TIME, HISTORY, AND MEMORY IN JAMES JOYCE’S *ULYSSES*

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by

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Ulysses is the infamous banned book, written by James Joyce and published in 1922. It depicts the lives and thoughts of Stephen Dedalus, and Leopold and Molly Bloom from 8:00 A.M., June 16, 1904, into the early morning hours of June 17. For the sake of convenience, Ulysses is categorized as a novel, though Joyce takes many liberties in the structure and style of his book. Ulysses consists of three sections corresponding to those of Homer’s Odyssey: the “Telemachia,” the “Wanderings of Ulysses,” and the “Homecoming.” Three episodes compose the first and final sections, which frame the other twelve episodes of the “Wanderings,” totaling eighteen episodes, each corresponding to a part of the Odyssey. The episodes are as follows: “Telemachus,” “Nestor,” “Proteus,” “Calypso,” “Lotus Eaters,” “Hades,” “Aeolus,” “Lestrygonians,” “Scylla and Charybdis,” “Wandering Rocks,” “Sirens,” “Cyclops,” “Nausicaa,” “Oxen of the Sun,” “Circe,” “Eumaeus,” “Ithaca,” and “Penelope.”

Ulysses begins a little over a year after Joyce’s first novel, A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, which ends April 26, 1903, before Stephen leaves Ireland for France. In the interim between A Portrait and Ulysses, Stephen goes to Paris but is called home by a telegram from his father, telling him that his mother is dying. When Joyce introduces Stephen in “Telemachus,” he is still mourning his deceased mother. The first three episodes of Ulysses focus on the moody, brooding Stephen Dedalus, who is no longer
living in his father’s house. Instead, he lives in the Martello Tower with Buck Mulligan and an Englishman, named Haines, who is visiting Ireland to conduct a type of anthropological study for a book he plans to write on the Irish. Upon his introduction in “Telemachus,” Stephen is displeased with his living arrangements, and he claims that he will not sleep at the Martello Tower. After Stephen leaves the tower around 9:00 A.M., he travels to the Dalkey private school for boys, where he teaches a history lesson and Milton’s poem, “Lycidas.” Next, he talks to his employer, Mr. Garret Deasy, who requests that Stephen talks to his literary friends about publishing his op-ed on foot and mouth disease. After he departs from the school, Stephen walks along Sandymount Strand thinking of such philosophical matters as time, space, and identity.

After the first three episodes, which focus on Stephen Dedalus, the time of day returns to 8:00 A.M., and an introduction to Leopold Bloom inaugurates the “Wanderings of Ulysses.” The first five episodes of the “Wanderings” follow Bloom throughout Dublin as he purchases a pork kidney, takes a bath, attends Paddy Dignam’s funeral, visits the offices of the Freeman’s Journal and the Evening Telegraph, and walks to the National Library. At the library, the focus changes from Bloom back to Stephen, who is giving his lecture on Hamlet to some of Dublin’s literary elite, in “Scylla and Charybdis.” Following Stephen’s lecture is the “Wandering Rocks” episode, which is composed of nineteen sections depicting different scenes happening simultaneously throughout Dublin.

The “Wanderings” continues charting Bloom’s journey to the Ormond Hotel bar and restaurant, at which point he sees his wife’s paramour, Blazes Boylan, en route to
consume his affair with Molly. Bloom then heads to Barney Kiernan’s pub to wait for Martin Cunningham, who he will accompany to Mrs. Dignam’s house, in order to settle some complications with her late husband’s insurance policy. While waiting for Martin, Bloom talks to some fellow Dubliners, one of whom is the Citizen, an anti-Semitic, Irish nationalist. Bloom angers the Citizen and is chased from the bar, escaping the Citizen and his dog, Garryowen, in a car with Martin Cunningham. The next episode, “Nausicaa,” begins after Bloom’s trip to Mrs. Dignam’s home. He lounges on the strand, where he masturbates to Gerty MacDowell’s subtle peep show and finally falls asleep. After the excitement on the strand, Bloom pays a visit to the Maternity hospital, where a friend of his, Mrs. Purefoy, is in labor. At the hospital, Bloom finds a heavily intoxicated Stephen Dedalus, whose friends seem to be plotting against him. From the hospital, Bloom follows Stephen in order to look after him. Stephen ambles to Nighttown, Dublin’s red light district, where he causes a ruckus in a brothel by hitting a chandelier with his ashplant in a drunken hallucination. The inebriated Stephen flees from the brothel into the street and instigates a physical altercation with two English soldiers. The “Wanderings” concludes with one of the soldiers punching Stephen, knocking him to the ground, curled in the fetal position. The “Homecoming” commences with Bloom helping Stephen up from the ground and out of the mess he created. In “Eumaeus,” Bloom walks Stephen to a cabman’s shelter to help him sober up, and, after, he invites Stephen to his house on Eccles Street, where they drink hot cocoa and talk. Stephen finally leaves Bloom’s house in the early hours of the morning, refusing Bloom’s offer to stay the night. Finally, Bloom retires to his bed—the very same bed in which Molly and Blazes
consummated their affair. The closing episode, “Penelope,” takes place entirely in Molly’s mind. The unpunctuated narration imitates her stream-of-consciousness narrative, which ends in her famous affirmative statement, “yes I said yes I will Yes” (U 18.1608-9).

The plot of *Ulysses* is mundane and quotidian. In fact, some readers complain that nothing happens in the novel. Stephen, the aspiring artist, does not compose any writing of note; Bloom does not stop the affair between Molly and Blazes when he has the chance to intercept Blazes at the Ormond Hotel, and, even worse, the consequent sex scene is not revealed; Stephen and Bloom do not fulfill each other’s reciprocal desires for a father and son; the two opportunities for fights at Barney Kiernan’s pub and outside of the brothel conclude anticlimactically; even the horserace, which a complete underdog wins, is skipped over. It is as if Joyce is mocking the reader’s desires and expectations by teasing her with sex, violence, progress, and closure. None of these expectations are met, but Joyce never set out to satisfy such expectations—he had a much larger objective.

Joyce was writing *Ulysses* amid much political tumult. The Irish were trying to regain the Ireland that they believed existed before the English colonized their country. To achieve this, many Irish nationalist groups were created to de-Anglicize and restore autonomy to Ireland. Joyce, who had left Ireland for Trieste, Austria-Hungary, in 1904, watched the political uproar from afar and included it in *Ulysses*. Joyce’s unique political stance against English imperialism and Irish nationalism manifests itself in the themes of time, history, and memory. In *Ulysses*, time and history become political vessels steered by oppressors such as the English Empire, the Catholic Church, Irish nationalist and
cultural groups, and capitalism. Stephen Dedalus and Leopold Bloom rely on their memories to create and retain their identities within the all-encompassing hold of time and history.

Chapter II, “‘Never know anything about it. Waste of time’: Reactions to Standardized Time in Ulysses,” provides the historical context for the imposition of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT), after the International Meridian Conference, held in Washington D.C., in 1884. This decision subjected the world to an English system of standardized time, at the request of President Chester Arthur. In 1916, after the Easter Rising, GMT replaced Dunsink time in Ireland exacerbating a feeling of English oppression. This feeling of oppression is represented in the “Lestrygonians” episode of Ulysses, when Bloom mistakes GMT for Dunsink time. His confusion ultimately leads to a feeling of helplessness when he is unable to remember what the word “parallax” means. Consequently, he decides that he should ask a priest or a professor about parallax, thereby relinquishing his power to authority figures. Caught in the middle of a political battle between English and Irish time, Bloom finds that he is unable to orient himself in space and time. His inability is contrasted by Molly Bloom’s stream-of-conscious monologue in the final episode, “Penelope.” Molly redeems the individual’s control of time by upholding her stream-of-consciousness time and relegating standardized time outside of her psyche.

The following chapter, “‘Fabled by the daughters of memory’: Stephen’s Rejection of History,” presents the paralyzing, cyclic history of Ireland, which is perpetuated by English imperialism, as well as nostalgia for an Irish past that never was.
In order for Stephen to “forge in the smithy of [his] soul the uncreated conscience of [his] race,” he must break free of the cycles of Irish history by subverting the objectivity of history (AP 276). Stephen reasons that because history is reliant upon memory, and memory is inherently subjective, then, history, too, must be subjective. By this logic, history can be manipulated by memory. Such reasoning provides Stephen with the ability to change his past.

Building on Stephen’s desire to free himself from history, Chapter IV, “Navigating the Past: Memory as Compass in A Portrait and Ulysses,” observes the roles of memory in Stephen’s and Bloom’s construction and recovery of their respective identities. Stephen aims to will his identity free from such social constructs as betrayers, his father’s voice, and Irish nationalist and cultural groups. Stephen’s memory helps him to navigate these social constructs and to imagine a number of different sources from which he can create an identity. Bloom’s identity crisis arises from the loss of his position in his home and family, as male suitors, Blazes and Bannon, threaten to usurp his wife, Molly, and daughter, Milly. Molly and Milly define Bloom’s identity as husband and father, and, without those roles, Bloom fears he will lose his identity and the happiness he derives from a full house. In order to provide a well-known alternative narrative for the reader, as well as for Bloom, to interpret his own situation, Joyce alludes to the “Rip Van Winkle” narrative. The comparison of Bloom to Rip foreshadows what will become of Bloom’s relationship with Molly and, consequently, his identity, if he continues to be a submissive husband.
Finally, the conclusion speculates on the relationship between Joyce and his characters and the similarities of their actions in creating a distinctly Irish piece of literature, a feat which Joyce felt his contemporaries fell short of. By freeing himself from the political bonds of time and history, Joyce afforded his characters the opportunity to escape the stifling burden of English imperialism and Irish nationalism.
CHAPTER II

“NEVER KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT IT. WASTE OF TIME”: REACTIONS TO STANDARDIZED TIME IN ULYSSES

