

# James Joyce and After



James Joyce and After:  
Writer and Time

Edited by

Katarzyna Bazarnik and Bożena Kucała

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**P U B L I S H I N G**

James Joyce and After: Writer and Time,  
Edited by Katarzyna Bazarnik and Bożena Kucała

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## INTRODUCTION

### KATARZYNA BAZARNIK AND BOŻENA KUČAŁA

In *Narrative Discourse*, Gérard Genette traces the beginnings of the Western literary tradition to the first effects of anachrony, by which he means various types of discordance between story time and narrative time. Whereas folklore narrative, according to Genette, normally conforms to chronology, the *Iliad*, having begun *in medias res*, in line eight goes back in time in order to recount the events that have led to the present situation. Time has always been a fundamental structural device in narrative literature, and hence anachrony, which results from the writer's awareness of the malleability of time, should not be seen as "either a rarity or a modern invention" (Genette 1983, 35-36).

The novel, relying strongly on the temporal development of the plot, initially tended to accord with the chronological framework, although early writers, too, confronted the obvious discrepancy between what were later termed *erzählte Zeit* and *Erzählzeit*, and one of the first novels, *Tristram Shandy*, famously explored the writer's freedom to shape the time of his narrative. Yet Sterne's daring in the treatment of time long remained an isolated exploit, to be matched only in modernist fiction which saw widespread recognition of the possibilities that narrative time offers to writers. If, according to Genette, the Western literary tradition began with anachrony, then the experimental trend in contemporary fiction must be traced back to the modernist re-shaping of narrative time. The narrator of *Orlando* claims:

But Time, unfortunately, though it makes animals and vegetables bloom and fade with amazing punctuality, has no such simple effect upon the mind of man. The mind of man, moreover, works with equal strangeness upon the body of time. An hour, once it lodges in the queer element of the human spirit, may be stretched to fifty or a hundred times its clock length; on the other hand, an hour may be accurately represented on the timepiece of the mind by one second. (Woolf 1945, 57-58)

James Joyce of course played a central role in revolutionising fiction and fictional time at the beginning of the twentieth century. Joyce's experiment, including the use of anachrony—to use Genette's term—is frequently credited with initiating the experimental trend in contemporary fiction. His subsequent works show an increasing degree of technical sophistication, leading to the most radically experimental *Finnegans Wake*, often regarded as a dead end in fiction. And here is where the present book begins. Having come to an end, the text of *Finnegans Wake* takes us back to the cycle of the riverrun of its first sentence. To be read at all, *Finnegans Wake* has to be re-read, re-cycled and re-traced, and seen in the context of the literary tradition as well as of Joyce's own earlier writings, upon which he drew.

The first and largest group of articles, collected in part one, "James Joyce and Commodius Vicus of Recirculation", focuses on particular works by Joyce, showing various degrees of his writerly appropriation of time. The essays constitute a new and comprehensive contribution to Joycean scholarship in that they discuss this aspect of Joyce's oeuvre from different perspectives. The articles cover a wide range of Joyce's writings, from *Finnegans Wake* to *Pomes Penyeach*. Michael O'Brien, for instance, analyses the use of music in "The Dead" as a way of encoding personal and collective memory and links it to modernist notions of music. In the opening article, in turn, Laurent Milesi offers an insightful and systematic discussion of the thematisation of grammatical tenses in Joyce's most enigmatic work. Krzysztof Bartnicki, the Polish translator of *Finnegans Wake*, presents his recent textual discoveries drawing on his intimate knowledge of the text. In the context of the modernist debate about time, Izabela Curyłło-Klag discusses the Joyce-Lewis rivalry in the light of both Lewis's publications and Joyce's response to Lewis in *Finnegans Wake*. Arleen Ionescu's essay examines in detail the significance of time markers in *Ulysses* against the backdrop of the concept(s) of temporality in the book. In an overview of *Dubliners*, Katrin Korkalainen discusses the correspondences between the characters' states of mind and the representation of time in the stories. Ilaria Natali offers an extensive analysis of the temporal dimension in *Pomes Penyeach*, whereas Piotr Paziński in "Ulysses: Memory and Life" charts the convergences and divergences between objective time and time in the minds of the book's characters. Paziński's article is an exemplary study of, as Paul Ricoeur put it, the "varieties of temporal experience that only fiction can explore [...] offered to reading in order to refigure ordinary temporality" (1985, 101).

