of meaning, not only erroneously privileges the placement of *tip* in a text which resists linearity, but exceeds the meaning production of the Mewseyfume section.

The Museyroom and Mewseyfume sections converge and diverge at several points. Like the portmanteau words themselves, they ramify outward as series, into series, from series. An isolated portmanteau word by itself may seem quantifiable in its meaning production (an illusion, of course), but when inserted into a network of series, series which contain other portmanteau words, meaning productions become wholly unquantifiable. If these words *museyroom* and *museyfume* seem indeterminate by comparison to the word *frumious*, this indeterminacy is the result of the multiple series in which they operate. Given a finite series of operation, they function in the same way as *frumious*. 
CHAPTER 3
INTERMISUNDERSTANDINGS OF ANTICOLLABORATORS

The difficulty with Joyce’s writing is that, as Derrida puts it in “Ulysses Gramaphone,” it is “overpotentialized” (281) (see our introduction). Because it is written in numerous languages and its semantic threads are dependent on unconventional aural and typographical sense formations, it is difficult to choose what kind of reading technique best fits a given situation. For example, how can one pinpoint an indirect portmanteau like met him pike hoses in *Finnegans Wake*? It’s through context that the reading is possible in *Ulysses*, but context is as changeable as word games in *Finnegans Wake*. Another complication that comes with *Finnegans Wake* is that it’s a text aware of its own workings of representation. Of course, this is not conventional representation—in the sense that Van Gogh’s *Sunflowers* shows sunflowers or that William Carlos William’s “Red Wheelbarrow” depicts a red wheelbarrow—because this is a work about a non-representational world. John Bishop states, in his *Joyce’s Book of The Dark*, “If one operates on the premise that *Finnegans Wake* reconstructs the night, the first preconception to abandon wholesale is that it ought to be read anything like narrative or make sense as a continuous linear whole: nobody’s “nightlife” makes sense as a continuous linear narrative whole (150.33, 407.20)” (27). But *Finnegans Wake* is a book which is saying something and knows that it’s saying something. It does not show the mind looking outwards towards the world. It is the world comprised within the mind: “The world, mind, is, was and will be writing its own wrunes for ever, man, on all matters that fall under the ban of our infrarational senses” (*FW* 19.35-6 to20.1). The *infrarational* is under the rational. It is that which precedes the orderly construction of reason. It is the dreamworld and, as Margot Norris says in her *Decentered Universe*, “A dream can’t be analyzed from the inside, because the dream is precisely the place where self-knowledge breaks down” (78). Of course, as Derek Attridge reminds us in *Joyce Effects*, the idea of the
Wake as dream narrative should be taken only so far, as it is simply one among other interpretive contexts available to the Wake (151). But as a metaphorical expression for the unreal world of the Wake, its analogical uses are innumerable. 

Finnegans Wake asks, “If you are abcedminded, to this claybook, what curios of signs (please stoop), in this allaphbed! Can you rede (since We and Thou had it out already) its world?” (FW 18.17-9). Reading the Wake’s world will require a different kind of reading, one that resists a here impotent temptation towards hermeneutic structures, towards systems of interpretation based on a premise of self-identity, of stable identity, because Finnegans Wake, “Is the same told of all. Many. Miscegenations on miscegenations” (18.19-20). Miscegenations is a mixture of races. But, more importantly, as with Stephen’s ancient ancestors in Ulysses, miscegenations, as a mixture, is a play of identities. Any narrative structure revealed by a reader must be perceived as being transient, much like all of the names of the so-called characters in Finnegans Wake, in that, “In the ignorance that implies impression that knits knowledge that finds the nameform that whets the wits that convey contacts that sweeten sensation that drives desire that adheres to attachment that dogs death that bitches birth that entails the ensuance of existentiality” (18.24-8), the ‘nameform’ does not carry determinate sense. Its sense derives from an impression which rests on nothing, on ignorance, for, “In the beginning is the woid, in the muddle is the sounddance and thereinofter you’re in the unbewised again, vund vulsyvolsy” (378.29-31). The void resists being filled by the word, or the word always falls back into the void. Word and void are inseparable. Instead of permanent sense, we have a “muddle,” and the “muddle” is followed by the return of the “unbewised,” the indomitable void.

Here we’ve extracted two passages from Finnegans Wake: one from page 18 and another from page 378. These two passages share nothing more than a metatextuality. The first is situated within a context pertaining to mythohistorical developments consisting of anything from “Gricks” and “Troysirs” (11.35-6) to “Meades and Porsons” (18.22). The second extract comes from a context involving a public execution of HCE—“Slip on your ropen collar and draw the noosebag on your head” (377.8-9); “Isn’t it great he is swaying above us for his good and ours” (377.36 to 378.1); “Hang coersion everyhow” (378.27; my italics). Despite a shared metatextuality, and whatever themes of risings and fallings which can be found in any section of
*Finnegans Wake*, there is nothing unique which merits the juxtaposition between these passages; and yet there is utter merit. Because of the obscurity of the language in *Finnegans Wake*, every passage projects the possibility of a semantic connection with any other passage. The question arises as to how one can be sure if a given reading has plausibility. Is a given reading wrong? The question is both understandable and absurd. Wrongness carries with it the notion of rightness. Is there a right reading? Or are there only misreadings, “*Missed Understandings*” (175.27)?

Because, Soferim Bebel, if it goes to that, (and dormerwindow gossip will cry it from the housetops no surelier than the writing on the wall will hue it to the mod of men that mote in the main street) every person, place and thing in the chaosmos of Alle anyway connected with the gobblydumped turkey was moving and changing every part of the time: the travelling inkhorn (possible pot), the hare and turtle pen and paper, the continually more and less intermisunderstanding minds of the anticollaborators, the as time went on as it will variously inflected, differently pronounced, otherwise spelled, changeably meaning vocable scriptsigns. (118.18-28)