James Augustine Aloysius Joyce was born on February 2, 1882. Approximately two years later, the International Meridian Conference met in Washington, D.C., to establish a fixed, universal system of time. The resulting system was christened Greenwich Mean Time (GMT), named after the district in London, England, which housed the Royal Observatory. This system became the official global time standard to which all other times were measured. To give some perspective of the temporal hodgepodge before time was universalized, Stephen Kern, in his *The Culture of Time and Space*, writes, “Around 1870, if a traveler from Washington to San Francisco set his watch in every town he passed through, he would set it over two hundred times” (12). This confusing multiplicity of times was not particular to America, for Europe and the rest of the world had myriad regional times, too. The change in the nature of time-keeping was brought about by a wave of technological advances which had already begun to change the way people thought about time and space. The bicycle, electric railroad system, radio, telegraph, and telephone made transportation and communication over expansive distances more expedient and convenient; they brought far away peoples and cultures together. While such progress in transportation and communication may seem a great advancement, its ability to connect otherwise separated peoples also created
tensions. For instance, in his chapter on the July Crisis, Kern argues that the new speed at which world leaders could communicate brought about rushed decisions and deadlines, which ultimately led to the First World War (286). Time, and the manner in which people interacted with it, created tensions between individuals and nations. These tensions manifested themselves in works of art and literature, and influenced early twentieth-century intellectuals. In this chapter, I will provide historical background and speculation on James Joyce’s life and the ways in which changes in time and the keeping of time informed one of the greatest novels of the twentieth century, *Ulysses*, and I will examine the political and personal impact that standardized time has on Leopold and Molly Bloom in the “Lestrygonians” and “Penelope” episodes of *Ulysses*. These two episodes present the most dynamic picture of the relationship between the individual and time. In “Lestrygonians,” Leopold Bloom walks the streets of Dublin, having just left the offices of the *Freeman’s Journal* and heads towards the National Library. On his route, he looks for a restaurant that suits his tastes. Among the many things that Bloom thinks about during his walk is time. While passing the Ballast Office, Bloom notices that the time ball, which is “a ball on a pole rigged to drop at a specific mean time . . . so that ships’ chronometers could be checked,” is down, and he assumes that it is after one according to Ireland’s standard time, Dunsink time (Gifford and Seidman 160). Later in the episode, Bloom realizes that he was mistaken because the time ball drops at 1:00 P.M. Greenwich Mean Time, twenty-five minutes ahead of Dunsink time. This temporal

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1 The July Crisis of summer 1914 was the period of diplomatic dialogue among the European powers, which ultimately led to World War I.
confusion, as well his not recalling the meaning of the word “parallax,” ultimately makes Bloom feel helpless to orient himself in time and space. “Penelope” provides a juxtaposition to Bloom’s helplessness, as Molly’s stream-of-consciousness monologue calls for a time based in the individual’s mind and body, reconstituting the power to temporally orient oneself.

a. Joyce in Trieste: A Fin-de-siècle Idea Center

On October 20, 1904, at the fresh ages of twenty-two and twenty respectively, James Joyce and Nora Barnacle, having met each other only four months prior in Dublin, arrived in the Austro-Hungarian port city of Trieste. Despite a four-year flight to neutral Zurich, Switzerland (June 1915 to October 1919), spanning World War I, the Joyces spent the better part of the early twentieth century in Trieste. According to McCourt’s chronology in his book, The Years of Bloom: James Joyce in Trieste 1904-1920, it was not until July of 1920 that they finally left Trieste for Paris (252-53). In examining Joyce’s temporal-spatial coordinates in history alongside the changing definitions of time and space due to legislative, academic, and technological developments, one might wonder whether a better environment could have been fashioned for a bourgeoning young artist than the city of Trieste. The multiplicity of perspectives and the burgeoning popularity of psychoanalysis and the cinema in Trieste offered Joyce a unique contrast to the imposition of a single standardized time system. Ironically, while the idea of multiple times existing within and beyond the individual were accepted in such fields as psychology, physics, sociology, and anthropology, a system of standardized time encompassed the globe. Yet, Joyce’s time in Trieste influenced his ideas of time in
Ulysses, as he illustrated, negotiated, and even managed the oppressive force of standardized time.

A lively city, Trieste had much to offer a young writer such as Joyce. McCourt illuminates the social and cultural nourishment that awaited Joyce in Trieste and its resulting manifestations in Joyce’s literary works. There were no shortages of intellectual stimulation, McCourt explains, from the active theater scene to engaging academic lectures, some of which Joyce presented himself. The mélange of languages and medley of cultures encouraged Joyce’s experimentation with language and expanded his cosmopolitan outlook. Trieste also harbored lively political and artistic movements such as the socialist movement, which Joyce briefly joined, and the Futurist movement, whose philosophy he did not agree with but which nonetheless influenced some sections of Ulysses (McCourt 67, 160-67).

Trieste was a center for the sharing of ideas in the arts, politics, and the sciences. Of the latter category, the psychoanalytic movement was a popular topic of conversation. Joyce was informed of the new psychological movement by Italo Svevo’s nephew, Dr. Eduardo Weiss, who was “one of [Sigmund] Freud’s earliest pupils and the first to introduce the subject into Italy” (McCourt 228). Psychoanalysis, popular in Trieste, became vital to many works of literature in the modernist canon which placed the abstract world of the mind above the concrete world of physical environments. In “Lestrygonians” and “Penelope,” Joyce’s use of stream-of-consciousness narrative with its complex representation of the human mind is a testament to the time and place in which he lived. Indeed, it is through the interworkings of Molly’s monologue that the
individual regains the power of temporal orientation from the imperious clock faces, time balls, and church bells representative of English Imperialism and the Catholic Church.

Another feature that Trieste boasted, and which hugely impacted Joyce’s writing, especially in terms of temporal experimentation, was cinema. In 1909, Trieste possessed twenty-one cinemas—twenty-one more than Dublin (McCourt 143). Joyce was a fan of the cinematograph to the extent that he not only attended the theatre regularly, but even joined the cinema industry for a short stint. Being business minded and always looking for an easy dollar, Joyce pitched his idea to bring a permanent theatre to Dublin. Joyce persuaded some Triestines with backgrounds in the cinema industry to support his business proposition. The business partners agreed, and, on Monday, December 20, 1909, the Volta on Mary Street opened for business. Six months later, on June 10, 1910, one of Joyce’s business partners, Francesco Novak, sold the Volta to the English Provincial Theatre Company. Joyce never saw any of the earnings from the Volta; however, the cinema had a major influence on Joyce’s writing, which was worth much more to literature than any amount of money he could have gained through the venture. Some of the most experimental episodes of *Ulysses*, such as “Wandering Rocks” and “Circe,” employ film techniques to manipulate time and space, which helps to show the inadequacies of standardized time to portray the complexities of twentieth-century life and the human mind.

Trieste, the central European hub which played an invaluable role in producing one of the twentieth century’s greatest minds, also happens to be where Joyce completed his book of short stories, *Dubliners* (1914), penned his erotic prose poem, *Giacomo Joyce*
(1914), wrote all of his semi-autobiographical Künstlerroman, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916), and his Ibsenesque play, *Exiles* (1918), and composed most of *Ulysses* (1922) (McCourt 3). In addition, Joyce composed two volumes of poetry: *Chamber Music* (1907) was written before his Trieste years, and *Pommes Penyeach* (1927) was written during and after his Trieste years. *Ulysses* exhibits the range of styles of an author whose writings spanned many genres, and whose perspective was expanded by such a microcosm as Trieste. The novel, *Ulysses*, if it can so be defined, was written with a hyper-consciousness of the social context and an awareness of the changing nature of time. *Ulysses* negotiates such authoritarian temporalities as GMT with other more personal temporalities, such as Bloom’s experimentation with parallax and Molly’s private time in her monologue.

**b. A Brief History of Time**

The intellectual climate of Trieste helped to expand Joyce’s perspective on time. In the cinemas, he would have witnessed alternative forms of narrative such as flashback, flashforward, and cuts from one scene to another happening simultaneously, instead of the linear, chronological narrative, indicative of the nineteenth-century novel. The discussion of levels of consciousness and subconsciousness surrounding psychoanalysis might have informed the way Joyce represented public and private time. But while Joyce’s ideas of temporality were growing in Trieste, the global definition of time was

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2 Richard Ellmann dates the composition of *Giacomo Joyce* as July or August of 1914 (342). *Giacomo Joyce* is unique because it is one of very few of Joyce’s works not written about Dublin, Ireland.
consolidating into a universal, standardized system of time, which did not consider the plurality of time but the potential power of controlling it. This dialectic between multiple temporalities and a single standardized system of time happens as Leopold and Molly Bloom interact with standardized time and the time of stream-of-consciousness narrative.

Leopold Bloom’s temporal confusion arises from his mistaking Greenwich Mean Time for Dunsink time. Bloom’s scenario shows only a fraction of the period’s time dilemma. Further historical context will illustrate the changes in time-keeping that had happened and were happening during Joyce’s prime years of creativity. To begin, consider the current idea of time. Most people in today’s developed and developing world might find it difficult to imagine anything more taken for granted than time. Time is omnipresent and constant. We need look no further than our cell phones, iPods, and computers, which give us the exact time according to our coordinates. For the purpose of time-keeping, the globe is neatly divided by meridians and time zones, which adhere to a global time scale, Coordinated Universal Time (UTC). This uniform system of time-keeping creates an efficient environment for a globalized world connected by communication, transportation, and economy; however, nearly one hundred and thirty years ago there was no single prime meridian nor the other twenty-three meridians that “divided the earth into twenty-four time zones one hour apart, and fixed a precise beginning of the universal day” (Kern 12).

Before the International Meridian Conference convened in Washington, D.C., on October 13, 1884, many “prime meridians” existed in multiple countries for various purposes. Some countries used their own prime meridians as symbols of nationalism,
while others used the more widely recognized Greenwich prime meridian for convenience in their trading with England. *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Maritime History* cites one instance in which the general acceptance and convenience of the Greenwich prime meridian trumped Thomas Jefferson’s call for the use of an American prime meridian for maps and nautical charts:

Following European nationalism, American president Thomas Jefferson preferred the United States prime meridian. Eventually the meridian through the Naval Observatory, founded in Washington, D.C., in 1844, became the official American prime meridian for maps, but because of Des Barres’ charts, the United States government retained the Greenwich meridian for nautical charts. Different meridians, one for charts, the other for maps, were common in the nineteenth century. (‘Prime Meridians’)

It is important to note the political and economic significance with which time and the keeping of time is imbued. A prime meridian is a source of national pride because of the power it carries. It not only marks that location as ground-zero of time-keeping, but it also defines all longitudes beyond it as subsidiary. Another interesting point is the multiplicity of times for charts and maps. Charts were used for trade by water and were, therefore, used for international importing and exporting with maritime nations such as Britain, France, and Spain. If a nation wanted to trade with one of these superpowers, it would need to adopt that country’s prime meridian for nautical charts. Maps, on the other hand, were used for travel by land, which would usually mean traveling within a
country’s borders. For such purposes, it would be convenient to adopt a prime meridian inside the country.

During this formative period for measuring time and space, England was the world’s most powerful empire, so most other countries used its prime meridian. Larger nations such as France, Spain, and Portugal, refrained from using the Greenwich meridian; still “72 percent of the world’s floating commerce used the Greenwich meridian for navigational purposes,” and “[t]he remaining 28 percent was divided among ten different prime meridians” (“Prime Meridians”). England boasted the most unified system, while the remaining twenty-eight percent was heavily divided, posing no threat to England’s candidacy for universal prime meridian.