Modernist fiction self-consciously exposed the disjunction between clock-measured, objective time and the subjective experience of time. The

articles in part two, "Writer and Private Time", investigate a special instance of subjective time, where the writer tries to record his/her own life experience. Katarzyna Bazarnik's article opening the section discusses how writers explore the space of the book to evoke in the reader an impression of simultaneity of reading and writing, which she sees as a distinctive feature of a newly defined genre called *liberature* and relates this to the Bakhtinian concept of *chronotope*. These almost epiphanic moments also figure in Joyce's novels, especially when he describes his characters involved in writing. But, as is well known, a great deal of other autobiographical material found its way into his work; he attached special importance to epiphanies, which he had a habit of recording and subsequently using in works of fiction. Adam Poprawa analyses the temporal aspect of these Joycean epiphanies. The remaining articles in this part offer case studies of other writers contemporary to Joyce, such as Conrad, or later ones (Elizabeth Bishop, J.M. Coetzee), facing the same problem of responding in literature to private time.

The two articles in part three, "Writer and Public Time", defy the cliché that public time must be equated with clock-time and as such presents neither difficulties nor challenges to the writer. On the contrary, writing and rewriting the past (the Victorian age in the novels analysed by Bożena Kucała) or responding to the immediacy of contemporary events (the 9/11 attacks in the books examined by Ewa Kowal) call for new temporal devices in fiction. The terrorist attack on the World Trade Centre, generally seen as a turning point in contemporary history, happened also in the context of the new, chiefly visual, media, foregrounding the need for new means of representation. In the article that concludes the collection Ewa Kowal argues that at the beginning of the twenty-first century the emerging post-9/11 genre reveals new approaches to fictional time, a hundred years after the modernist revolution. Far from being exhausted, the riverrun of fiction flows on.

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**PART ONE:**

**JAMES JOYCE AND COMMIDIUS  
VICUS OF RECIRCULATION**



CHAPTER ONE

FUTURUS/FUTUTUS:  
FUTURE PERFECT AND PRETERITION  
IN *FINNEGANS WAKE*

LAURENT MILESI

Reflections on the peculiar temporalities that inform the writing and thematics of *Finnegans Wake* are as time-worn as the seventeen-year genesis of *Work in Progress* itself. As early as *Our Exagmination Round his Factification for Incamination of Work in Progress* (1929), Marcel Brion had proclaimed, in “The Idea of Time in the Work of James Joyce”: “I imagine that Joyce could compose a book of pure time,” before commenting that the difficulty of Joyce’s recent works for the reader lay in “adapting themselves to the rhythm of each page, in changing ‘time’ abruptly and as often as this is necessary” (1972, 31). No doubt prompted by Joyce himself—like the other essays in this epoch-making collection—Brion’s piece, which ends on a parallel with Einstein’s scientific discovery of the relativity of time, neatly segued Wyndham Lewis’s attack on Joyce and other contemporary writers for their time obsession in *Time and Western Man* (1927; coincidentally also the year of publication of Heidegger’s *Being and Time*).<sup>1</sup> And the *Wake* itself will sanction the centrality of the theme next to its celebrated punning version of the “Twelve”:

If there is a future in every past that is present *Quis est qui non novit quinnigan* and *Qui quae quot at Quinnigan’s Quake!* Stump! His producers are they not his consumers? Your exagmination round his factification for incamination of a warping process. Declaim! (*FW* 496.35-497.03)

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<sup>1</sup> For a temporal dovetailing of Lewis’s attack with Joyce’s drafting of the time-oriented “fables” of the *Wake*, see Milesi 1994.

In famously beginning “in the middle of a moment and of a sentence” (Brion 1972, 31), subverting the traditional expectations of plot chronology, and conflating lexical elements with their attendant semantic temporal universes into “contemporaneous” portmanteau words, Joyce’s own “relative time” would have discovered for fiction the paradox of a pure temporality in its “abstract essence” (31).

Despite these well-known and, as it were, time-honoured landmarks, sufficiently close attention has yet to be paid to the theme’s intricacies in the light of some key textual passages (with the odd preparatory notebook evidence), in which Joyce brings together into syntactically dense and puzzlingly non-linear configurations the three major tenses that shape the course of human action—the alpha and omega that stretches between *past* and *post* (cf. *FW* 348.05-06)—as well as the “moods” that frame them (cf. *FW* 268.19: “it moods prosodes”; *FW* 187.30: “the moods and hesitensies of the deponent”). In particular the performative imbrication of sexual and grammatical (im)potentialities involving the “future” (a notion to be redefined) in an open chain of being-coming-(coming to be)-be/coming (cf. *FW* 269: “may perhaps chance to be about to be in the case to be becoming”), central to the relationships between male and female principles in the *Wake* as well as to the special Wakean brand of Vichian cyclicity, remains to be patiently exhumed, not merely as an inchoate yet grand theory but as a meticulous textual practice. This paper offers to draw together and analyze some of these hitherto unconnected temporal fragments and tease out their overall significance in terms of the work’s obsession with generation and transmission and its larger narrative strategies of (self-)engenderment, with its glimpses of a potential “future perfect” always compromised by acts of preterition. In so doing I will implicitly keep in mind Lacan’s own reconstruction of a similarly disjointed theory of a temporality of the unconscious at work in Freud’s texts as a theoretical touchstone for understanding how these scattered Wakean markers point at the more general structure of *Nachträglichkeit* and preterition which underpins the endless revisitings of the complex primal sin/scene in Joyce’s text and their semantic, interpretive deferrals.