This is part of the letter which begins on page 104--Anna Livia’s letter. As we read *Finnegans Wake* we read the *Wake* reading this letter (in the passages which concern it). However, as the *Wake* talks about this letter we realize that the *Wake* is talking about itself. Eco writes in *The Aesthetics of Chaosmos: The Middle Ages of James Joyce* that “*Finnegans Wake* defines itself as ‘Chaosmos’ and ‘Microchasm’ and constitutes the most terrifying document of formal instability and semantic ambiguity that we possess” (61) and he points out that *Finnegans Wake* “is the continuous poetics of itself” (62). “Anticollaborators” of the above quote refers to multiple groups. On the one hand there were those from whom Joyce sought aid for his project— in the way of criticism or as sources of information which would further obscure his work. On the other there are the critics and the general readers. We, as part of the latter group, are the final “intermisunderstanding minds” of his “scriptsigns,” and, because of the overpotentialized nature of these “scriptsigns,” all “intermisunderstandings” are preconceived by the text itself. This may suggest an element of order within the text, but instead demonstrates the “chaosmos” of language in general.
Finnegans Wake is a work which expects misunderstanding, which takes into account semantic variability as produced by the historico-cultural construction of the individual reader. It preconceives the deferring aspect of Derrida’s differance, “The taking-account of time and forces in an operation that implies an economic reckoning, a detour, a respite, a delay, a reserve, a representation—all the concepts [summed up] here in a word [. . .] which could be added to this series: temporalizing” (“Differance” 136). Joyce’s differance: “The as time went on as it will variously inflected, differently pronounced, otherwise spelled, changeably meaning vocabable scriptsigns (FW 118.26-8). In “Postmodern Joyce: Chance, Coincidence and The Reader,” Attridge calls this Wakean preconceiving, “An openness to the contingencies of the particular context in which the work is enjoyed” (1). He asserts that “Joyce’s major texts allow meaning to arise out of [a] mass [of fragmentary detail] by the operations of chance” (3). One such way that this variability of reading is preconceived in the text is through portmanteau and portmanteau-like words (3). What follows is an exercise of our own intermisunderstanding of scriptsigns.

The mixer, accordingly, was bluntly broached, and in the best basel to boot, as to whether he was one of those lucky cocks for whom the audible-visible-gnosible-edible world existed. That he was only too cognitively conatively cogitabundantly sure of it because, living, loving, breathing and sleeping morphomelosophopancreates, as he most significantly did, whenever he thought he heard he saw he felt he made a bell clipperclipperclipper. (FW 88.4-11)

‘Morphomelosophopancreates’ is a portmanteau word composed of four prefixes and one present tense verb. The meanings can be fairly well parsed out: morpho to connote changeability and sleep, to suggest Morpheus, the Greek god of dreams, a changeling, one who shapes dreams; melo to suggest melody, music; sopho to suggest wisdom, knowledge; pan, all and Pan the deity; and creates is self-evident. Loosening the tongue and relying on the ear more we also have other possibilities: morph, morpheme, morphine, perhaps Philomel and Philomela (recurrent in the Wake), Melos, Sappho, fop, phobe, Phoebe, pancreas. These are some words which branch out of the portmanteau word. Within the context of the passage in which the portmanteau word occurs, the plausibility of these meanings varies in degree. The connection between morpho and Morpheus is evident by its proximity with “sleep.” Once melo follows, a rhythm is established
and carries itself to the end of the word. We read *morpho, melo, sopho, pan* and *creates–pan* continues the order of prefixes. Because we are dealing with prefixes, *morpho* becomes the primary prefix. It comes first. *Sopho* is the secondary prefix and so on. However, these prefixes normally precede nouns, not verbs. As *creates* is the modified end-word, the whole portmanteau word seems to take on the aspect of action, motion, process. However, the portmanteau word is modified by the gerunds “living, loving, breathing and sleeping” (88.8), each with different rules of verbal use and all of which, because they are gerunds, augment and complicate the motility of *creates*. What we do know, however, is that the “mixer,” the agent of operation, “most significantly” “creates,” and anything involving *significantly* involves signification. Within the context of this section of the *Wake*, the mixer is a witness to a crime committed at Phoenix Park. But during the “crossexamination” (87.34) his testimony is drawn into question, as it is dependent on the reliability of his senses. His sureness in the existence of the “audible-edible-gnosible-edible world” (88.6) depends on his senses, but when “there [is] not much light from the windowed moon as would dim a child’s altar,” these senses become muddled (88.2-4). Ultimately this “mixer” is a “wordpainter” (87.13). His reality is the production of what he morphomelosophopancreates. He is asked if he is certain of what he witnessed: “Certified?” (88.13). The exchange between lawyer and witness continues: “[Witness:] As cad could be. [lawyer:] Be Lying!” (88.13). His account belies the truth. Instead, it is a *morphing* melodic epistemic totalizing creating. Of course, this reading is our intermisunderstanding. *Morphomelosophopancreates* ramifies into variant semantic series, not in Joyce’s *Finnegans Wake*, but in the individual readers’ Joyce’s *Finnegans Wake*. However, since *Finnegans Wake* carries “...an openness to the contingencies of the particular context in which [it] is enjoyed” (Attridge “Postmodern” 1), the work reads the reader.

To continue with the *Wake*’s reading of our context, the word *morph* resonates in *Finnegans Wake* in much the same way that *metempsychosis* resonates in *Ulysses*. It doesn’t carry symmetric counterparts—as with *museyroom* and *mewseyfume*—but it does harbor morphemic metamorphoses within the *Wake*. It is part of a convergent semantic series which ramifies into other series, but whose common link is *morph*. 
Man is “morphyl” (mortal) \((FW\ 80.22)\). Like all that is organic he dies and returns to the earth. And potatoes, too, are organic:

And every morphyl man of us, pome by pome, falls back into this terrine: as it was let it be, says he! And it is as though where Agni araflammed and Mithra monished and Shiva slew as mayamutras the obluvian waters of our noarchic memory withdrew [. . .] to some wastyhast timberman torchpriest, flamenfan, the ward of the wind that lightened the fire that lay in the wood that Jove bolt, at his rude word. Posidonius O’Fluctuary! (80.21-9).

*Annotations to ‘Finnegans Wake’* points out that *pome* juxtaposed to *terrine* alludes to the French *pomme de terre*, potato, as does the word *murphy* (McHugh 80). *Morph* also resonates intertextually with *murphy*: “murphybuds” (161.29); “murphy come, murphy go, murphy plant, murphy grow, a maryamryiameliarmurphies” (293.9-11); “murphyplantz” (542.1) and so on. This fluctuant organicity of potato and man, from birth to death, occurs under the aegis of Jove’s building bolt (lightning) “at his rude word” (Yahweh’s word?) and this word, like “Posidonius O’Fluctuary,” is the fluid and rude (raw and rudimentary) destructive and creative water of language.