The change from local times to Greenwich Mean Time was not instantaneous. While a majority of countries changed their time-keeping policies to fit those of the new standard, much confusion ensued in the following years as other countries lagged behind or even refused to alter their time-keeping methods. Kern cites a survey conducted by John Milne in 1899, approximately fifteen years after Greenwich was voted the international prime meridian, which reports that China, Russia, and India were still using local times and solar times. Milne’s report depicted France as “the most chaotic situation, with some regions having four different times, none of which had a simple conversion to Greenwich time” (qtd. in Kern 13). Imagine the confusion that could arise by simply asking for the time in turn-of-the-century France:

Each city had a local time taken from solar readings. About four minutes behind each local time was astronomical time taken from fixed stars. The
railroads used Paris time, which was nine minutes and twenty seconds ahead of Greenwich. A law of 1891 made [Paris time] the legal time of France, but the railroads actually ran five minutes behind [Paris time] in order to give passengers extra time to board: thus the clocks inside the railway stations were five minutes ahead of those on the tracks. (qtd. in Kern 13)

At this particular time in France, one could receive five different responses by simply asking for the time: local (depending on location), astronomical (approximately four minutes behind local time), Paris, railroad (Paris -5 minutes), and Greenwich Mean Time. Kern continues on France’s temporal bedlam, citing a French journalist, L. Houllevigue, who acknowledged that France’s hesitation to adopt GMT was a matter of national pride (qtd. in Kern 14). To remedy the situation, in 1912, France decided to take a leading role in the politics of time and host the International Time Conference in Paris. The following year, July 1, 1913, France transmitted the first time signal around the world (Kern 14).

Like France, Ireland was hesitant to adopt GMT; unlike France, it did not embrace the new standard. In fact, it was three years after France transitioned to GMT that Ireland switched—and then, not on her own accord. During the aftermath of the Easter Rising of 1916, England officially imposed GMT on Ireland. But Ireland’s transition was not so sudden. In her article, “The Ballast Office Time Ball and the Subjectivity of Time and Space,” Deborah Warner explains that, though Ireland did not concede to GMT until after the Easter rising in 1916, Greenwich Mean Time had been present in Ireland decades earlier:
In 1874, the year after the installation of the telegraph line between Dunsink and Dublin, the Royal Dublin Society sponsored a report on the public clocks in Dublin, and this, in turn, led to the establishment of a second system of master and slave clocks in Dublin. The Royal Dublin Society system was controlled by time signals from the Royal Observatory at Greenwich, and, as it had three circuits with seven, fifteen, and sixteen slave dials respectively, it was considerably larger than the Dunsink system. For the next forty years, some clocks in Dublin read Greenwich time, and some read Dunsink time. . . . the difference between the two was about 25 minutes of time. (Warner 862)

The argument that Ireland’s time be changed to GMT came up more than ten years later, in 1885, following the International Meridian Conference, when the Principal Officer of the Dublin Board of Trade advised that “the Ballast Office time ball be controlled by telegraph signals from Greenwich” (Warner 862). He supported his argument by noting that Dunsink Mean Time was flawed by a miscalculation of the Dunsink Observatory’s coordinates, and that it would be advantageous for Ireland because other civilized nations were adopting GMT. Noticing this man’s occupation as Principal Officer of the Dublin Board of Trade, one might wonder whether his argument was influenced by the desire to strengthen Ireland’s standing in the global market. Again, one can see the struggle between the convenience of commercial trade with a global economy and national pride.

As time became spatialized and commoditized, imperialist countries viewed it as another territory to be divvied up and colonized—to be owned. Though Greenwich
became the prime meridian of the world, ground-zero of universal time, not every
country was willing to acknowledge it. It is no surprise that the Irish were not willing let
GMT replace their own Dunsink time, especially after the violent Easter Rising which
occurred only months prior. The relationship between England and Ireland during the
writing of *Ulysses* was one of oppressor and oppressed. One way that Joyce represented
that relationship is through Leopold’s and Molly’s actions and reactions toward
standardized time.

c. **Time in *Ulysses***

In *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, Stephen Dedalus explains to a school
mate, named Davin, why he will not join any of the Irish nationalist movements: “When
the soul of a man is born in this country there are nets flung at it to hold it back from
flight. You talk to me of nationality, language, religion. I shall try to fly by those nets”
(*A Portrait* 220). Stephen has a complex relationship with his country, and, although he
does not list English imperialism among Ireland’s nets, it is in reaction to English
domination that Ireland fashions these nets. Stephen’s net is a fitting metaphor for GMT,
which subjects Ireland, as well as the rest of the globe, to the English Empire. In his
essay, “‘The Shortcomings of Timetables’: Greenwich, Modernism, and the Limits of
Modernity,” Adam Barrows views standardized time as “a powerful symbol of
authoritarian control from a distance and of the management of diverse populations,” as
well as “for the maintenance of global commerce” (263). He claims that *Ulysses*, and the
other texts that he analyzes (Joseph Conrad’s *The Secret Agent* and Virginia Woolf’s
*Mrs. Dalloway*), resist the synchronization of time and “formally and thematically
mediate between a host of competing temporal demands, negotiating (without ever necessarily resolving) a complex array of temporal models, alternately centered in the body, the mind, the state, the empire, and the globe” (Barrows 263). For example, in “Oxen of the Sun,” time follows the progression of literature from ancient pagan virility hymns to a chaotic mixture of what Joyce described in a letter to Frank Budgen as “a frightful jumble of pidgin English, nigger English, Cockney, Irish, Bowery slang and broken doggerel” (Letters I 139). Below is an excerpt from the first and last lines of “Oxen of the Sun,” beginning with a pagan hymn and ending in a fractured clutter of languages:


Send us bright one, light one, Horhorn, quickening and wombfruit. . . .

Shout salvation in King Jesus. You’ll need to rise precious early you sinner there, if you want to diddle the Almighty God. Pflaaaap! Not half.

He’s got a coughmixture with a punch in it for you, my friend, in his back pocket. Just you try it on. (U 14.1-3, 1588-91)

Of course, Joyce has a reason for such an experiment as tracing the progression of literature from the beginning up to the very writing of Ulysses and perhaps forecasting the style of Finnegans Wake. The episode takes place in the National Maternity Hospital while Mrs. Purefoy is giving birth; the progression of literature parallels, therefore, the “natural stages of development in the embryo and the periods of faunal evolution in general” (Letters I 139). In “Oxen of the Sun,” Joyce presents two temporalities progressing together, whereas he could have composed the episode according to
standardized time and saved himself the “1000 hours’ work” he claims it cost him
(*Letters I* 141). But Joyce did not. He saw in “Oxen of the Sun” the opportunity to
present a situation in which multiple temporalities thrive and bring forth new life. In
comparison, standardized time was sterile.

As the time in “Oxen” represents the subject and context of the episode, so too
does “Aeolus.” The “Aeolus” episode takes place in the offices of the *Freeman’s
Journal* and the *Evening Telegraph* and progresses in short sections suggestive of
newspaper articles, divided by capitalized headlines such as, “IN THE HEART OF THE
HIBERNIAN METROPOLIS” and “THE WEARER OF THE CROWN” (*U* 7.1-2, 14).
Accordingly, the story time seems to move forward in short blurbs, a more appropriate
time sequence considering the context than the exact ticking off of seconds and minutes
of standardized time. Barrows argues that standard time, invented for political and
commercial power, is much too simple for a novel such as *Ulysses* that aims to reveal all
of life’s complexities; the text, therefore, manages other types of temporalities along with
GMT to demonstrate the deficiencies of standardized time. By asserting other forms of
time before GMT, Joyce presents a political stance using his text. *Ulysses* appears to free
itself from English temporal rule.

Barrows’ point is not mere theory. In fact, in his article, “Spaces of Time through
Times of Space,” Luke Gibbons presents historical proof that some Irish citizens felt that
England’s temporal control was strictly for the good of the English. In this particular
instance, Gibbons draws on Irish responses to the imposition of Daylight Savings Time,
which subtracted an hour from Dunsink time in order to allow English factory workers to
begin work earlier (81). Gibbons cites Reverend C. Mangan’s article in *The Catholic Bulletin* (August, 1918): “... it is due to no honest desire to benefit any Irish interest, but rather to the insufferable arrogance of the ruling caste in England and its rather complacent garrison in Ireland” (qtd. in Gibbons 81). In his op-ed, Mangan expresses frustration at England’s use of power to benefit itself economically without regard for the Irish, but he does not stop there. Mangan continues: “There is a suspicion that it was motivated by a desire to check the national sentiment which the people might have in distinct Irish time” (qtd. in Gibbons 81). Here, Mangan affirms Barrow’s statement that standardized time, or more generally, temporal control, is “a powerful symbol of authoritarian control” (Barrows 263). Furthermore, that the English imposed such control for the sake of its laborers illustrates that the purpose is economic as well as political.

Barrows views GMT as a means of controlling the Irish for English commercial gain, and in order to free itself of this colonial power, *Ulysses* is narrated in multiple styles evoking a plurality of times. Alexandra Anyfanti would agree with Barrows’ claim that standardized time is an insufficient means of keeping time in *Ulysses*, but she differs from Barrows’ perspective when she argues that Henri Bergson’s idea of “duration”\(^3\) is

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\(^3\) Anyfanti explains Bergson’s theory of duration: “Bergson first formulated his theory in ‘Time and Free Will,’ in an attempt to distinguish between the organisation of the material world and that of psychic states.” Bergson, she notes, “draws a distinction between the permeability and interpenetration of psychic states as opposed to the concreteness and distinctness of material objects.”
the temporal foundation in *Ulysses*, most prominently in the characters’ stream-of-consciousness narratives. She explains, in “Time, Space, and Consciousness in James Joyce’s *Ulysses*,” that the narration transcends standardized time by means of stream-of-consciousness, which allows a character to traverse time from past to present to future seamlessly and ever-changingly because the instances of the thoughts are ever-changing; in other words, the present context in which thoughts are perceived changes the thoughts themselves. Like the time in a stream-of-consciousness narrative, which follows no measurable, standardized time, yet traverses all times, the characters are fluid and ever-changing: “Man is not only what he does, he is also what he does not do, what lies beneath, what is speculated, planned, or imagined. The point of interest in *Ulysses* falls on the character’s stream-of-consciousness, and there as we have seen the change is constant” (Anyfanti). Anyfanti recognizes, like Barrows, that standard time is too simple to encapsulate the mind, where time is unhindered by the precise, artificial measurements of standardized time. She concludes that the self must be as “protean” as the world in which it lives because “it is itself the whole world reflected in itself.” Barrows would agree with Anyfanti that standardized time does not do justice to the many temporalities encountered in *Ulysses*, as well as in life outside of literature; he disagrees, however, with Anyfanti’s claim that Joyce’s only answer to standardized time comes in the form of private, stream-of-consciousness narrative. Barrows states:

Joyce’s understanding of the complicities of time with these diverse regimes of knowledge and power militates against any schematic reading
of the text as an expression of interior, psychic, or private modernist temporality. (Barrows 271)

He explains further in his endnotes that it is usually the application of Bergsonian philosophy to *Ulysses* which results in a “dichotomy between a private interior temporality and a shared public space” (Barrows 285). Perhaps this Bergsonian dichotomy between public and private, psychic and physical, time is too simple; it is more constructive to view private time as another temporality to be negotiated.