### 1. Foreplay—“Time: the pressant” (*FW* 221.17)

“With futurist onehorse balletbattle pictures and the Pageant of Past History worked up with animal variations [...]” (*FW* 221.17-19) and “Promptings by Elanio Vitale” (*FW* 221.22—an echo of time-oriented Bergson’s “vital impulse”), the casting of the “Mime of Mick, Nick and the Maggies” in *FW* II.1 best captures the special urgency and untenability



of the evanescent present moment—that of the instant (of the) fusion into the Wakean portmanteau, the imperceptible moment of the book’s final *ricorso* on which the split sentence, last-become-first (again), hinges, the fleeting flicker of the revelation of a numinous signature (*FW* 420.19: “Initialled. Gee. Gone”) or of Earwicker’s guilt in his self-deferring stutter, etc. The impossible witnessing or “presentation” of such a transient event could indeed be envisaged as a likely paradigm for the Wakean reader’s frustrated hermeneutic activity, whose recurrent failings therefore inaugurate the perpetual recyclings of the same quested occurrences, dialectically tensed between the interpretation of a trauma and the trauma of interpretation (cf. *infra*).

This “untimeliness” or *intempestivité* of the present, uncomfortably squeezed between a past and a future, was also analyzed by Derrida in *Specters of Marx* as the disjointed, dis-located temporality of ghosts, which turns any ontology into a “hauntology”:

To maintain together [*maintenant*; cf. also Derrida 1986] that which does not hold together [...], all of this can be thought [...] only in a dis-located time of the present, at the joining of a radically dis-jointed time, without certain conjunction. (Derrida 1994, 17)

The “con-temporaneity” of the *pressant* in the *Wake*’s “recursive” Vichian writing is necessary to “hold together” the potentialities of both past and future in the narrative equilibrium of “one continuous present tense integument” (*FW* 186.01).<sup>2</sup> As a suspensive “aactual futule preteriting unstant” (*FW* 143.07-08), always on its way out to a past (“preteriting”) and yet forever anticipating a future (the play on “presently” in *FW* 48.09: “Canbe in some future we shall presently”), it marks at once the impossibility of a pure present(ific)ation and the necessity of its derived re(-)presentations as so many compulsive repetitions, as in the various intermissions in the Mime or in the variously inflected silences that punctuate the *Wake*—for e.g. the “ginnandgo gap” that joins together “antediluvius” B.C. and “annadominant” A.D. (*FW*, p. 14: the Ginnunga gap is the interval between aeons in the *norse Eddas*). Or as *FW* 272.R1 puts it, commenting on a passage featuring the pastness of B.C. and futurity of A.D.: “... THE FUTURE PRESENTATION OF THE PAST”—presumably “The seim anew” (*FW* 215.23).

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<sup>2</sup> For an analogy with the Moebius strip, see Riquelme 1982, 109-112.

## 2. Inter-courses: *futurus/fututus*—future perfect and preterition

The present of enunciation necessarily mediates between past (aorist and preterite) and future, and makes its presence felt. One apposite Wakean formulation of that general temporal law is to be found in the “Lessons” chapter, where grammar features among the subjects of “triv and quad” to be mastered by the warring twins in their “geometrical” conquest of female sexuality:

but even the aoriest chaparound und whatever plaudered perfect anent prettidotes and *haec genua omnia* may perhaps chance to be about to be in the case to be becoming a pale peterwright in spite of all your tense accusatives [...] (FW 269.04-09)<sup>3</sup>

The Latin *casus* or “chance” is the grammatical “case” whereby the aoriest [aorist] chap around, hailed (Latin *plaudo*: to applaud) or gossiped (German *plaudern*) as “perfect”, may bit by bit—note the protractedly slow passage from “to be” to “to become” via “to be about to” and the -ing form in “to be about to be in the case to be becoming”—turn into a pale *preterite*, i.e. something of the past, if like Peter Wright he publishes a scandal-mongering book on the patriotic figure of Parnell (sexual innuendoes lurk in Latin *haec genua omnia*: all those knees, and petticoats [“prettidotes”]). In fact, in gradually be-coming past (or passed; cf. later), he will have become... a (performative) future perfect. (A variation on the above can be found in FW 563.21-23: “You may never know in the preterite all perhaps that you would not believe that you ever even saw to be about to.”)

The text later adds, soon after the mention of the Latin *gerundium* and geraniums, which introduce the theme of the jilted female standing a wallflower (ll. 9-10):

And egg she active or spoon she passive, all them fine clauses in Lindley’s and Murrey’s never brought the participle of a present to a desponent hortatrixy, vindicatively I say it, from her postconditional future (FW 269.28-270.01).