There are innumerable allusions to organic life in *Finnegans Wake*. In chapter six of Book I, as the first lengthy riddle presents itself we find the word “zoomorphology” \((FW\ 127)\) Paul Bowers, in his “‘Variability in Every Tongue’: Joyce and the Darwinian Narrative,” discusses the influence of Darwinian evolution on *Finnegans Wake*. One fundamental point of his essay is that the thematic aspects of special change that run through *Finnegans Wake* resist teleology. The developments are not moving toward an end; they are mutating. This is saying something about the evolution of words in the *Wake*. The words are part of a network which repeatedly circulates—there is no end page and the polynarrative fabric and the portmanteau semantic ramifications develop without end. This *zoomorphology* works well with the tie between *morphyl man, murphy* and our morpheme; but the morpheme for all the genetic permutations of *morph* that surface in the *Wake* is not a stable morpheme, the root. Instead it is the metamorphosing text of Morpheus. Instead of the potato root, despite the fact that the potato is a member of the nightshade family, the vegetable behavior of the *Wake* is that of the rhizome.
Deleuze and Guattari write in *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* that “Joyce’s words, accurately described as having ‘multiple roots,’ shatter the linear unity of the word, even of language, only to posit a cyclic unity of the sentence, text, or knowledge” (6). Some descriptions of the rhizome found in *A Thousand Plateaus*: “Any point of a rhizome can be connected to anything other, and must be” (6); “A rhizome ceaselessly establishes connections between semiotic chains, organizations of power” (7); “A rhizome is not amenable to any structural or generative model. It is a stranger to any idea of genetic axis or deep structure” (12); “A rhizome has no beginning or end; it is always in the middle, between things, *intermezzo*” (25); “To be rhizomorphous is to produce stems and filaments that *seem* to be roots, or better yet connect with them by penetrating the trunk, but put them to strange new uses” (my italics; 15). It would seem that the *murphy* of the *Wake* is the product of genetic engineering, for it is something entirely new, a rhizomorphous potato, a vegetable paradox, a rootless root. Of course, *Finnegans Wake* is not just some spud sitting on a desk. The book “forms a rhizome with the world” (11). Deleuze and Guattari speak of “deterritorialization” and “reterritorialization” (11). The interface between book and reader demands a negotiation of terms, literally, and of ways of speaking and perceiving. Grafting one’s own world onto a book is to reterritorialize it. Occurring at the same time is a deterritorialization of that world. But the negotiation is unrelenting, because the terms metamorphose like *morph* itself—“metandmorefussed” (*FW* 513.31); “nomo-morphemy” (599.18-9); “metamorphoseous” (190.31); “marymyriameliarmurphies” (293.10-1) and so on. The *morph* occurs in a rhizome without “beginning or end” and which is always “intermezzo” (Deleuze and Guattari 25). *Morph*, like the rhizome of which it is part, “ceaselessly establishes connections between semiotic chains” (7). It connects to series which span the fabric of the *Wake* and, as the *Wake* is without beginning or end, no textual coordinate promises a root. This process or re- and de-territorialization is part of the text of which Attridge speaks. The interface between book and world creates multiple books and worlds depending on the historico-cultural context of the interfacing. We aren’t talking simply of language in play; we are talking about a book which premeditates its own language in play.

The application of Deleuze, and sometimes Deleuze and Guattari, to Joyce’s writing has gained force in recent years. For example, Udaya Kumar’s *Joycean Labyrinth* applies Deleuzian
repetition to *Ulysses*, as does Timothy S. Murphy’s essay, “The Eternal Return of ‘The Seim Anew’: Joyce’s Vico and Deleuze’s Nietzsche.” As with Bowers’ Darwinian essay, Murphy (a somewhat felicitous name in context) discusses the *Wakes*’ teleological behavior. He argues that Vico’s *New Science*, despite its changing cycles of development, shows a definite telos: “Vico articulates his theory from a Christian position in support of the linear, teleological structure of history that is a crucial aspect of divine revelation” (Murphy 716). But a Vichian reading of the *Wake* is an incomplete reading because of its very promise of completion. Not unlike the traditional reading of the *Wake* as a dream, it posits a system from outside of the text. For Murphy, however, there is also the Deleuzian reading, one which “Dissolves the Vichian separation of reader and text, not by simply subsuming the reader into a generalized deconstructive textuality but by opening both up to the becomings that traverse and link them (in)to the future” (Murphy 730). Of concern to Murphy is how we read repetition in the *Wake*. In a manner of speaking, the *Wake* should not be seen only as something which trails behind the boat; rather, it extends forward as well. Every moment of reading of *Finnegans Wake* is in medias res. Deleuze himself frequently speaks of Joyce. Deleuze writes that, in *Finngans Wake*, “The identity of the object read really dissolves into divergent series defined by esoteric words, just as the identity of the reading subject is dissolved into the decentered circles of possible multiple readings” (Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition* 69). *Morphomelosophopancreases* is one such esoteric word which produces multiple readings, ours being only one of them. And this word, though a repetition connected to all permutations of *morph*, has no root, as there is only the rhizome with *Finnegans Wake*. There is no root, no original being copied. There are only copies, pointing to themselves, pointing backward and forward into the text, and the text is the rhizome comprising book and world.

*Finnegans Wake* is a reading experience wherein a reader is always looking for a grounding point, a hermeneutic, a scaffolding, a set of rules, a stable word. And really, in order to discuss any narrative thread within the *Wake*, it becomes necessary to speak of characters. But what of the question of character?

In *Finnegans Wake* the notion of an “environment”—which depends on an empirical belief in the separation of inner and outer, subjective and objective,
mental and physical—completely disintegrates. Characters are fluid and interchangeable, melting easily into their landscapes to become river and land, tree and stone, Howth Castle and Environs, or HCE. We find in the *Wake* not characters as such but ciphers, in formal relationship to each other. (Norris 4)

Margot Norris here speaks of a “relationship,” and this word carries both linguistic and familial connotations. A character always manifests itself through a pronoun or a proper name. A proper name is introduced, an artificial agency to which descriptions and behaviors attach themselves. In the rules of conventional narrative the proper name acts as a root. It is what it is and its assemblage of meanings maintains relatively consistent values. The proper name also carries a “formal relationship” with other proper names. Though *Finnegans Wake* has a proper name in its title, to speak of it as having characters, in any traditional sense, is a dubious affair—hence Norris’ use of *ciphers*. There are the innumerable variations of the acrostic *HCE*. There is Fin. There is Anna Livia Plurabelle (also often appearing in acrostic form). There are the many permutations of the twin brothers. There is Issy. There are the other character groupings of the twelve, the four, and the two and the three in the park. And these proper names give the reader some sense of comfort, provide a way of talking about the many stories in *Finnegans Wake*. Rightly so. This said, in the *Wake* a proper name is nothing more than a *morph* or a *murphy*. It establishes connections, has the semblance of a root, but exists merely as a copy among copies. In David Lynch’s film, *Mulholland Drive* (2002), there are two characters, Betty Elms and Rita, who later turn out to be Diane Selwyn and Camilla Rhodes. During the course of the dreamy movie the viewer is confronted with a narrative twist which subverts character cohesion. The stability of the initial proper names is lost and along with it a sense of identities. Imagine a film without ending in which this process is constantly taking place—a chain of proper names replacing one another. To cope with this character confusion the reader seeks out “formal relationships.” In *Mulholland Drive* the characters are frequently paired up—the two central women, the two detectives, the two men eating at Winkies. The twins in *Finnegans Wake* are a pair whose relationship is established through competition and antagonism. Other relationships in the *Wake* are determined by sexual relations. These are the repeating “formal relationships” which attempt to fill the gap left by the loss of the stable proper name. The relationships between Shem and Shaun, Butt and Chuff,
Glugg and Kev, etc., retain semantic integrity because of the repetition of their pairings and their
designations in a network of broader relations, to a sister-cipher, to a mother-cipher, to a father-
cipher. In the end, the linkages between these pairings become reading tools, ways for the reader
to maintain his bearings in a sea of chaos, and ways for the text to launch its dialectical games, to keep the reader in its game.
CHAPTER 4