Barrows and Anyfanti make valid points against standardized time. Greenwich Mean Time is an authoritarian symbol of English power, which disregards the individual and his or her context. GMT neglects many context-based temporalities such as those of the maternity hospital, the newspaper offices, and the characters’ minds. Standardized time, instead, governs all temporalities for the benefit of English pockets. In *Ulysses*, there is a dialectic between multiple temporalities and GMT. In some circumstances, such as Bloom’s failure to tell the time in “Lestrygonians,” GMT oppresses the individual, while in others, such as Molly’s monologue, the individual conquers standardized time, putting it in its place among the many other temporalities encountered in twentieth-century Dublin.

d. “Lestrygonians”

In “Lestrygonians,” the lunch hour episode of *Ulysses*, Bloom wanders the streets of Dublin in search of a suitable eatery. In addition to his search for nourishment, Bloom also tries to find a way to orient himself temporally and spatially, which proves to be more difficult than finding a proper restaurant. Throughout this episode, time is often on
Bloom’s mind, most likely because he knows Molly’s affair with Blazes Boylan is scheduled for 4:00 P.M. Bloom’s thoughts about time and its relationship to authoritarian figures (the British Empire, priests, and professors), astronomical readings, and the individual finally leave him feeling deprived of his power to position himself in a world which is organized by a spatial and temporal grid.

Early in “Lestrygonians,” Bloom passes by the Ballast Office Time Ball. At this building, the local time, Dunsink time, is determined by astronomical readings. Bloom notices that the time ball is down, and, because the time ball drops at 1:00 P.M., he thinks, “After one. Timeball on the ballastoffice is down. Dunsink time” (U 8.109).

Bloom later realizes that he was mistaken in thinking that the time ball drops at 1:00 P.M. Dunsink time. Continuing on his walk, Bloom stops to window-shop at Yeates and Son’s, a shop which sells eye glasses. As he is looking at a pair of field glasses, Bloom remembers, “There’s a little watch up there on the roof of the bank to test those glasses by. . . . Can’t see it. If you imagine it’s there you can almost see it. Can’t see it” (U 8.560-63). Bloom’s inability to see the watch on the bank’s façade and the moment when he realizes that the ball falls at Greenwich time is symbolic of his subjugation to England.

Here, Joyce presents the reader with an anachronism. It was not until 1914, ten years after Bloomsday, that the Ballast Office Time Ball began dropping at 1:00 P.M., Greenwich Mean Time (Warner 862). Before then, it dropped at 1:00 P.M. Dunsink time, so Bloom was correct at first in noting that it is after 1:00 P.M., Dunsink time. It is likely that Joyce knew this fact, yet took the liberty of manipulating history to reveal the temporal contentions.
Because the time ball drops at 1:00 p.m. GMT in Joyce’s *Ulysses*, and Dunsink time runs twenty-five minutes behind GMT, according to Dunsink time, it is actually just after 12:35 p.m., not 1:00 p.m., as Bloom first thought. Bloom’s thoughts are symbolically suggestive of English power: the relation between GMT and the bank’s façade represents England’s economic control over Ireland by means of controlling time. This situation evokes the old maxim, time is money. Further, the situation reminds the reader of an English sympathizer introduced earlier in the novel, Stephen’s employer at the Dalkey private school for boys, Mr. Deasy. While talking to Stephen, Mr. Deasy declares, “Money is power” (*U* 2.237). Time is money, money is power, and all three are out of Bloom’s reach, or rather out of his sight. Bloom’s confusing the time represents the Irish peoples’ lack of consent in the imposition of Greenwich Mean Time, and it is reminiscent of the doubly confusing period in 1916 when, by Gibbons’ count, there were as many as four different times working in Ireland: Dunsink, GMT, Summer Time (Ireland), and Summer Time (England) (Gibbons 80). While Bloom’s confusion brings to mind the historical moment of English dominance, it also shows the effects of temporal control on the individual subject. By merely checking the time, Bloom is reminded of his subjugation to England, whose King Bloom envisions as a vampire, “[s]itting on his throne sucking red jujubes white,” at the beginning of the episode (*U* 8.4).
After Bloom finds that he is unable to tell the time via the bank’s clock and the time ball, he looks to the sun and ponders parallax in an attempt to regain the power he has lost in the confusion between GMT and Dunsink time. Parallax fails Bloom, as its meaning evades him, and he wonders whether he should take his question to a priest or physicist. Whereas standardized time was forced upon the Irish, solar or astronomical time is based on the position of the time teller, which gives a great deal more power to the individual. Position in space is why the astronomical time in Dublin and in Greenwich differed. Because Dublin is west of London, and the sun travels from east to west, noontime will arrive in London before Dublin. There is a sense of autonomy in determining one’s own time, so when England imposes GMT on Ireland, Ireland loses its ability to orient itself in space. Instead, England orients Ireland. It no longer matters where Ireland is in position to the sun and stars, only its position relative to Greenwich, England. Bloom experiences a similar loss of power in “Lestrygonians,” when he looks to the sky and thinks of parallax. He remembers a clever trick of perspective, which he associates with parallax: he “[holds] out his right hand at arm’s length towards the sun” to find that he can blot out the sun (U 8.564-65). This action puts Bloom in control of his position in space, but he is not long in control, for while pondering the meaning of parallax, he thinks, “I never exactly understood. There’s a priest. Could ask him.” (U 8.110-11). The concept of parallax would put Bloom, the observer, in a position of

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5 Barrows describes parallax as, “the apparent displacement of an object caused by a change in the position of the observer” (273). Parallax gives power to the viewer. In this respect, that viewer is Bloom.
power over the object he views, giving him a sense of autonomy in orienting himself without reliance on GMT. But Bloom relinquishes that power to religious authority. Bloom further resigns his power of perspective when he returns to his thoughts about parallax later in the episode, envisioning how he might ask Professor Charles Joly, whom he imagines to be descended of noble blood. In his daydream, Bloom thinks of how he might flatter Joly in order to have his inquiry answered. Bloom’s musing ends with Professor Joly ordering that Bloom be “thrown out of the observatory for simply saying the word ‘parallax,’” with its suggestion that the role of the observer has some meaningful relationship to what happens in the heavens” (Barrows 275). This daydream illustrates three different forms of authority stripping Bloom of his ability to orient himself in space and time: the English Empire, the Church, and science. In terms of science, Barrows describes this turn of events as “Bloom’s role in the construction of his own social time [being] torn from him and cast into an incomprehensible astronomical canvas” (275-76). There is a clear dialectic between authoritarian temporalities (GMT and astronomical time) and Bloom’s personal temporality based on the position of the sun. This dialectic leaves Bloom feeling helpless as an individual, subjugated by the higher powers of empire, religion, and science. What the novel suggests in this scene is that GMT is essential for the power and commerce of the British Empire, yet it causes the Irish individual, for example, Bloom, to feel dominated and unable to consult the thing he once felt comfortable with, the sun.

James Joyce was not the only modernist author to represent such feelings of oppression due to confusion over time. A similar situation arises in Faulkner’s *The
*Sound and the Fury*, in which time and money, representative of outside authoritarian forces, oppress Jason Compson. Jason expresses his frustration with the telegraph office and the market when he does not receive his telegram from the cotton market in time to act on its content. In order to stay abreast of the market’s fluctuation, one needs to be constantly connected to an information source. During the time in which *The Sound and the Fury* is set, the best form of communication was the telegraph; however, one must be positioned near a telegraph office to receive a telegram, which presents a spatial restraint. In this instance in *The Sound and the Fury*, Jason is unable to be informed because he is chasing his niece, Quentin, and the man with the red tie through town and into the woods. Figuratively, Jason has broken free of his domestic leash and is outside the telegraph office’s range. As a result, the telegraph company could not alert Jason to the state of the cotton market quickly enough to keep him abreast of its downward trend. In this scene at the telegraph office, Jason receives his telegram, which is now useless:

>`... He handed me a telegram. “What time did this come? I says.  

>“About half past three,” he says. 

>“And now it’s ten minutes past five,” I says. 

>“I tried to deliver it,” he says. “I couldn’t find you.” 

>“That’s not my fault, is it?” ... (Faulkner 152)`

Because Jason was outside of the telegraph office’s range of communication, he was unable to receive the telegram, and by the time he does receive it, the market has closed for the day. Jason reads the telegram explaining that he should sell his stock because the market is unstable, to which he responds by mimicking the tone of the telegram:
“. . . Send this collect,” I says, taking a blank. Buy, I wrote, Market just on point of blowing its head off. Occasional flurries for purpose of hooking a few more country suckers who haven’t got in to the telegraph office yet. Do not be alarmed. “Send that collect,” I says.

He looked at the message, then he looked at the clock. “Market closed an hour ago,” he says.

“Well,” I says. “That’s not my fault either. I didn’t invent it; I just bought a little bit of it while under the impression that the telegraph company would keep me informed as to what it was doing.” (153)

In this instance, Jason pleads helplessness (“That’s not my fault, is it?”) because, like Bloom, he lacks control over and knowledge of the workings of the world around him. Bloom does not understand parallax; he cannot determine the “real” time due to his confusion about GMT and Dunsink time, and he is unable to read the clock on the edifice of the bank; Jason struggles to invest his money successfully in a world in which technology is bourgeoning, yet not all technologies complement each other. The market allows people across the globe to invest their money, and while there are no spatial restraints on where people can invest, there are restraints on when and where people can communicate. The method of sending information by means of telegram is not sufficient for those who require immediate updates on the state of the market. Both circumstances present a change in the nature of time and space: Bloom loses control of his ability to tell time, and Jason suffers the conflicting temporalities of the market’s requirement for fast-paced communication and the spatial constraints of the telegraph office. Both situations
are focused on monetary gain, for, as Barrows explains, the change to a standardized time helps maintain a global economy. These scenes also portray the control that two individuals lose to powers beyond their spheres of influence.

e. “Penelope”

The “Lestrygonians” episode shows Bloom caught within a political struggle over the control of time, but, in the final episode of *Ulysses*, “Penelope,” the private time of the individual, portrayed in the stream-of-consciousness technique, takes precedence over standardized time. The result is a major difference in the passage of time and coverage of content between “Penelope” and the other episodes. Not coincidently, Molly’s episode takes place entirely in her mind with no spoken dialogue or punctuation. Similar to psychologist William James’s description of the mind, it flows as a river in which “every definite image in the mind is steeped and dyed in the free water that surrounds it. With it goes the sense of its relations, near and remote, the dying echo of whence it came to us, the dawning sense of whither it is to lead” (James 255). What distinguishes the final episode from all the others is that it lasts a mere fifteen minutes, according to GMT. Molly does not rely on or reference any standardized measurement of time; rather, it intrudes upon her monologue as tolling church bells outside of her window: “3 quarters the hour 1 wait 2 oclock well thats a nice hour of the night for him to be coming home at” (*U* 18.1231-33). The short duration of “Penelope” stands apart from the others, all of which register at one hour, except for “Oxen of the Sun,” which clocks in at two hours standard time. One might think that less time allows for coverage of less content; in her monologue, however, Molly remembers her childhood in Gibraltar up through her
extramarital affair with Blazes Boylan only hours earlier. She even contemplates her future with Bloom. All of her reminiscences flow seamlessly in blended thought, indicative of Bergson’s theory of duration.