Not the slightest trace or parti(c)i ple of a present can be derived from the “postconditional future” of a desponent woman lacking tenses (as in

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<sup>3</sup> I have attempted a fuller reading of the sexual-grammatical cruxes in this section of FW II.2 in Milesi 1989.

Latin deponent verbs), which can be construed as a more than optative mood with a tense still to be-come.

Here a detour via an uncrossed notebook entry in VI.B.17 58 “footootoo / —is the supine / of the verb to come” is necessary to appreciate the full extent and subtlety of the joint thematization of grammar and sexuality. The “supine” (i.e. lying on its back) is etymologically relevant as a grammatical form for the sexual verb “to come”, while “the verb to come” (in French *à venir / avenir*: future) also conjures *futurus*, the future participle of “to be” in Latin, whose “coming” is held at bay by the enunciative present “is”. (It also turns out that “supine” was added after “third person”, at the beginning of the “gramma’s grammar” section, now *FW* p. 268, at 3.2 draft stage on MS 47478-31 and suppressed in the following revision on MS 47478-132; see *The James Joyce Archive* 52: 19, 26.) Being sexualized, grammar is literally “thrown backwards” or made supine, and its “laws” celebrate “the coming man, the future woman” [i.e. the fucked [*fututa*] woman] (*FW* 246.11-12). This entry may have also spawned the “ological” disquisition, with its Joussean flavour, of *FW* 468.03ff, which shares thematic affinities with the evocation of the heliotrope riddle in the Mime: “[...] for the end is with woman [...], while the man to be is in a worse case after than before since she on the supine satisfies the verg to him!” (ll. 05-08; French *verge*: penis). But an even closer match appears in the Latin passage on *FW* p. 287 (at the beginning of the “intermission” during which the twins change sides), starting “*venite, preteriti*”, which brings together *fututa* and *future*: “*eadem quae ex aggere fututa fuere iterum inter alveum fore futura*”: those things which were to have been on the bank would later be in the bed—possibly another instance of the *Wake*’s “postconditional future” which, in shaping a grammatical “iterative” trajectory from preterite to future, ties together sexual coming (*fututus*) and grammatical be-coming (*futurus*).

Another grammatical improvization on this generic pattern can be found in *FW* 271.21-22 and shows how the Wakean future perfect can be logically derived by prolonging a present-present perfect-future sequence, as in *FW* 269.05-10: “there’s a split in the infinitive from to have to have been to will be.” With its compounds “have been” and “will be” severed from “to”, which is made to tie with “from”, the whole process of temporal derivation or slippage at work in the sentence gives an insight into the more significant ambivalence of the split within the first-last sentence, which destabilizes the seemingly confident temporal linearity of Vichian motifs like “Anna was, Livia is, Plurabelle’s to be” (*FW* 215.24) or, in the next cycle, “Mammy was, Mimmy is, Minuscoline’s to be” (*FW* 226.14-15; cf. Vico 1984, §349).

As Thomas Pynchon's *Gravity's Rainbow* also brilliantly thematized, to be a *preterite*, in Calvinist theology, is in a sense to be "fucked", i.e. "passed over" (as by Divine Providence) and therefore *foutu/fututus*, without a future (*futurus*). Whether as Puritan doctrine or, more specifically to the *Wake*, as a figure of rhetoric whereby one draws attention to a subject while explicitly feigning to gloss over it in a kind of "nat language", *preterition* (from Latin: to go beyond, hence pass over) offers some tantalizing analogy with the psychoanalytical mechanisms of denial (*Verneinung*) and repression, best seen in Joyce's text in the frequent lapses or "hesitancies" of the protagonist teetering on the verge of confession and self-incrimination. (And the slippery craft of portmanteau coinages could itself be envisaged as the all-pervasive manifestation of a denial complex powerfully at work through narration and writing alike.) That the sexual act, though involving the promise of conception and (self-)(re)generation, should be regarded as such—cf. also its possibly unsatisfactory conclusion in *FW* III.4, mixed with the complex court case of Honuphrius' sexual perversions—reminds us that the periodic renewal of the patriarchal order rests on a potent political repression at work in the procreation of future generations which will first secure the demise of its present totemic figures.

*Finnegans Wake* incessantly defers the future tense (of semantic revelation-as-truth, etc.) through such acts of preterition, (perfect) future be-coming past as "future perfect", preterite being "fucked" (*fututus*) without a future. By the time the reader meets again the more than perfect (i.e. pluperfect) of "had passencore rearrived" (*FW* 3.04-05), with its innuendoes of future tense, they will have realized that the "beginning" of *Finnegans Wake* is deferred until the "end", or what they, about to meet it for the second time, took to be the end: in effect, the re-anticipation of "riverrun", etc. As Edward Said noted, *Finnegans Wake*, at once cyclical and deferred, "blur[s] the distinction between beginning and beginning-again, or writing and rewriting, or positive text and interpretation" (1975, 222), to which we may add: between past (present perfect / pluperfect) and future (perfect), the trauma of the former being revisited in the endlessly recirculating reinterpretations of the latter.