LANGUAGE GAMES AND WAKEAN DIALECTICS

In *Philosophical Investigations* Ludwig Wittgenstein writes, “People who on waking tell us certain incidents (that they have been in such-and-such places, etc.). Then we teach them the expression ‘I dreamt,’ which precedes the narrative. Afterwards I sometimes ask them ‘did you dream anything last night?’ and am answered yes or no, sometimes with an account of a dream, sometimes not. That is the language-game” (p. 184). For Wittgenstein a language game, if it is to succeed as a game, is practiced when its participants follow rules established through consensus. In the above example the dreamer follows the rules of the particular narrative by invoking *I dreamt*. The phrase provides a context for the story about to be told. It’s a dream. It’s not part of waking reality. In the process of introducing his concept of language-games he writes, “And the process of naming the stones and of repeating words after someone might also be called language-games. Think of much of the use of words in games like ring-a-ring-a-roses” (*PI* §7).

To play the language game of ring-a-ring-a-roses the children must first learn its rules, and learning rules is a process of illustration and mimesis, of example, of guessing and of trial and error. In *Logic and Sense* Deleuze discusses games which occur in Lewis Carrol’s *Alice in Wonderland*: “The caucus-race [. . .] in which one begins when one wishes and stops at will; and the croquet match in which the balls are hedgehogs, the mallets pink flamingos, and the loops soldiers who endlessly displace themselves” (58). He points out that these “games have the following in common: they have a great deal of movement, they seem to have no precise rules, and they permit neither winner nor loser” (58). In *Finnegans Wake* the reader is confronted with a universe of games. There are literal games, as in chapter one of Book II where Glugg, Chuff, Izod and the Floras play a game modeled after what Joyce called *Angels and Devils*; there are references to children’s games—“A ring a ring a rosaring” for example (*FW* 147.19); there are
games dealing with language, like riddles; and there are the language games enacted by the *Wake* itself—the games played by text and reader where the rules are always changing.

In Book II, chapter one, what Joseph Campbell and Henry Morton Robinson call “The Children’s Hour” in their *Skeleton Key to ‘Finnegans Wake,’* the children put on a play, “The Mime of Mick, Nick, and the Maggies, adopted from the Ballymooney Bloodriddon Murther by Bluechin Blackdillain (authorways ‘Big Storey’)” (*FW* 219.30-33). Shortly after the program to the play is given, the Wakean version of *Angels and Devils* begins, where Glugg must guess the color of Izod’s underclothing: “Her boy fiend or theirs, if they are so pluriellet, cometh up as a trapadour, sinking how he must fand for himself by gazework what their colours wear as they are all shownen drawens up” (224.24-7). At times Izod stands on her own; other times she is identified with the Floras, also called the Maggies. The seven rainbow girls are one more permutation. Of interest is the fact that the Floras are “A month’s bunch of pretty maidens” (220.4) who, along with Izod, amount to twenty-nine in number: “Hymnumber twentynine. O, the singing! Happy little girlycums to have adolphetd such an Adelphus” (234.34-5)! They are also the “Mayaqueenies” (234-13) who form a circle—“toe by toe, to and fro they go round, for they are the ingelles, scattering nods as girls who may, for they are an angel’s garland (226.21-3)—who perform the maypole dance around the angel, Chuff, also Dolph, to be identified as the object of heliolatry: “the tot of all the tits of their understamens is as open as he can posably she and is tournesoled straightbut or sidewaist, accourdant to the coursets of things feminine, towooersds him in heliolatry, so they may catchcup in their calyzettes, alls they go troping” (236.34 to 237.2). The circle of the girls is the cycle of the month, of the moon, and, given the theme of fertility present in this section, of menstruation. Beyond the fact that the moon joins the Earth’s revolution around the sun, it reflects the sun’s light. These celestial bodies, like the heliotrope, turn toward the sun. The female personae of this chapter are constantly linked to flower imagery, and, as with the above excerpt, this is a sexual image which conjoins with the maypole image to suggest fertility. In addition, the dance around the Maypole is linked to the dance in ring-a-ring-a-roses—“Yet the ring gayed rund rorosily” (239.36)—a nursery rhyme and game which carries the image of children as roses who have pockets of posies. Patrick A. McArthy, in his *Riddles of “Finnegans Wake,”* discusses the omnipresence of *heliotrope* in the
Wake and especially in this section. He notes, for example, the anagrammatic (though two are imperfect) occurrences of heliotrope in “The howtosayto itiswhat hemustwhomust worden schall. A darktongues, kunning. O theoperil! Ethiaop lore, the poor lie” (223.27-8; my italics). These three anagrammatic games correlate with the approaching three riddles, each of which consists of three questions, though, as will be shown, this triad of triads will not fulfill a reader’s expectations for tidy game-playing.\(^1\) McCarthy illustrates the connection--part of this based on the appearance of heliotrope-- between this section and the Prankquean episode (McCarthy 137) and the Phoenix park theme (138) and his use of ‘heliotrope’ as a link between these sections is meant to support themes related to relations between characters. Our position, however, is that the fundamental importance to heliotrope is the trope-- “alls they go troping” (FW 237.2). The connections that ‘heliotrope’ makes with the colorful objects apparent on the surface of the riddles are the result of troping, the game behind the scenes of the maypole games and the game of the theatric production.