In addition to the duration of the episode, the speed, or rate, at which content is covered is many times faster than the rest of the book. The shortest episode of the novel is “Nestor,” at 505 lines, spanning the standardized time of 9:00 A.M. to 10:00 A.M., during which Stephen teaches a history lesson at the Dalkey private school for boys and has a conversation with Mr. Deasy. “Penelope,” spans only a quarter of that time, according to standardized time, and consists of 1,609 lines, the content of which is more expansive than “Nestor.” Evidence of the speed of the monologue is expressed through the lack of punctuation. Because the entire episode takes place in her mind, there is no need for commas, periods, or paragraphs. There is a rhythmic flow to the endless lines which prevents the reader from stumbling. All of her thoughts are linked, resulting in smooth, natural transitions. That this vastness of content—Molly’s lifetime and other peripheral lives—is remembered in fifteen minutes, illustrates standardized time’s inadequacy to govern and synchronize the human mind. The complex human memory can remember and recreate the past to make connections to the present and to contemplate the future. Standardized time does not facilitate such fluency of time. It only records a manufactured, constant, forward progression of time.

The duration of the episode as well as the presentation of Molly’s thoughts casts off the limitations of standardized time, and even Molly, herself, rebels against clock time. In “Penelope,” the reader learns that Molly is often unaware of the time, and she
relies upon alternative temporalities to inform her of the time. As she lies in bed trying to remember what time Blazes arrived, she uses alternative temporal cues: “he must have been a bit late because it was ¼ after 3 when I saw the 2 Dedalus girls coming from school I never know the time even that watch he gave me never seems to go properly” (U 18.343-45). Here, Molly relies on the habitual movements of people in the city, which are more memorable to her than the tolling of church bells or the reading of hands on a clock. Later, she wonders what time Bloom returned home, at which point the bells of Saint George’s Church assert themselves, telling her it is 2:00 A.M. (U 18.1231-33). It is as if public, clock time is fighting for Molly’s attention. She does not seek standardized time; time seeks her, asserting itself when needed. In “Penelope,” there is a change in the characterization of time, from the public time which Bloom cannot seem to locate or understand: the time which looms omnipotently above him on the bank’s façade. Standardized time is not the sole time, nor the primary time, in “Penelope.” The private time of the mind reigns supreme, and public time plays its role of informing Molly, though not oppressing her. By the novel’s end, standardized time assumes its humble position as one among many temporalities that a modern society needs, instead of the one and only that it was voted to be by the International Meridian Conference.

Oddly enough, Greenwich Mean Time was imposed upon the world at a time when a multiplicity of times were being considered across many fields. James Joyce, a leader in his own field, matured in a period in history when time itself began to have a history. Local times in Dublin, Ireland, were replaced over the course of forty years by Greenwich Mean Time, which collected the entire earth under an English net of
commerce and imperialism. Like Stephen and Molly, the novel itself seems to fly by the net of standardized time. *Ulysses* was written during these major “advances” in standardized time, and it negotiates the many other temporalities beside it, in order to reveal the flawed idea of a universal time. The text could not wholly rid itself of standardized time because such a system of time is necessary to the objective world of a city, and the objective world is necessary for providing some unity to the mind. Without either one there is no *Ulysses*. Yet one cannot deny the struggle between temporalities in the novel, as Bloom’s experience with the sun versus the clock and Molly’s monologue express. This dialectic between times arises not only in *Ulysses* but in other modernists’ works as well, and is not limited to literature, as Stephen Kern explains. Sociologist Emile Durkheim, psychologist William James, philosopher Henri Bergson, Cubist painter Pablo Picasso, and physicist Albert Einstein all explored the multiplicities of time. There was a collective social and cultural reaction to the standardization of time, and *Ulysses* was a major part of that reaction.
CHAPTER III
“FABLED BY THE DAUGHTERS OF MEMORY”: STEPHEN’S REJECTION OF HISTORY

Similar to the way in which England controlled time by tossing the net of Greenwich Mean Time over the world, she also dictated history. In the early twentieth century, the British Empire was at the height of its power, ruling a fifth of the world’s population and a quarter of the world’s land (“British Empire”). Ireland felt Britain’s power as much as any other colonized country. In fact, Ireland’s battle with English colonialism stretches back many centuries and forward into the present day. From Dermot MacMurrough’s alliance with Henry II in 1166 C.E., which resulted in a Norman conquest, to the failed Easter Rising of 1916 and the Bloody Sunday fiasco of 1972, Ireland’s history, or rather England’s history of Ireland, appears to be a series of nightmares that continue to resonate (Martin 96-100). The memories of the past are ingrained in the Irish people, their country, and culture. In his article, “The Normans: Arrival and Settlement, 1169-c. 1300,” F.X. Martin writes:

Ireland, more than most countries, cannot escape her past. The Norman settlement—over 800 years ago—has left an indelible mark on the face and character of the country, on its seaports, highways and bridges, its castles, churches and towns. The songs, the literature, the very faces of
the people today pay tribute to those fearless Norman knights who came, saw and conquered, and settled in the country. (95)

To “pay tribute to” is a generous description of Irish sentiment toward the colonization of their land. For instance, many characters in Joyce’s works hardly appreciate the “fearless” Norman knights and their conquests. Such characters include extreme cases as the drunken, Irish nationalist, the Citizen, with his boisterous pro-Irish-and-damn-the-rest attitude; and the subtle, intellectual Stephen Dedalus, whose skepticism of English imperialism and Irish nationalism results in a less obnoxious demonstration of his disfavor for the English presence in Ireland. In contrast to the Citizen’s ranting, Stephen’s tools consist of “silence, exile and cunning” (AP 269).

In his fiction, Joyce acknowledges—never directly—the inundating history of oppression in Ireland and its repercussions in scenes such as Stephen’s meeting with the Dean of Studies in A Portrait: Stephen enters the theatre to find the Dean filling a lamp with oil using a tundish. When the Dean alludes to the tundish as “[t]he funnel through which you poor the oil into your lamp,” Stephen corrects him circuitously, by posing a question, “—That? said Stephen. Is that called a funnel? Is it not a tundish?” (AP 203). Ironically, the Dean assumes the word is Gaelic, asking Stephen, “—Is that called a tundish in Ireland? . . . I have never heard the word in my life” (AP 204). This small discrepancy over word choice bursts into emotionally-charged thoughts about the power struggle inherent in imposing the colonizer’s language on the colonized:

Stephen looked at the English convert with the same eyes as the elder brother in the parable may have turned on the prodigal. A humble
follower in the wake of clamorous conversions, a poor Englishman in
Ireland, he seemed to have entered on the stage of jesuit history when that
suffering and envy and struggle and indignity had been all but given
through—a late comer, a tardy spirit. (AP 204)

It is telling of Stephen’s sensibility as an Irish writer that the improper usage of one word
should encapsulate such subjects as nationality, colonialism, and religion. Situating his
circumstances within the “Parable of the Prodigal Son” (Luke 16:11-32), Stephen relays
his resentment of having to use the colonizer’s language. Expressing his frustrations
thus, Stephen invokes the oppressive powers of England and the Catholic
Church. By
correlating the Christian parable with the political circumstances of England and Ireland,
Stephen becomes the elder brother who was loyal to family and fatherland, saddled with
the baggage of Ireland’s history. The Dean represents the prodigal brother who spent his
inheritance living beyond his means in another land. When the prodigal brother has
expended all of his inheritance, he becomes poor in a time of a famine, scrounging for
food among pigs. Then, remembering his father, the prodigal brother returns home to be
welcomed with a generous feast. In the parable, the elder brother is upset that his
brother, who has squandered his money on prostitutes, is given a fattened calf, when he,
who has never transgressed against his father, never received as much as a young goat to
share with his friends. Stephen expresses his anger for such an injustice through the
narrative of the parable. He feels that, for bearing the weight of Ireland’s history, he
should be rewarded; yet the Dean, who carries no such burden, who is, in fact, part of
Stephen’s burden, appears undeserving and unappreciative of his relationship to history.
He does not think twice about the language he speaks, whereas Stephen is hyper-conscious of the history of oppression behind the language he speaks. Stephen thinks further about language, illuminating a problem which he faces as an artist who must use the colonizer’s language to “forge in the smithy of [his] soul the uncreated conscience of [his] race” (AP 276):

—The language in which we are speaking is his before it is mine. How different are the words home, Christ, ale, master, on his lips and on mine! I cannot speak or write these words without unrest of spirit. His language, so familiar and so foreign, will always be for me an acquired speech. I have not made or accepted its words. My voice holds them at bay. My soul frets in the shadow of his language. (AP 205)

Stephen is so sensitive to his position as colonized that the very words he speaks cause him “unrest.” This passage suggests the impact that English imperialism has on the Irish people, on Stephen, and on Joyce’s fiction: Stephen wants to create a national conscience as an Irish artist, yet the language he must use is that of the oppressor. His options are to speak the colonizer’s language or rebel against it by speaking Irish. But, as Stephen’s comment to Davin, in A Portrait, shows, he does not support reviving the Irish language: “—My ancestors threw off their language and took another, Stephen said. They allowed a handful of foreigners to subject them. Do you fancy I am going to pay in my own life and person debts they made?” (AP 220). Each language carries political baggage—oppression and betrayal—but Stephen grudgingly chooses the colonizer’s language. At
the end of *A Portrait*, Stephen’s journal entry for April 13 reveals that the tundish scene still plagues his memory:

That tundish has been on my mind for a long time. I looked it up and find it English and good old blunt English too. Damn the dean of studies and his funnel! What did he come here for to teach us his own language or to learn it from us? Damn him one way or the other! (AP 274)

The ramifications of Ireland’s colonial history are present throughout Joyce’s work, down to the very language in which he and Stephen write. This chapter examines the presence of history in the first two episodes of *Ulysses* and Stephen’s strategy for flying past the nightmarish history imposed on Ireland by such powers as the Imperial British state, the Church, and Irish nationalism.