### **3. Post-factum: The *Wake*'s "intrepidation" of *Nachträglichkeit***

The sexual and temporal (grammatical) "hesitancies" in the *Wake* restage the traumatic displacements of a forever foreclosed primal sin/scene, caught between the end and the (re)beginning of a lassoing first sentence.

That, according to one canonical type of Wakean exegesis, it all takes place in a dream finds uncanny theoretical support in the concluding sentences of Freud's *The Interpretation of Dreams*—also recalled by John Forrester's chapter entitled, after Freud's very last words, "A Perfect Likeness of the Past" in *The Seductions of Psychoanalysis* (Forrester 1990, 90-96). Let me quote in turn the very end, whose context is Freud's musings as to whether dreams lead us into the future and, if so, what kind of future this is:

[...] this future, which the dreamer takes as the present, has been moulded by his indestructible wish into a perfect likeness of the past (Forrester 1990, 90).

Dreams indeed lead us into the future but, glosses Forrester,

they do so because the dreamer takes his or her present to be the future, whereas this present is, unbeknownst to the dreamer, a perfect likeness [...] of the past. In other words dreams create a future, but only insofar as that future is like the past. (90-91)

To put it differently, the theatricalization of some Wakean episodes—especially the Mime, with its "Time: the pressant"—bears witness to the double *répétition*, i.e. at once rehearsal *and* repetition, that haunts Wakean identity and eventhood, and confers upon them the double urgency of unrepresentability and *de-rived* (cf. Latin *derivare*, from *rivus*: stream) re-presentability. Narrative invariants must be re-presented time and again, and in various guises, to palliate the fact that they can never be presented or remain "absent": "*All the presents are determining as regards for the future the howabouts of their past absences which they might see on at hearing could they once smell of tastes from touch*" (FW 355.02-05).

Both at the levels of plot writing and reading, this raises the issue of the relationship between past trauma and future (re)interpretations as reenactments. And in this respect one of the crucial lessons afforded by the vicissitudes of the critical debate around Poe's tale of "The Purloined Letter"—Barbara Johnson's view of psychoanalysis as the repetition of a trauma of interpretation, rather than as a classically conceived interpretive solution to an earlier traumatic occurrence (1988, esp. 245)—could be profitably applied to the *Wake*, in which, to echo Shoshana Felman in her own "analysis" of "The Case of Poe" (1987, esp. 44), repetition compulsion repeats the interpretation of difference rather than identity—difference being conceived here as the explicit temporization of identity as already a principle of deferred or re-presented sameness: "The seim

anew”. Like the inchoate Freudian theory about the temporality of the unconscious—and precisely because the latter has to be performatively predicated upon the deferred action of a traumatic event that shapes its retroactive nature—the structure of *Finnegans Wake* informs the shift from an original confidence in the power of interpreting, hence recovering, a “lost” past *Urszene* to the traumatic reinscriptions of the ceaseless failures of its “intrepider[s]” (FW 467.05). It is this particular movement or trajectory, timidly surfacing in such choice scattered moments as the ones analyzed above, which informs the *Wake*’s special brand of deferred action or *Nachträglichkeit*, with its preteritions and future perfects “passencore rearrived”—not yet yet always already.

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## CHAPTER TWO

### *FINNEGANS WAKE*, FEATURING TIME

#### KRZYSZTOF BARTNICKI

Some basic statements about time in James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* (hereafter *FW*) are:

- (1) Time is downgraded to space.
- (2) Time is down-to-Earth and down-to-Man.
- (3) Time is (of the) awake.
- (4) Time is down-with-God.
- (5) Time is circular (so, futureless).
- (6) Time is reversible and quantum-scale-observable.
- (7) Time is divisible.
- (8) Time is parasitic and exposed to mortality.

Languages allow mixing of words referring to time and space.<sup>1</sup> In that regard, *FW* has (or is) an exemplary mix of the temporal and the spatial. The concurrence of space and time is frequently noted in *FW*.<sup>2</sup> However, while able to organise much of the book-space,<sup>3</sup> Joyce would be much less

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<sup>1</sup> In English, there is a *length of time*. And a *period* of it. Somebody shook Bon Scott *all night long*. We say: *long time no see*. The Bible says: *the time is short*. We measure *life span*. Follow *local time*. Need microspace-taking atoms of caesium to define the second. We state macrospace distances in light-years. In Polish, *pacierz* (= Our Father), *zdrowaśka* (= Hail Mary) or *różaniec* (= Rosary) mean the time it takes to say these prayers—but also any distance one covers within their prayer-time.