Because of the neologistic formations in Finnegans Wake, the portmanteau words, etc, the reader quickly becomes aware that words are not as they seem. In the experience of this textual defamiliarization, every word must be looked at twice, thrice, and so on, and even the quotidian word, the word catalogued by the desk dictionary, beckons for attention. Heliotrope is one such word. As the OED informs us, the heliotrope is not just connected to the flower that bends toward the sun, but also to the bloodstone, to a sun-dial, to “a scent imitating that of the heliotrope,” and to “an apparatus with a movable mirror for reflecting the rays of the sun, used for signaling and other purposes.” However, heliotrope is also helio and trope. It asks to be parsed in the same way that museyroom or morphomelosophopancreates do. Helio is self-evident, but in conjunction with trope its meanings will ramify. A trope is “A figure of speech which consists in the use of a word or phrase in a sense other than that which is proper to it; also, in casual use, a figure of speech; figurative language” (OED). However, the trope is also “The ‘turning’ of the sun at the tropic” (OED).

Before taking a look at the role heliotrope plays in Finnegans Wake, we can’t resist exploring some parallels between this section and the “Nausicaa” episode of Ulysses. These parallels will suggest a way to read the former. McHugh’s Annotations points out a phrasing
shared by the second riddle of *Angels and Devils* and the dialogue between Cissy and Tommy in “Nausicaa” (the latter of which is, in a way, meant by Cissy to smooth matters between twins Tommy and Jacky). In the *Wake* we read:

– Haps thee jaoneofergs?
– Nao.
– Haps thee mayjaunties?
– Naohao.
– Haps thee per causes nunsibellies?
– Naohaohao.
– Asky, asky, asky! Gau on! Micaco! Get! (233.21-7)

In *Ulysses* we read:

–Tell us who is your sweetheart, spoke Eddy Boardman. Is Cissy your sweetheart?
–Nao, tearful Tommy said.
–Is Edy Boardman your sweetheart? Cissy queried.
–Nao, Tommy said.
–I know, Edy Boardman said none too amiably with an arch glance from her shortsighted eyes. I know who is Tommy’s sweetheart. Gerty is Tommy’s sweetheart.
–Nao, Tommy said on the verge of tears.

Cissy’s quick motherwit guessed what was amiss and she whispered to Edy Boardman to take him there behind the pushcar where the gentleman couldn’t see and to mind he didn’t wet his new tan shoes.

But who was Gerty? (13.66-78)

In each case the interrogator asks to know a sexual secret. In the *Wake* it is Glugg who is guessing at the color of a girl’s underwear. In *Ulysses* the girls are asking Tommy who is the object of his puerile affections. In each case the interrogation leads to embarrassing results.

McHugh informs us that ‘Micaco’ is ‘mi caco’ which means ‘I shit’ (233). Tommy, too, must relieve himself. Other parallels are present between this section of the *Wake* and the “Nausicaa” episode. The Maggies reveal themselves to Chuff. Gerty reveals herself to Bloom. Shortly after his sexual encounter with Gerty, Bloom is able to smell her scent in the air: “Wait. Hm. Hm.
Yes. That’s her perfume [. . .] What is it? Heliotrope? No. Hyacinth? Hm. Roses, I think” (U 13.1007-9). He continues to ponder the perfumes of women, “They’re always spinning it out of them, fine as anything, like rainbow colours without knowing it” (13.1020-1). As is usual he is preoccupied with natural phenomena like rainbows: “Best time to spray plants too in the shade after the sun. Some light still. Red rays are longest [. . . ] red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet” (13.1074-6). This is part of an intertextual link with the Wake. The rainbow girls dance in circles clockwise and counterclockwise—“R is Rubretta and A is Arancia, Y is for Yilla and N for greeneriN. B is Boyblue with odalisque O while W waters the fleurettes of novembrance” (FW 226.30-3); “Winnie, Olive, and Beatrice, Nelly and Ida, Amy and Rue” (227.14). Here’s the acrostic game spelling ‘rainbow’ forwards and backwards. In Ulysses Bloom falls back on the clichéd comparison between a woman’s genitalia and flowers: “Open like flowers, know their hours, sunflowers” (U 13.1089)—much like the Floras of the Wake. Bloom also devotes his attention to women’s undergarments. Lastly, his thoughts also turn to menstruation: “Virgins go mad in the end I suppose. Sister? How many women in Dublin have it today? Martha, she. Something in the air. That’s the moon” (13.781-2). The fabric of “Nausicaa” is reworked and reformulated into this section of Finnegans Wake. On the purely textual level, we can’t draw conclusions about Finnegans Wake from a reading of “Nausicca.” However, the correlations are suggestive and complement well the sexual and fertility motifs we’ve mentioned thus far.

As McCarthy’s text confirms, it is unclear how the riddles in this Wake section relate to heliotrope (145), but we do know that Joyce intended this to be the answer to these riddles (137). The first riddle is as follows. Glugg asks the girl(s): “Have you monbreamstone [. . . .] Or Hellfeuersteyn[. . . .] Or Van Diemen’s coral pearl?” (FW 225.22-6). The answer for each question is no. The second riddle is shown above and again each answer is “nao” (actually “no” in this case). But, as we shall demonstrate, the third riddle is altogether different. Ultimately we must ask to whom all of these riddles are being addressed. The answer is to the reader. The questions are attached to the ciphers performing this game within a play, “The Mime of Mick, Nick and the Maggies.” Within the narrative game the questions are directed towards the girls in the first two riddles and then toward Glugg in the last—the latter riddle representing a break from the rules of Joyce’s Angels and Devils (in the real game the devil is always the interrogator); but
within the textual game it is the reader who is being asked these riddles. As the riddles are working on two different series (for the characters, for the reader) the former compounding the latter, these series converge and diverge at different points within the meaning production of the text. Within the confines of the riddles themselves, the answer to these riddles is entirely problematic. With recourse to some simple reading the first riddle suggests moonbeamstone, (moonbeam, moonstone, brimstone), hellfire, and coral pearls. (Other meanings suggest themselves, but these are the most obvious.) The second riddle (with a little help from McHugh) shows us yellow eggs (“jaoneofergs” as yellow of eggs) (McHugh 233); May dancers or yellow May dancers (“mayjaunties”; jaunty to suggest lively movement); and a nun’s belly (“nunsibellies,” to suggest a fair color, perhaps yellow, since Glugg is asking about colors). The final riddle, however, fails to complete the rules of the game. It is the girl(s) who is asking the question: “Willest thou rossy banders havind [. . . .] Are you Swarthants that’s hit on a shorn stile [. . . .] Can you ajew ajew fro’ Sheidam?” (FW 250.3-7). To each of these questions Glugg does not answer but reacts through a miming game. The first question seems to be asking if he will have their rosy bands–like having a hand in marriage--the bands to the Maypole which, given that the girls dance around Chuff and Chuff is the centered sun, then Chuff is the phallic Maypole. Can Glugg be man enough to fill Chuff’s shoes? Glugg’s mimed response: “He simules to be tight in ribbings round his rumpffkorpff” (250.4) The Maypole would be tied tight to/in ribbons. Glugg’s answer is yes. In response to the second question Glugg “makes semblant to be swiping their chimbleyes” (250.6). A possible reading of the question is that it is asking Glugg if he masturbates, sweaty hands on a shorn penis. His miming shows the act of sweeping their chimneys, a clearly sexual performance. The last query is the most difficult to unpack. In response to the question “Can you ajew ajew fro’ Sheidam?” (250.7) Glugg “finges to be cutting up with a pair of sissers and to be buytings of their maidens and spitting their heads into their facepails” (250.8-9). McHugh reduces “ajew” to adieu and “fro’ Sheidam” to frau scheiden. He also notes scheiden as German for separation and divorce. Reading backwards, in light of the fact that Glugg bites off the maidens’ heads, an evident deflowering, we might read the question as asking Glugg if he is capable of performing this act.
The actual flower head to be bitten off is the heliotrope. Returning to the anagrammatic forms preceding these riddles we find the answer to the riddles (for the reader) is given before the riddles appear:

But what is that which is one going to prehend? Seeks, buzzing is brains, the feinder.

The howtosome itsiswhatits hemustwhomust worden schall. A darktongues, kunning. O theopreril! Ethiaop lore, the poor lie. He askit of the hoothed fireshield but it was untergone into the matthued heaven. He soughed it from the luft but that bore ne mark ne message. He luked upon the bloominggrund where ongly his corns were growning. At last he listed back to beckline how she pranked alone so johtntily. The skand for schooling.

With nought a wired from the wordless either. (223.25-34)

Though it would seem that “kunning” reflects back on “darktongues” as a kenning (also cunning), it also points to the anagrams whose solution is heliotrope, and we might say that heliotrope (helio + trope) is also a kenning. If we read heliotrope to mean a flower which turns toward the sun, it is not a kenning because the referentiality is direct—word to thing. However, once we realize that heliotrope designates the color of a girl’s underwear and performs this designation amid a network of signifiers involving the cycle of the moon, the maypole, etc, the sexual and procreative context develops. It is a kenning because heliotrope refers to the girls’ underwear, really what’s behind it, and how it turns toward the light-giving and fecund source. This said, beyond these thematics so humorous in their male-centeredness, there is the elemental role of the trope, that “figure of speech which consists in the use of a word or phrase in a sense other than that which is proper to it” (OED). Finally, whatever reading we tag onto the riddles of this section, the sense to whatever nominata is designated by these riddles never locates a proper sense because the sense is always a puzzle. The riddle has no definitive answer. McCarthy states that “What is clear. . is that our own uncertainty about what happens, like Glugg’s failure to solve the riddle, is a commentary on the problem of knowledge and certainty” (152). If there is any clarity, it is to be found in the fact that the riddles carry tropes which point to heliotrope, which in turn points to that which is beyond the veil, behind the undergarments, that which is
always inaccessible in terms of stable sense and always productive of multiple senses. The reader and Glugg must guess at what resides behind the veil, that to which only Chuff seems privy. However, Chuff, as the sun, is he who emits light, and the Maggies, as the moon, reflect that light—Chuff is “He who relights [their] spearing torch, the moon” (244.3-4). If this is the case, Chuff sees nought but his own reflection. We might recall that the heliotrope is, among other things, “an apparatus with a movable mirror for reflecting the rays of the sun, used for signaling and other purposes” (OED). The answer to the riddle, for Chuff, comes from Chuff. This reflects the process of meaning production of the reader.

Ultimately Glugg fails to solve the riddle: “Evidentament he has failed as tiercely as the deuce before for she is wearing none of the three” (FW 253.19-20). In fact, Glugg never makes a third series of guesses. McHugh locates his guess and the third color (the first series emphasized red, the second yellow) in “But Noodynad’s actual ingrante tootle is of come into the garner mauve and thy nice are stores of morning and buy me a bunch of iodines” (253.16-8). Clearly the color mauve is present, but there is nothing to suggest Glugg has made a guess; and, despite the next line (shown above, beginning with “Evidentament”), there is nothing evident about the guess or the answer. It would seem that the game is no longer abiding by its previous rules. Instead the following pages of this chapter show a theme of antagonism between the brothers, a sulking Izod—“That little cloud, a nibulissa, still hangs isky [Issy]. Singabed sulks before slumber” (256.33-4)–and an end to the game and play. We read: “The play thou schouwburgst, Game, here endeth” (257.31). But there is no end to a game in Finnegans Wake. Just before the last line, one of the Wakean thunderclaps resounds and is followed by “Byfall” (257.29). As always, the falling signifies a transition between cycles, but, as mentioned earlier, the teleology that comes with Vichian cycles is not part of the fabric of Finnegans Wake. This is also true of Wakean games. They evolve in the same way as Lewis Carroll’s caucus-race, which, as Deleuze points out, shows no fixed rules. Wittgenstein’s ring-a-ring-a-roses shows a system of rules, but the Floras’ circle in the Wake dissolves into disorder and into the play of the trope, the latter being the Deleuzian language game in which all other games are subsumed. More than this, the Flora’s game ignores the teleological progression of time that normal games include. As Campbell and Robinson note, time moves forward or backward depending on whether the
rainbow girls dance clockwise or counterclockwise (*Skeleton Key* 125). This temporality of the circle reflects an atemporal feature of the *Wake*—namely that in a book without beginning or end, where every point in the text is beginning and end due to the moment of reading-experience, each temporal direction exists in presence. The reader must realize that he participates in a caucus-race. If he listens for the text to say, “I dreamt,” which carries a set of rules which establish and satisfy reader-expectations, he will fail to meet the *Wake* at its own terms. The haphazard behavior of hedgehogs, flamingos, and soldiers will frustrate the reader rather than increase his pleasure.