**a. History of the Nation / His[$]tory of the Self**

The passages above from *A Portrait* illustrate Stephen’s sensitivity about history as an Irish writer and the connectedness between history and political and religious powers. While Stephen’s opposition toward history is clear, what may not be so clear is what history is and how it affects him. In “Joyce and Lacan: The Twin Narratives of History and His[$]tory”¹ in the ‘Nestor’ Chapter of *Ulysses,* Garry Leonard sets out to

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¹ The “$” symbol in Leonard’s term “His[$]tory,” is borrowed from Lacan’s “barred S,” a symbol of the subject, which Lacan explains in his *Four Fundamental Concepts* is, “in so far as it is constituted as secondary in relation to the signifier . . . [I]t is thus that the subject sees himself duplicated—sees himself as constituted by the reflected, momentary,
explain just this. Utilizing Lacanian theory, Leonard defines history as a national narrative that picks and chooses certain events from the past to create a narrative that supports “the mythical unity and coherence of the ‘nation’ or of the ‘self’ by allowing some facts to represent the sum of ‘what happened’” (170-71). The whole of the past is never told, and, instead, a story is fashioned out of the material of the original event, much as a politician or reporter might misquote or quote out of context, in order to achieve a desired result. Unfortunately, unlike the mouth of a politician, the words of an historian are often regarded as sacred, rather than approached with skepticism because it is easier to see the motivations behind a politician’s remarks than the motivations of an historian’s work. And yet the impact of a piece of history can be just as influential as an election or law. Histories can produce master narratives for the people about whom the history is written. Likewise, Leonard argues that this process of creating the history of a nation influences the production of the History of an individual. The goal of controlling the production of history is to manufacture a predictable future:

Neither the narrative of ‘History’ nor that of ‘History’ ousts the possibilities of the past: these fictional narratives only pretend to do so in order to give ‘meaning’ to the present and a sense of predictability to the precarious image of mastery, imagines himself to be a man merely by virtue of the fact that he imagines himself” (qtd. in Leonard 180). Leonard explains that he uses the barred S to “suggest how the subject becomes secondary to the stories he narrates about ‘reality’ . . .” (181).
future. Either of the narratives, once fictionalized as ‘Truth,’ serves to
limit the possibilities of narratives written in the future. (170)
If England or the Church can limit the futures of their subjects, then they can remain in
their positions of power; history limits Stephen’s History, trapping him in the cyclical
nightmare of Irish history. To break free of history and History, Stephen must utilize
the material of the past which was trimmed and discarded from the pieces selected for the
historical narrative of Ireland.

b. Deconstructing History

_Ulysses_ is often read with the expectation that it offers an encyclopedic history of
Dublin up to 1904. As Leonard’s theory of history posits, such a complete history is
impossible because much of the original story is trimmed off; in his book, _James Joyce
and the Making of_ Ulysses, however, Frank Budgen quotes Joyce as saying he wanted
_Ulysses_ “to give a picture so complete that if the city one day suddenly disappeared from
the earth it could be reconstructed out of my book” (67-68). But, after reading the novel,
it is apparent that its pages attempt no such feat as a linear history of anything or anyone.
Molly, for instance, receives relatively little direct attention from the novel. Aside from
her one episode, “Penelope,” Joyce grants her the brief scene in her bedroom in
“Calypso” and the appearance of her generous, white arm in “Wandering Rocks.” Even
though Joyce grants Molly relatively little direct attention, the reader still feels a sense of
familiarity with her because of the novel’s many references to her. For instance, Bloom
divulges much of Molly’s history indirectly, via thoughts, hallucinations, and
conversations. Information not learned from Bloom often arises from gossiping
Dubliners such as Lenehan and John Henry Menton. The manner in which Molly’s history is narrated demonstrates how the novel as a whole narrates history. *Ulysses* does not present history in the traditional, linear sense, but in a way that one might learn of another person in real life. For example, one usually does not introduce oneself beginning with their earliest days, as does the opening paragraph of *David Copperfield*; rather, the past is revealed through present interactions. For instance, we do not learn about Bloom’s burial plot until he enters Prospect Cemetery for Paddy Dignam’s funeral. The grave plots act as memory cues: “Mine over there toward Finglas, the plot I bought,” Bloom thinks (*U* 6.862). The past is divulged through interactions with the immediate, objective world.

Just as *Ulysses* presents the characters familiarly, so *Ulysses* introduces the reader to 1904 Dublin assuming she already knows it. Budgen describes this phenomenon of familiarity in *Ulysses*: “Streets are named but never described. Houses and interiors are shown us, but as if we entered them as familiars . . . The history of Dublin and of the Irish nation is served up piping hot in the speech of the living patriot” (68-69). *Ulysses* does not reveal history as linear, but as a lived present and remembered past which flow seamlessly into the future. It is told as if the reader shared in the collective Irish memory.

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Lenehan brags to M’Coy in “Wandering Rocks” about groping Molly in a carriage years ago, while Bloom was busy pointing out stars to Chris Callinan (*U* 10.562-63). John Henry Menton also provides a glimpse into Molly’s past when he recognizes Bloom at Paddy Dignam’s burial and remembers dancing with Molly “fifteen seventeen golden years ago, at Mat Dillon’s in Roundtown. And a good armful she was” (*U* 6.686-97).
The same process applies to the representation of the physical environs of Dublin. The novel does not attempt to draw a map of the city, though the reader is tempted to chart the routes of each character on a temporal-spatial grid. In essence, the reader is tempted to make a chronological narrative—a linear history—of *Ulysses*, but the novel resists. The complex and deliberately ambiguous novel that it is, *Ulysses* plays with the progression of time and the idea of history, rejecting the concept of a definitive, Anglo-centric history. This resistance is performed most clearly through Stephen Dedalus’ conversations with Haines and Mr. Deasy, both representatives of the English Empire in the first two episodes, “Telemachus” and “Nestor.” In these episodes, history is portrayed as a domain controlled by such powers as the English Empire, the Catholic Church, Irish nationalism, and capitalism. In response, Stephen ponders ways that he might make his own history, separate and free from the nightmarish master narratives of Irish history.

Before scrutinizing Stephen’s complex relationship with English imperialism and religious oppression, one should understand the relationship between “objective” history and memory. In “Memory, History, Revelation: Writing the Dead Other,” Edith Wyschogrod addresses some assumptions about history, how it is formed, and what it delivers: history is the product of an event that has passed and is remembered. When recorded, the memory is put into a narrative structure that best conveys historical content, usually chronological order, “as seen from the perspective of ‘now,’ the present of the narrator” (Wyschogrod 19). Wyschogrod addresses the misconception that despite the temporal and spatial gap between the original event and the historical narrative, readers
believe history to “mirror what actually happened.” Leonard would agree with Wyschogrod because he claims that history is fictionalized by piecing together facts from the past to create a new narrative; the narrative of history, therefore, resembles a pastiche of actual past events, and not an exact duplication. Wyschogrod explains why history is subjective and thereby supports the argument that Stephen rejects the English and Catholic visions of history as any more legitimate than another. First, history is subjective because the original event must be experienced with the senses. If the historian experiences the event first hand, it must be interpreted by the senses and then stored in the memory. A portion of the event is absorbed by the senses and becomes a memory representing the entire original event. Only a portion of the original event is consigned to memory because one person is unable to experience the entirety of an event. Once an event is consigned to the memory, the original event and the memory are separated by the constantly expanding gap of time and space. Finally, when the memory is written down, it undergoes a translation from memory to historical narrative. By the time the original event is transcribed into words, it has undergone three translations: original event interpreted by the senses, transcription from senses into memory, and

3 Comparing writing to the painting of a self-portrait, Budgen remarks, “But, worst of all, [the writer’s] medium is not an active sense, but memory, and who knows when memory ceases to be memory and becomes imagination? No human memory has ever recorded the whole of the acts and thoughts of its possessor. Then why one thing more than another? Forgetting and remembering are creative agencies performing all kinds of tricks of selection” (62-63).
translation from memory into historical narrative. Deconstructing the production of history illuminates that it is, at its very foundation, subjective.

To further question the commonly held beliefs about history, one should also consider the interpreter—the historian—who must perceive the event first hand or interpret an event from one or more primary or secondary sources. At the moment of perception of the original event, it is deprived of its objectivity because it has been consumed by one person’s perspective, which is ineluctably influenced by social and cultural stimuli. Furthermore, these stimuli affect each person differently. The way in which a person sees, hears, feels, smells, and tastes is partially determined by his or her social, cultural, and genetic makeup. For a similar case in Ulysses, consider the two narrators in the “Cyclops” episode, who provide wildly different accounts of politics and pub activities. For instance, the unnamed Irishman, dubbed the “Bar Fly” by critics, begins the episode complaining about a situation between Moses Herzog, a Jewish tea merchant, and Michael Geraghty, an Irishman who owes Moses money. The “Bar Fly” describes the situation thus, “There’s a bloody big foxy thief beyond by the garrison church at the corner of Chicken lane . . . Jesus, I had to laugh at the little jewy getting his shirt out. *He drink me my teas. He eat me my sugars. Because he no pay me my moneys?*” *(U* 12.13-14, 30-32). Immediately following the Bar Fly’s description is a parody of the situation appropriately described in the style of a “legal document in a civil suit for nonpayment of debts” (Gifford and Seidman 316):

For nonperishable goods bought of Moses Herzog, of 13 Saint Kevin’s parade in the city of Dublin, Wood quay ward, merchant, hereinafter
called the vendor, and sold and delivered to Michael E. Geraghty, esquire, of 29 Arbour hill in the city of Dublin, Arran quay ward, gentleman, hereinafter called the purchaser . . . (U 12.33-37)

Though the narration is exaggerated for comical effect, it proves the point that no two people perceive the same event in the same way. While the Bar Fly is anti-Semitic, taking the side of the Irish debtor over the wronged Jewish merchant, the parodic style that follows judiciously addresses the two as civil equals, objectively distinguishing them only by their addresses and respective roles in the matter at hand. In addition to perspectives differing between people, they also differ across time. Budgen recognizes the subjectivity of the writer, noting the changes which occur in a man and his memories as his position in time and space changes:

Between the moment of experiencing and the moment of recording there is an ever-widening gulf of time across which come rays of remembered things, like the rays of stars long since dead to the astronomer’s sensitive plate. Their own original colours have been modified by the medium through which they passed. The ‘I’ who records is the ‘I’ who experienced, but he has grown or dwindled; in any case, he has changed. (63)

The historian, or any person, is constantly changing across time, especially in comparison to the original event which has happened in an unchanging past time and space; though an event cannot be altered after its occurrence, the way that it is remembered is subject to change. An event that one may witness today is not perceived as one might witness it or
remember it tomorrow. The original event loses authenticity through the three translations mentioned above and, further still, through the ever-changing time, space, and identity of the historian.