<sup>2</sup> A quick introductory selection: “Eins within a space” (*FW* 152.18), “this space of our couple of hours” (*FW* 154.25-26), “Next place you are up town” (*FW* 172.05), “the land of lost time” (*FW* 454.33), “a hundred foot later” (*FW* 518.03-04) and “how much times we live in” (*FW* 555.03-04).

<sup>3</sup> Primarily, books are dimensional. Describing a book, we are more likely to state its size, number of pages, fonts—rather than to specify how many hours the writer spent on it. The borders of books are most often book covers. Books can be put on dimensional shelves—hardly in sands of time. It is not rare to remind the reader that *FW* was in progress for 17 years, but this is simply to awe the mortal reader.

able to arrange his book-time. With the 3 D's labelled as important as the T, he could resume some control over time, downplay the importance of time, pretend space and time are interchangeable. He welcomes stories about when and where time and space were neighbours or one—such as the beginning of the Biblical myth of Genesis. He introduces the brothers: Shem [associated with time] and Shaun [associated with space]; they are twins, so, presumably, peers. Joyce wants us to believe time is not infinite (since, were it infinite, it would be beyond the reach of a mortal). He does not plunge into things about which he cannot make firm enough statements.

A major preset for *FW* is the choice of *our* planet and *our* race.<sup>4</sup> Joyce chooses the Earth—not Mars, the Sun, a remote star or a rock, the Moon, a comet, a black hole or an imaginary celestial body inhabited by imaginary beings. His universe is so geocentric and egocentric (in short: anthropocentric). *FW*-time is not cosmic, but down-to-Earth. And down-to-Man. More, it is not about human *existence*, but about human *life*. The difference consists in awareness. *Existence* contains times over which we have no conscious authority. *Having the time of our life* means enjoying something greatly. And we can hardly greatly enjoy our sleep. When we say we enjoy our sleep, we mean the pleasant things we dream about. Sleeping in *FW* is not an unconscious period of organic, physiological reinforcement; it is an action-packed, colifeful course of events that we could daydream of in broad daylight.

When Joyce states a premise “One great part of every human existence is passed in a state which cannot be rendered sensible by the use of wideawake language, cutanddry grammar and goahead plot”,<sup>5</sup> in order to offer us a text governed by a dream logic, he is just lulling the wool over our eyes to instil a false sense of logicity. Joyce could not narrate this sensibly unattainable part of human existence. Where it is impossible to render something sensible with sensible tools, it is futile to use non-sensible tools to this end. Albeit sensible tools can make non-sensible output, non-sensible tools cannot yield sensibly. *FW* cannot portray our dreaming phase. What we (sensibly) make out of *FW* is no dream. Thus, time in *FW* is never (of the) asleep, though the wakeful author loudly mimics what he imagines to be everyman's dream. But why is Joyce such a pretender? For one thing, obscurity covers phobias and urges, including those which are dirty or scatty. Go-around plots make the reader's thinking go round, too dizzy to ask questions “why the circle?”. On a more

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<sup>4</sup> By “race” I mean “humans as we know them”, as opposed to any co-human or post-human construct.

<sup>5</sup> In a letter to Harriet Shaw Weaver, 1926, quoted on the Web, e.g. by Wikipedia. *Finnegans Wake*. <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Finnegans\\_wake](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Finnegans_wake)>

general level, *FW* is a tale told by the idiom, full of smokescreen fuming, giving out a new faith.

In a book focused on Man-on-Earth there can be little room for God-of-Space. To quote James Atherton: “the basic idiom underlying *Finnegans Wake* is that the artist is the God of his creation. Joyce seems to have gone a step further than that and considered that the work on which he was engaged was itself a new sacred book” (1974, 169). So, Joyce, who is down-to-Earth, is down-with-God (other than himself). There are numerous references to various sacred books, religions, deities etc. but there is no incongruity—they are Man’s work. And after we simplify “God” to mean “our knowledge of God” to mean “anything we have not learned yet”—the natural opposition of God is understanding. Any discovery scientists make diminishes the realm of a religious God. Any discovery Joyceans make diminishes the religious appeal of *FW*. Yet, as Joyce-God wants to keep us partly in the dark about His work, James the Godless downgrades any competition by means of quite a lot of science—science that is down-to-Earth, obviously. Joyce does not dwell on the *pre*-temporal and the *pre*-spatial, on issues “before the creation of time, when nothingness was all” (as the poet puts it).<sup>6</sup>

There are two key life-preserving mechanisms for *FW*: cryptic language and circular time. The first is a field sown with sensations and associations so generously, and so purposefully unobvious that it is safer to assume that it contains more than less, that it became a wordier-than-thou mechanism whose potency outgrew its creator’s, and with new exegeses and readings which Joyce himself might have never intended (though he might have wished to have it that way), it secures itself a longer life. The latter is a way not to go ahead. When time moves in circles, there is no future—that can be proven wrong. There are only prophecies and explanations offered by the reader, not the book. Prophets—not the religion—are blamed for any misprophecies.