The failure of Wakean dialectics is the success of its poetics. The objective of a dialectic is to derive truth, which, in a post-structuralist aesthetics of meaning, is false in that ‘truth’ carries notions of stability and permanence. In Wakean dialectics, on the other hand, there is no telos, just the ongoing and fluid play of meanings. In his essay, “The Mutt and Jute Dialogue in Joyce’s *Finnegans Wake*: Some Gricean Perspectives,” David Herman does exactly what his title indicates. He applies ideas of H.P Grice to the dialectic between Mutt and Jute. Conversation is a game comprising games, some of which are called ‘adjacency pairs’ (9). Participant $X$ asks a question; participant $Y$ answers. $Y$ issues words signifying departure, an end to the conversation. $X$ reciprocates with one among many appropriate responses. In these conversational games and others participants follow what “Grice describes as the Cooperative Principle: most basically, one’s default assumption that one’s interlocutor is designing and processing utterances in a reasoned and predictable manner” (Herman 2). Of course, Mutt and Jute are not people; they are ciphers. Meaning production derives not from their conversation, per se, but from the reader’s ‘conversation’ with the representation of a dialogue. The cooperative principle is what a reader brings to the text. The expectation in this dialectic is that a hierarchy of sense will be revealed. But, as we shall see, the poetics of the *Wake* rejects this principle in favor of semantic multiplicity and obfuscation.

Much of the dialogue in *Finnegans Wake* situates itself explicitly or suggestively within contexts of pub gossip or courtroom proceedings—the latter usually dealing also with gossip rather than evidence. Most of this dialogue doesn’t present itself in the form of the written play—in the name-to-utterance (“Jute.–Yutah!”) format (*FW* 16.10)—but presents itself in prose,
relying on linguistic cues to separate speakers, e.g. the question-to-answer form, because in most cases we can assume the answer is spoken by someone other than the interrogator. In our second chapter we referred to the ‘Mixer’ in Chapter 3, Book II of the *Wake*, a section labelled “HCE–His Trial and Incarceration” by Campbell and Robinson (*Skeleton Key* 60): “The mixer, accordingly, was bluntly broached, and in the best basel to boot, as to whether the audible-visible-gnosible-edible world existed” (*FW* 88.4-7). The question is intended to cast doubt on the validity of the Mixer’s testimony. The cross-examination continues, “Certified?”; “As cad could be”; “Be lying!” and so forth (88.13). Of course, as any Joycean will attest, it is never clear what crime or indiscretion is committed at Phoenix Park. There is simply the constant recirculation that something happened to cause a scandal which typically involves HCE (or any associated cipher), two girls and three soldiers–the two and three also permuting in various contexts. Margot Norris writes, “*Finnegans Wake* harbors at its center a myth of origins that functions as a living mystery for its figures. A secret source of guilt, like the theological Original Sin or the Freudian crimes of incest and parricide buried in the unconscious, its manifestation is an evasive and digressive narrative style” (*Decentered Universe* 44). Gossip can hardly be said to be a trustworthy source of truth. It has no place in an estimable dialectic whose function is to dismiss confusion and fallacious reasoning.

The Mixer’s testimony is drawn into question because, on the night of his witnessing, “there was not as much light from the widowed moon as would dim a child’s altar” (*FW* 88.2-4). Chapter 8, a chapter of gossip between two washerwomen, has similar results. The section begins in a near hysteria of anticipation: “O tell me all about Anna Livia! I want to hear all about Anna Livia. Well, you know Anna Livia? Yes, of course, we all know Anna Livia. Tell me all. Tell me now. You’ll die when you hear” (196.1-6). However, their riverside gossip will hardly satisfy the reader’s expectations. Instead the obscurity of darkness enfolds the text. Even the women lose a sense of themselves and a sense of sense–sensorial and semantic–as they metamorphose into tree and stone:

> Can’t hear with the waters of. The chittering waters of. Flittering bats, fieldmice bawk talk [. . .] Can’t hear with bawk of bats, all thim liffeying waters of [. . .] 
> My foos won’t moos. I feel as old as yonder elm. A tale told of Shaun or Shem?
All Livia’s daughtersons. Dark hawks hear us. Night! Night! My ho head halls. I feel as heavy as yonder stone. Tell me of John or Shaun? Who were Shem and Shaun the living sons or daughers of? Night now! Tell me, tell me, tell me, elm! Night night! Telmetale of stem or stone. Beside the rivering waters of, hitherandthithering waters of. Night! (215.31 to 216.5)

Despite all the attempts to air the dirty laundry surrounding ALP and HCE, the gossip promises nothing other than more conjecture and doubt. Along the way we are witness to only a series of non-exclusive stories, and, like our perception of the washerwomen, clear reading is hindered by the falling night. Herman speaks of the reader as bringing a “presumption of coherence” to the *Wake.* When we read the dialectics of the *Wake*, we attempt to fill in points of obscurity to complete our reading. Herman maintains that “Mutt and Jute’s is a dialogue that models our own dialogic interaction with the *Wake*: in each case the participants can only partly delimit current discourse topics from other concerns with at least some bearing on the current topics; in each case, too, we cannot be absolutely sure where previous topics end and new ones begin” (14). Not only does this unsureness result from the local context, as when we aren’t sure of who is speaking or of what they’re saying because their words ramify into multiple readings, but on the global context as well; this because themes which surfaced from one chapter sneak into another chapter—as when the Prank queen drops in from time to time, or when the theme of Buckley and the Russian General or the ant and grasshopper surface. Moreover, modes of representation also overlap in the *Wake*. For example, the stories of Book II, chapter 3, are woven from a “tolvtubular high fidelity daildialler” (*FW* 309.14) (a radio), a “bairdboard bombardment screen” (349.9) (a television), and publican gossip. It isn’t clear where one mode of representation begins and another ends, it isn’t clear whether there are beginnings and endings to these modes, and it isn’t clear whether one mode contains or is contained by another mode. The same could be said of the chromolithograph whose militaristic depiction precedes Butt and Taff’s story of Buckley and the Russian General, or of Anna’s letter, her “mamafesta” (104.4) which is one more play within a play, a mirror to the text. As soon as a reader privileges one theme or one mode of representation over others, he is bringing a presumption of coherence to his dialogue with the text. The same imposition leads to the conflicting opinions as to whether *Finnegans Wake* is a
dream of a single dreamer (and who that dreamer might be) or multiple dreamers, whether it is traceable to moments of real world referentiality (consider John Gordon’s ‘Finnegans Wake’: A Plot Summary), or whether it should be thought of in terms of a dream at all. This is not to mean that Finnegans Wake is incoherent, rather it consists of multiple coherencies which, like Deleuze’s series, converge and diverge at different points. To seek out a totalized coherent reading is to misread the poetics of the Wake, is to uphold it to a dialectic it purposefully undermines. But the Wake never tells us “this is a dream” before its text unfolds. It does not play language games in the ways to which the conventional reader is accustomed. It may want us to think it does—a poker player who bluffs—but, if anything, it draws our attention to the way we play, to the rules we erroneously take as absolutes. The result is that we are continuously trying to find the right rules and the right games, which is a game in itself.
CONCLUSION

Intelligent signs: *metempsychosis*, *morph*, *heliotrope*, words whose textual roles exceed dictionary definitions. They perform or play with their own senses, and their meaning productions take on metatextual dimensions, which is to say they offer critiques of their textual environments. We’ve tried to engage these words, to investigate how they operate, but in the final analysis they remain slippery to understanding, true to Joycean form.