If history is so fundamentally subjective, how can anything of the past be known? What is gained by enshrouding in doubt everything one knows of the past? To achieve a higher level of authenticity, one might present a mélange of historical perspectives to offer a more varied and dynamic interpretation of an event, which is, perhaps, attempted in the “Wandering Rocks” episode which consists of nineteen perspectives taking place in Dublin simultaneously, presenting a multidimensional record of a present moment in turn-of-the-century Dublin; however, the problem of perception by an ever-changing, socially-influenced historian still remains. Multiple narrators may not be a sufficient solution, but a solution may not be as valuable—at least for the purposes of this chapter—as using the subjectivity of history to approach histories more critically and less definitively. It will be beneficial to keep these ideas in mind throughout the remainder of this study as Stephen Dedalus, Wyschogrod and Leonard suggest, grapples with his subjection to political, religious, nationalistic, and economic masters, all of which entwine themselves with his thoughts about history. Not only does he struggle with grand questions of history, but he ponders how to express his own story beyond the shackles of Irish history.

c. “It seems history is to blame”: Addressing the Nightmare in “Telemachus” and “Nestor”
In the first episode, “Telemachus,” an Englishman named Haines is introduced, and, through his conversation with Stephen, the topic of history in the context of English imperialism and religious oppression arises. Haines is staying with Buck Mulligan and Stephen as a guest in the Martello Tower while studying the Irish for a book he is writing, metaphorically making subjects of the Irish. After breakfast, Haines asks Stephen about his religious beliefs to which Stephen answers, “—You behold in me, Stephen said with grim displeasure, a horrible example of free thought,” indicating the religious and colonial oppression he feels (U 1.625-26). Haines continues, “—After all, I should think you are able to free yourself. You are your own master, it seems to me” (U 1.636-37). This comment may seem ironic to the reader who, pages earlier, read Stephen’s thoughts which illustrate the exact opposite sentiment of Haines’ assumption: Stephen notices that Buck Mulligan left his shaving bowl on the parapet and he is deciding whether he should bring it to its owner. This scenario reminds Stephen of his days as an altar boy at Clongowes, when he was “[a] servant too. A server of a servant” (U 1.312). In this instance, Stephen associates his holding Buck Mulligan’s shaving bowl with his carrying the incense boat at Mass, indicating that he was a servant of God’s servant, the priest, and now is a servant to Mulligan, a servant to Haines and Ireland. Whereas, the latter quotation demonstrates Stephen’s feelings of religious subjugation, his reply to Haines’ inquiry (“—You behold in me, . . . a horrible example of free thought”) is pointed towards Haines as an Englishman, a representative of the British Empire; clearly, Stephen’s feelings of subjugation to British imperialism invoke other masters. In the following dialogue between Stephen and Haines, Stephen enumerates his masters:
—I am a servant to two masters, Stephen said, an English and an Italian.

—Italian? Haines said.

A crazy queen, old and jealous. Kneel down before me.

—And a third, Stephen said, there is one who wants me for odd jobs.

—Italian? Haines said again. What do you mean?

—The imperial British state, Stephen answered, his colour rising, and the holy Roman catholic and apostolic church. (U 1.638-44)

From here on, subjection to English imperialism, the Catholic Church, and even Ireland—presumably the third master which wants Stephen for odd jobs—pervade Stephen’s thoughts. Interestingly, it is not until Haines’ next comment that history becomes the main subject on which Stephen’s thoughts dwell. Perhaps detecting Stephen’s frustration, Haines replies, “—I can quite understand that, he said calmly. An Irishman must think like that, I daresay. We feel in England that we have treated you rather unfairly. It seems history is to blame” (U 1.647-49). In this statement, Haines shifts the blame of Ireland’s colonial history under England to the abstract idea of “history,” as if he and his nation were separate and unaccountable for the path of Irish history. In his condescending comment, Haines not only separates himself from Stephen (we English, and you Irish), but he relegates the oppression of which Stephen is so acutely aware (remember the tundish dispute in A Portrait) to the past, when, in reality, the political strife was far from resolved. Consider the political context in which Joyce wrote Ulysses: soon after beginning the novel, the Easter Rising of 1916 occurred, which was followed a few years later by the Irish War of Independence (1919-1921), the Anglo-
Irish Treaty (1921), and the subsequent civil war (1922), which led to the formation of the Irish Free State and the Northern Ireland partition.\(^4\) It will suffice to say that Haines was far from the mark with his comment, which illustrates his lack of regard for the Irish victims of colonialism. The topic of history carries over into the following chapter, “Nestor,” in which Joyce introduces a new representative of English imperialism, and history permeates nearly all of Stephen’s thoughts.

Haines does not appear in “Nestor,” though his presence lingers in the underlying theme of history and in the figure of Stephen’s employer, the headmaster at the Dalkey private school for boys, Mr. Garret Deasy. Deasy is not an Englishman; rather, he is an Ulsterman, whom Gifford and Seidman describe as “a ‘west-Briton,’ one who regards Ireland as the western-most province of England and who mimics English manner and morals” (33). The chapter is primarily about history, and, more specifically, how England, the Church, and capitalism create history and perpetuate its course for their own

\(^4\) In a conversation about the relations between Ireland and England in 1919, Budgen told Joyce that Ireland should be given political autonomy from England, to which Joyce responded, “‘Ireland is what she is, . . . and therefore I am what I am because of the relations that have existed between England and Ireland. Tell me why you think I ought to wish to change the conditions that gave Ireland and me a shape and destiny?’” (Budgen 151-52). Having achieved some rank as a literary figure Joyce probably would have felt more comfortable with this sentiment than would Stephen, for Stephen is still fighting to create the conscience of his race out of a history and language steeped in colonialism.
sakes. Deasy even defines the course of history, a definition with which Stephen disagrees: “All human history moves toward one great goal, the manifestation of God” (U 2.380-81). England’s control of history is comparable to the net of Greenwich Mean Time with which England enveloped the world. As this chapter suggests, England not only control the passage of time but also the recording of time. Yet, Stephen, the Irish artist, rejects his place in history and aims to replace it with his own story. Just as he claims in A Portrait to fly by the nets of nationality, language, and religion, Stephen will fly by the oppressive, Anglo-centric history in Ulysses.

“Nestor” begins with Stephen’s teaching a history lesson which leaves the reader wondering what the significance of history is. To start, Stephen asks his student, Cochrane, about Pyrrhus’ battle at Asculum. Cochrane provides only the city that called for Pyrrhus and the year of the battle. Possibly unsure of the answer to his own inquiry, Stephen checks the date in a dirty history book to find the city where the battle took place. The history lesson soon diminishes into wordplay, when Stephen asks Armstrong, “What was the end of Pyrrhus?” to which Armstrong answers, “—Pyrrhus, sir? Pyrrhus, a pier. . . . A thing out in the water. A kind of bridge. Kingstown pier, sir” (U 2.26, 32-33). To this digression, Stephen thinks of a clever witticism with which he may be able to impress Haines: “—Kingstown pier, Stephen said. Yes, a disappointed bridge,” (U 2.39). The history lesson is forgotten as the students ask Stephen to tell them a ghost story. Stephen does not; instead, he instructs a student to read from Milton’s poem, “Lycidas.” Before the end of class, Stephen treats them to a riddle, which receives confused looks from the class. Stephen’s history lesson leaves the reader wondering
what history is: is it a catechistic series of questions and answers about events in time and space, a joke, or maybe a riddle? Stephen’s history lesson lacks any bridge to the past—hardly a pier, for that matter. The students do not appear to connect with the lesson in any way, and they would much rather prefer a fictional narrative such as a ghost story.

So what is significant about history? As Leonard and Wyschogrod explain, history’s accuracy and truthfulness are fictions, and its narrative structure is artificial, which might put it on par with the fictional stories the students crave: “For them too, thinks Stephen, history was a tale like any other too often heard” (U 2.46-47). Appropriately, it is immediately after the history lesson that Stephen ponders the possibility of the alternative histories:

Had Pyrrhus not fallen by a bedlam’s hand in Argos or Julius Caesar not been knifed to death. They are not to be thought away. Time has branded them and fettered they are lodged in the room of the infinite possibilities they have ousted. But can those have been possible seeing that they never were? Or was that only possible which came to pass? (U 2.48-52)

Here, Stephen questions the objectivity of history, wondering what has become of all of the alternative stories that were not “chosen” to become history. It is in these stories that Stephen’s chance of creating an identity free from English imperialism and Irish nationalism, indeed, free from social constructs in general, lie.

For the students, the history lesson ends at 10:00 A.M.; however, Stephen continues to brood over history as he waits for Mr. Deasy, who is out “restoring order” to the children’s hockey game (U 2.191-92). While waiting in Deasy’s study, Stephen takes
stock of all the symbols of imperialism. Meanwhile, Stephen is also remembering the
_Gloria Patri_, a Christian hymn:

> As on the first day he bargained with me here. _As it was in the beginning, is now._ On the sideboard the tray of Stuart coins, base treasure of a bog:
>
> _and ever shall be._ And snug in their spooncases of purple plush, faded, the twelve apostles having preached to all the gentiles: _world without end._

(emphasis added, _U_ 2.200-04)

This passage illustrates the masters to whom Stephen serves by peppering his observation with symbols of the Church, England, and money. These oppressors are combined within a hymn, the _Gloria Patri_, which stresses the cyclic nature of time. The hymn reads in entirety, “Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end” (Gifford and Seidman 34). The _Gloria Patri_ connects the Holy Trinity with a sense of cyclic time. The first sentence of the passage shows that Stephen feels the same oppression working at the school under Deasy as he felt from the Church during his time at Clongowes Wood College. He has jumped from one oppressor to another. When Deasy returns from restoring order, he pays Stephen his earnings and speaks of the many oppressive forces Stephen struggles with: England, money, and the Church. By examining Deasy’s views of this trinity of powers and their control over history, it becomes quite clear why Stephen must destroy history, especially Deasy’s theory of history, which “moves toward one great goal, the manifestation of God” (_U_ 2.380-81). Mr. Deasy’s chronological perspective of history
represents those of Stephen’s masters, from which he must break free in order to create anything of value.

d. Religion in A Portrait

Stephen’s struggle with the Catholic Church began in his adolescence, when he declared, in A Portrait, that he would be “a priest of eternal imagination, transmuting the daily bread of experience into the radiant body of everliving life,” instead of a secular priest (AP 240). Despite his declaration, the Church still burdens his mind. Stephen thinks of the burden of the Church along with his employment under Mr. Deasy in terms of eternal cycles, which represent the perpetual oppression of Ireland under England. This paralyzing cycle of history, famously described by Stephen as “a nightmare from which I am trying to awake” (U 2.377), appears symbolically in his recitation of the Gloria Patri and his reference to three nooses around his neck (U 2.377). The first part of Stephen’s thought, “As on the first day he bargained with me here” (U 2.200), imitates the following line from the Gloria Patri, “As it was in the beginning, is now,” indicating that just as his employment began, presumably with him and Deasy deciding his wages, so it continues—a stagnant cycle mimicking that of history. Stephen works at a job he does not enjoy (as his half-hearted history lesson reveals), for an employer whom he ideologically disagrees with, in order to live under the roof of the Martello Tower, symbolizing English military rule in Ireland, with an usurper, Buck Mulligan, who uses Stephen’s earning for booze. Such is Stephen’s own drab cycle, which he compares to the history of Ireland, and, thus, to the Gloria Patri—history repeating itself without end, like an inescapable nightmare. The comparison between the cyclic history of Ireland, the
Church, and his employment continues when Stephen relates his stagnate His[$]tory, as Leonard would say, to a perversion of the Holy Trinity: “The same room and hour, the same wisdom: and I the same. Three times now. Three nooses around me here” (U 2.233-34). In this scene, it is not only the repetitive cycle of history but also a physical constriction that Stephen feels is ready to strangle him. The crippling cycles of history bring together two of Stephen’s three masters, England and the Church.