Knowing it is geometrically feasible to make stereographic projections, Joyce let his circle be a sphere, mapped onto a plane. It has already been thoroughly discussed that the sphere Joyce chose to be projected on the leaves of *FW* is our human globe.<sup>7</sup> In such a universe, Joyce is not afraid of the grandfather paradox, time dilation, problems associated with time

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<sup>6</sup> Or what is smaller than Planck length or shorter than Planck time. How is any post-temporal or post-spatial.

<sup>7</sup> For details see Katarzyna Bazarnik’s *Joyce, Liberateure and Writing of the Book*: <[http://hjs.ff.cuni.cz/archives/v8\\_2/essays/bazarnik.htm](http://hjs.ff.cuni.cz/archives/v8_2/essays/bazarnik.htm)>

Mark that the longitude of Dublin is 6°15' West, but as we move more toward the Phoenix Park, it becomes 6°28'.

travel. His characters swap identities, ages, places; parents come forward as their progeny and children are known as their ancestors. The paradox is not possible when grandfathers may be “she’s”—their own sisters or wives.

The tale is repeatable every time 628 flows into 003 and the primary cycle is closed. Since *FW* imitates the space we live in, its reversibility may be limited to the quantum scale. It is said overtly a (!) “quantum theory” is being worked out (*FW* 149.35). Joyce pre-echoes Schrödinger’s cat in its quantum superposition of coexisting (yet opposing) states of being alive and dead. After we lift the lid and look into the box, we either catch the feline soul or let the animal out alive.<sup>8</sup> Further, *FW* functions in unison with the *uncertainty principle* (which Heisenberg formulated in 1927), claiming it is impossible to know both the exact position and the exact momentum of an object at the same time.<sup>9</sup> There is *FW*’s *hesitancy principle*—at a given time, it is impossible to know any word’s exact spelling, pronunciation, etymology, connotation, denotation etc.<sup>10</sup>

At the level of singular signs, icons, ideas—though not at the level of the whole book—temporal symmetries may be observed alongside spatial

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<sup>8</sup> Cf “we are lufted to ourselves as the soulfisher when he led the cat out of the bout” (*FW* 118.34-35). Only after we steal a peep at the cat, we can settle on its condition: “made a cat with a peep” (*FW* 420.05-06) and “the Cat and Cage. O, I see and see.” (*FW* 563.19). Peeping Tom can tell. (*FW* 196.22).

<sup>9</sup> See “at the present momentum, potential as I am” (*FW* 304.08), below where H. Poincaré is mentioned (“Pointcarried”). Also note Phillip F. Herring’s *Joyce’s Uncertainty Principle* (Princeton UP, 1987). For an additional discussion of *FW* with (or along) Newton’s physics, Einstein’s relativity, Max Planck’s Quantum Theory, quantum mechanics see: Andrzej Duszenko’s *The Joyce of Science. New Physics in Finnegans Wake*. <<http://duszenko.northern.edu/joyce/index.html>>

<sup>10</sup> Every “no-where” may become “now-here” (or “knowher”, *FW* 101.17). Every “whence” (= from where) may co-mean “when’s”. A hole may equal a whole. (Cf. *FW* 434.22). Binary logic can go—or go astray. “Es voes, ez noes, nott voes, ges, noun. It goes. It does not go.” (*FW* 245.16-17). Next to the otherwise regular connectives: “if”, “only if”, “if and only if” (*iff*), there is *erriff* (*FW* 205.23), *iffiff* (*FW* 284.15). *Likeand* (*FW* 332.15) may look “like an end” or be “like nand” (or “not and”, or the Sheffer stroke function). Sometimes there is place for Lukasiewicz-like 3-value logic (there is truth, there is false, there is something else). Or someplaces there is time for more fuzzy logics between dreaming and being awake. Ways of thought that follow the tetralemma of Nagarjuna, pre-pronounced in *Ulysses* are in *FW* again. Nagarjuna suggested: 1) X. 2) Not X. 3) X and not X. 4) Neither X nor X. In a Joycean way, these statements would be: 1) Yes. 2) No. 3) Yo. 4) Nes. Words 3) and 4) are spoken by Bloom in chapter 15 of *Ulysses*.

symmetries—“events” happening in both directions of the time arrow.<sup>11</sup> Who said we should always read *FW* from left to right, top to bottom?

An example of a very fine-scale observation made possible by *FW* but probably not planned by Joyce, a revelation by a reader but not by the writer, is the story of Genesis, when Space met Time, found in the “last” sentence of *FW* (628.15-16), sporting a tiny universe in its own right—the string “*A way a lone a last a loved a long the*”:

A...

In its beginning there is A, Alpha-god, the Creator, more mysterious, indefinite. The end is *the*, the Created, more definite. More numerous, too:<sup>12</sup> the one-lettered A spawns triplets: *the*. See where the capital and small letters lie to learn that the offspring are not so important as the genitor. Images of A are *a*’s: they emanate God, lowercased, inferior.