Wakean punning is infectious; so, too, are the ways the *Wake* plays with language in terms of its intratextualities—the way a familiar word pops up in a divergent context—and in terms of semantic, aural and optical repetitions. In our first chapter we discuss *Venus Metempsychosis* and soon after play with Frege’s *morning star* and *evening star*—each designating the planet Venus. Bloom sees *Venus Metempsychosis* at the museum. In chapter two we encounter the *museyroom* and the *mewseyfume*, both connected to the concept of a museum. Moreover, when Bloom recalls *Venus Metempsychosis* in “Circe” he also recalls the muses. In chapter three we discuss the metamorphosing *morph* and *murphy* and, as we are doing so, we cite Timothy S. Murphy, whose journal uses Deleuze. We speak of the *morph* as part of the Deleuze and Guattari’s rhizomorphous text. Murphy’s name becomes a morph of our *morph*. Infectious. And now, as we repeat the word *infectious* we are reminded of Marian Eide’s essay, “The Language of Flows: Fluidity, Virology, and *Finnegans Wake*.” She says, “The fluid disruptions within Joyce’s language recall the workings of a virus, a strand of genetic code that mutates constantly within itself” (478) and that “The viral infection forms temporary and surprising connections between disparate elements” (478). While she makes her point she references Deleuze and Guattari’s *Thousand Plateaus*. Again, infectious. This is the feeling that comes with writing about Joyce. The writing spreads. It ramifies into unexpected directions. It creates its own
convergent and divergent repetitions, and all the while the recognition of repetitions occurs not only on the level of the word, but on the level of the letter, the allele to genetic coding.

Jed Rasula, in his “Finnegans Wake and The Character of The Letter,” speaks of alphabetic characters as psychological characters (523). However, while exploring Hélène Cixous’ *The Exile of James Joyce,* he determines that “The real character of character—its consistency as *prima materia*—is as simulacrum, ‘mask as mask’ (etymologically *persona*), or the material contingencies affixing identity” (523). All masks are unstable constructs of identity. This is why “Joyce’s insubordinate polyglossia unsays everything that it says, thereby subjecting the transcendental signifier to equivocation” (526). Of course, this means that the *Wake* also says everything it unsays. It is the field of metempsychosis and the metamorphosing morph whose ‘prima materia’ is traceable to, not the atomic word, but the subatomic letter, the electron who is never home. Letters are constantly rearranging themselves, as with those comprising *heliotrope,* *rainbow,* *HCE,* *ALP,* *museyroom* and *mewseyfume.* And as these letters form networks of words like *morph,* they *morphismelosophopancreate* a text which talks about itself, which talks about its own poetics of language in play.

It is interesting that we speak of electrons, Eide speaks of viruses (as do Deleuze and Guattari), Deleuze and Guattari speak of the rhizome, and Bowers speaks of Darwinian evolution. For a work which is non-representational, *Finnegans Wake* seems to lend itself to such naturalistic analogues. However, these analogues deal with what occurs beneath surfaces, beneath the “audible-edible-gnosible-edible world” (*FW* 88.6). They deal with what is obscure to the senses (Darwin may describe finches, but this is for the purpose of exploring the hidden workings of evolution). Perhaps we are drawn towards these comparisons because the *Wake* seems as expansive as the cosmos (*chaosmos*) and seems to possess as much variation. The mathematical complexities prompt us to ask “how many combinaisies and permutandies can be played on the international surd” (284.12-4)? And the answer, we think, must be the “zeroic couplet [. . .] ∞” (*FW* 284.10-1), in other words, infinity.
REFERENCES


45


1. We are speaking first and foremost about identity in meaning production (a=b=c). Psychological identity is the product of the construct of identity in meaning and here largely serves as a metaphor for identity in meaning production. The corollary between character and signifier becomes much closer in Finnegans Wake.

2. ‘Ulysses’ Annotated notes that ‘Kalligyge’ means “beautiful buttocks” (Gifford 228) and that ‘Pandemos’ means “of all the people,” the latter originally referring to “a goddess of all Greece [who later] . . .evolved into the goddess of sensual lust and prostitution” (Gifford 444).

3. ‘Ulysses’ Annotated: “Molly’s version of the opening lines of Robert Southey’s (1774-1843) poem ‘The Cataract of Lodore; Described in Rhymes for the Nursery’ (1823)” (Gifford 627).

4. This is evident in Portrait as well: Stephen’s erotic encounter with the woman on the beach leads to a rapture of thought wherein the woman transforms into a bird: “A girl stood before him in midstream, alone and still, gazing out to sea. She seemed like one whom magic had changed into the likeness of a strange and beautiful seabird” (Portrait 144).

5. A rearrangement of ‘a,’ ‘b’ and ‘c’ would be no less linear. However, if ‘a’ and ‘b’ operate on different narrative planes, there is no linear relationship between the two.


7. Note the acrostic HCE.

8. Paul Bowers, in his essay, “‘Variability in Every Tongue’: Joyce and the Darwinian Narrative,” illustrates Joyce’s interest and use of temporal theories including and related to “Einsteinian relativity” and “Darwinian evolution” (Bowers 873), the last of which come with a non-teleological temporality.

9. This is to say that Joyce contains Vico. Vico does not contain Joyce. This is the same with the ‘dream’ reading of Finnegans Wake.
10. ‘P. 184’ follows the method of citation used for Part II of *Philosophical Investigations*. Text in Part I is cited by section number--e.g. ‘§16’ refers to section 16.

11. The first chapter of McCarthy’s *Riddles of Finnegans Wake* discusses the Irish tradition of triad riddles, riddles “with a three-part answer” (20). Though the riddles we are looking at consist of three-part questions, the similarity is interesting.

12. Near the end of this chapter we read “he war” (*FW* 258). These words which, among other things, communicate the antagonism between the twins, are the focus of Jacques Derrida’s essay, “Two Words for Joyce.”

13. As David Herman notes, the term ‘adjacency pairs’ comes from Stephen C. Levinson’s *Pragmatics* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1983).

14. As mentioned earlier, he focuses mainly on the dialogue between Mutt and Jute, though with the purpose of saying something about the whole text.
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Andrew V. McFeaters was born in Natick, Massachusetts on June 23, 1970. He received his B.A. in English from Florida State University in 1998. He received his M.A. in English from Florida State University in 2003.