...way...

A [Alpha] has His way. A creates Man. God’s work was exhausting, or so was the output: *Way* co-spelled: *wey* is an ancient unit of *weight*. Or do we choose to read it *why* (co-spelled *wye*): to have the why and the wherefore there is A-god.

...a lone...

Man is lone (*all one*). A creates Woman.

...a last...

Is Eve “a last”? She is a *lass*. Adam was *a-lassed*—or *a’lasst*—added a girl. *Last* is another unit of measure, from German *Last*, to mean *load*. More, it is a shoemaker’s block, its etymology tracking Old English *last*, “track, footprint, trace”. Depending on what we pick up, Eve is either a

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<sup>11</sup> Examples are: “nathandjoe” reversible into *Jonathan* (*FW* 003.12), anagrams, semi-anagrams (such as “Tunc” that reads *cunt* (*FW* 122.23); or “Ethiaop lore” that reads *heliotrope* (*FW* 223.28); “Soldi” that reads *Isold* (*FW* 280.23), “marhaba” that reads *Abraham* (*FW* 418.17); “bludyn” that reads *Dublyn* (*FW* 593.03), mirror words such as “Dumlat” (*FW* 030.10), “skool” (*FW* 308.63); “Mehs”, “Pu Nuseht” (*FW* 593.22-23), encoded words (e.g. underneath “Approach to lead our passage!”, *FW* 262.02), boustrophedonic writing (*FW* 114.16-17), reconfigured strings of initials and more. Time(space) is reversed in names such as *Eve and Adam’s* (*FW* 003.01). The reader is encouraged to look out for letter-to-number or number-to-letter replacements. Every time we see “time” we are permitted to read “mite” or “emit” and shift corresponding numerical values. When Joyce puts “till Daleth” (*FW* 020.17) we may see “till Four”, or “Door Tilt”, or “Hall Titled” or “Lethal Tild”, whatever whichever way we choose.

<sup>12</sup> Entropy increasing: *the* is the most common word in English (*a* is the fifth, usually past *of*, *and*, *to*). Two of *the*’s letters—T and E—precede A on lists of the commonest letters in English.

follower in Adam's footsteps or his ballast. (Anyway, Man and Woman last—but only until the Fall triggered by...can we see Alastor, or?<sup>13</sup>)

...*a loved*...

Man is still loved by A.

...*a long*...

A longs for seeing Man again.

A...*the*

There is *Athe*, the supreme deity of Atheists. And when we abandon the Judaeo-Christian Alpha-male order, free within the sentence, we read the name back:

...*the*...A

Read: sun-, moon-, dawn-mothering Titaness, goddess Thea (Theia), Mother-Earth, the feminine cause.<sup>14</sup>

The space of the sentence contains invisible things. In the book draft version there was a string “a lost” (between “a lone” and “a last”)—it got lost. Or was it not lost—less so overlooked—but deliberately removed, so that Joyce might enjoy having 28 letters rather than 33? (Choosing the female, lunar number and / or the leap year 28 of Moon over the male, Christ number and / or the common year 33 when the crucified body was lost, *ad inferos*.) Or preferring 11 words to unlucky 13?

There is no dot to bring the sentence to a close. Joyce adds the time and space of his making, PARIS 1922-1939, a part of the text.<sup>15</sup> The story of Genesis (or broadly, history of Man) is not ripe yet to be concluded with an Armageddon. There is time to reach beyond “*the*” and into “*riverrun*” of the first sentence. By doing so, the reader defies the (allegedly) Heraclitean claim that, given that everything is in flux, we can step in the same river but once.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>13</sup> In Greek myths Alastor is the avenger of evil deeds. More generally: a deity who avenges wrongs committed by man. Here it can be Satan who avenges the Rise of Man, or Nemesis-like archangel who avenges the Fall of Man. See Alastor between Baal and Astarte in “Baalastartey” (*FW* 091.14), or “pulling alast stark daniel with alest doog” (*FW* 354.03). See Alastor-like house of Satan in “house of satin alustrelike” (*FW* 032.26). Hear *Alastor* echo in Aleister Crowley (1875-1947). [Did not Crowley write “The Genius of Mr. James Joyce” in 1923?]

<sup>14</sup> “Theia” is also the name of a protoplanet that hit the Earth a few billion years ago. Some of Theia sank into the Earth, but some debris became the Moon.

<sup>15</sup> “PARIS” starts with a P, the 3. letter of the ALP triad—the initials of the main heroine of *FW*. And “1922-1939” equals (minus) seventeen, and indeed it is the seventeenth line of the page that is appropriate for doing that kind of maths.

<sup>16</sup> Defies half of the aphorism, in fact. *FW* flows from the river of page 3 to the sea of page 628 and from the sea to the river again, granting the reader *the same river*