The cyclic history which restrains Stephen is not limited to “Nestor” or even Ulysses. In fact, a similar application appears in the final story of Dubliners, “The Dead,” written in 1907. Interestingly, “The Dead,” more so than the other stories in Dubliners, represents the paralyzing relationship between past and present, in Ireland. The story implies a future of inevitable death and futility, not unlike Stephen’s feelings about history. In the story, the aging Misses Morkan and Mary Jane, their niece, host the annual Christmas party. It would seem appropriate for a party celebrating the birth of the Savior and the new year to focus on life and rebirth; however, the topics of discussion at the party continually circle back to memories of the past, demonstrating a desire for a present that cannot be achieved. For instance, the topics of discussion at the party include the Morkans’ deceased siblings, Ellen and Patrick, and monks who sleep in their coffins to remind them of their mortality (D 201-2). When not talking of death directly, \footnote{5 I am referring the three masters that Stephen enumerated for Haines in “Telemachus”: England, the Church, and the third which wants him for odd jobs (U 1.638-44). I interpret the third master as Ireland; however, one might also interpret the third master as money, which would explain why Stephen works at a job which he does not enjoy.}
the guests reminisce about unrivalled opera singers and dying traditions such as genuine hospitality, which the present generation lacks. The guests are infatuated with the past and refuse to live in the present. Looming death manifests itself throughout “The Dead” in the form of Aunt Julia’s failing health, which is compared to her sister’s liveliness: “. . . [Julia’s] slow eyes and parted lips gave her the appearance of a woman who did not know where she was going. Aunt Kate was more vivacious. Her face, healthier than her sister’s” (D 179). At the end of the story, Gabriel vividly imagines he will soon be attending Julia’s funeral. But it is not only Julia who is fading into the past. Gabriel thinks, “One by one they were all becoming shades. . . . His own identity was fading out into a grey impalpable world: the solid world itself which these dead had one time reared and lived in was dissolving and dwindling” (D 224-25). The characters in “The Dead” continuously circle back to the past, just as Gabriel gesticulates, making “a circle in the air with his arm,” before giving his speech about reviving in the present generation “the tradition of genuine warm-hearted courteous Irish hospitality” (D 203-4). Endlessly recalling the past, the guests of the Morkans’ party and Ireland, in general, are living in a time which has passed, in a sense, a dead history.

It is not merely the wave of an arm or the recycling of the past in conversation that connects “The Dead” to the history that Stephen must undermine: it is the forces behind the cycles. Gabriel’s comic retelling of the story about his grandfather’s horse, “[t]he never-to-be-forgotten Johnny,” reveals the forces at work behind history (D 208). The story goes that Patrick Morkan, Gabriel’s grandfather, owned a starch mill in which his work horse, Johnny, drove the mill by walking circles around the mill stone. One
day, Patrick decided to ride Johnny out to watch a military review. On the way, as they were passing the statue of King William III of England,6 Johnny either took a liking to William’s horse or mistook it for the mill stone, and he began to circle the statue (D 208-9). Gabriel’s story portrays an animal so trained to work at one job that it cannot conduct simple tasks without its duty hindering the act. The horse’s obedience to its duty is similar to Ireland’s bondage under England. Ireland has been controlled by the English since 1169 C.E.—so long that memories of certain freedoms have been forgotten and acts of servitude seem natural, for instance, the use of the English language. Even in the present in which the story of Johnny is told, Gabriel reenacts the horse’s comical mistake by galloping in a circle, commemorating the memory and recurrence of the oppressive history. He and the guests around him do not realize that all night they too have been circling the same figurative mill stone as Johnny, doting on the past instead of living in the present. This scenario recalls Stephen’s recitation of the Gloria Patri, “As it was in the beginning, is now. . . . and ever shall be . . . world without end” (U 2.200-4). Both instances evince the idea of cyclic history, driven by English and religious power. Furthermore, the relationship of death and paralysis to cyclical history in “The Dead” provides insight into Stephen’s feelings toward a life ruled by such a history.

6 Gifford notes in his Joyce Annotated that “Protestant William won the battle of the Boyne in 1690 and went on to thoroughly suppress yet another Irish bid for independence. His reconquest of Ireland in effect turned the country into a penal colony” (Gifford 122-23).
In addition to the symbols of British imperialism in “The Dead,” “Nestor” yokes British imperialism with capitalism. Imperialism and capitalism complete the trinity of forces which determine history in Ulysses: Church, Imperial State, and capitalism. The relationship of imperialism and capitalism is apparent in Stephen’s recital of the Gloria Patri when he mentions the Stuart coins (U 2.201). These coins were minted by James II of England in 1689 after he fled to Ireland, having been dethroned the previous year. Gifford and Seidman describe the coins thus: “The coins though initially as worthless as the Stuart attempt to use Ireland (the bog) as a base from which to retake England, are, of course, rare. The coins bore the motto CHRISTO—VICTORE—TRIUMPHO (Christ in Victory and Triumph)” (34). In the image of the Stuart coins, the three forces appear: religion, power, and, of course, money.

After Stephen’s Gloria Patri, Mr. Deasy returns to his study to pay Stephen his wages. While Mr. Deasy doles out these wages, Stephen turns his attention to the shells in “the cold stone mortar” on Deasy’s desk (U 2.213). Stephen thinks of the shells as, “[s]ymbols too of beauty and of power,” and he relates them to St. James the Greater and archaic forms of currency (U 2.226-27). Stephen connects money to religion, but it is Mr. Deasy who relates contemporary currency to England. Deasy asks Stephen, “Do you know what is the pride of the English? . . . —I will tell you, he said solemnly, what is his proudest boast. I paid my way” (U 2.251). Previously, Mr. Deasy had told Stephen, “You don’t know yet what money is. Money is power” (U 2.236-37). Thus, through Deasy’s dialogue, it is clear that the English have power because they have money.

Money is likewise tied to religion in the form of the Stuart coins and the shells, both of
which Deasy owns. Stephen is in Deasy’s power in this way, for as Frank Budgen writes, “Let an individualist artist deny religion and politics as vehemently as he will, economics is something he cannot deny” (42). The control that the English and the Church derive from money gives them power over the narrative of history, and, as Garry Leonard argues, the power to pick what facts are used in a historical narrative. Control over the formation of history allows the creator to produce a history which will perpetuate the present: a repeating cycle, which guarantees the creator power and control over all other subjects. In order to undermine the cycle, Stephen must not only fly by history, as he does the nets of nationality, language, and religion (AP 122), but he must manipulate it.

The history that Mr. Deasy symbolizes is supported by three masters which Stephen feels oppressed by: England, the Church, and capitalism. All of these forces endorse a cyclical history. In such a history, those in power reap all of the benefits continuously. The subjects of imperialism lose their native language, religion, right to self-govern, and national pride. Under these circumstances, when the dropping of a time ball or even the name of a street reminds one that he is subject to foreign rule, producing the conscience of one’s race becomes a difficult feat; therefore, it is imperative that Stephen manipulate history. Stephen must wake himself from the nightmare, and, instead of viewing history as something separate from himself and at fault for the course it has run, he must oust it with all of its imperial, religious, and financial bondage. History, Stephen thinks, is “a tale like any other too often heard,” and he will be the one to revitalize it (U 2.46-7). Supporting that point, Leonard says, “Stephen wishes to fictionalize himself (that is, narrate ‘His$istory’) in a way that does not depend on
'History.' . . . to evade the limitations that the narrative of ‘History’ imposes on the narrative of ‘His[$]tory’” (175). By manipulating history, Stephen can manipulate his own story.

**e. History and Memory**

Before he begins creating his own His[$]tory, Stephen begins to question the objectivity of history. To replace history with an alternative version, Stephen attacks the supposed inherent veracity of history by acknowledging its dependence on memory. When Cochrane forgets the city where Pyrrhus’s battle took place, Stephen thinks about how an historical fact is subject to change depending upon whether it is remembered or forgotten: “Fabled by the daughters of memory. And yet it was in some way if not as memory fabled it” (U 2.7-8). Here, Stephen links Cochrane’s mis-remembrance to the “daughters of memory,” the Muses of Greek mythology. The Muses were goddesses of the arts and the offspring of Zeus and Mnemosyne (Greek for “memory”) (Gifford and Seidman 30). Memory, the mother of the creative forces, presides over all of the Muses from that of lyric poetry to dance, including the Muse of History, Clio. Stephen says that the goddesses of creativity have caused Cochrane to forget, and, thus, history is altered. History is contingent upon memory, a creative process; therefore, history is a creative process. In a similar line of thought, Budgen compares the writer to the self-portraitist, asking, “who knows when memory ceases to be memory and becomes imagination? . . . Forgetting and remembering are creative agencies performing all kinds of tricks of selection, arrangement and adaption” (62-63). Though history claims objectivity, it is descended from and reliant upon memory, which is subjective. Stephen does not stop
after displacing history from assumed objectivity to subjectivity. He thinks, “And yet it was in some way if not as memory fabled it,” suggesting that Cochrane’s forgetting is in some way truthful—not a fable. If history is a creative art, then Stephen, as an artist, can construct new histories, which will not oppress him linguistically, economically, and spiritually. In essence, he will be free to produce the conscience of the Irish race.

Cochrane’s mis-remembrance begins Stephen’s ponderings about history and its dependence upon memory. His thoughts suggest that there may be some truth to forgetting historical events, as if the “truth” of an event depends entirely upon how it is remembered. He thinks further about the possibility of changing events that have already transpired and are largely accepted as historical fact. Stephen considers hypothetical outcomes of famous historical events, such as Julius Caesar and Pyrrhus not having been murdered:

Had Pyrrhus not fallen by a bedlam’s hand in Argos or Julius Caesar not been knifed to death. They are not to be thought away. Time has branded them and fettered they are lodged in the room of the infinite possibilities they have ousted. But can those have been possible seeing that they never were? Or was that only possible which came to pass. Weave, weaver of the wind. (U 2.48-53)

As Stephen ponders the possibility of an un-murdered Pyrrhus and Caesar, he doubts himself— “They are not to be thought away”—because of the amount of time that they have been believed as truth and remembered as such (U 2.49). It is the strength of the memory that seems to determine history and not objectivity. The following sentence,
though, is where Stephen begins to formulate a plan for ousting the story that has been branded and fettered by time as history. He thinks, “But can those [the infinite possibilities ousted by history] have been possible seeing that they never were?” Here, Stephen pioneers the idea of multiple or alternative histories, indeed, in terms of ancient history (Pyrrhus and Caesar); nevertheless, the implication is that Stephen’s own History and that of Ireland could be recreated, not from the perspective of an Englishman, but from the point of view of an Irish person, unlike Mr. Deasy—someone who is aware of the power structure upon which history is constructed. The implication is that Stephen will be the author of such histories in which he is not dominated by the social constructs of imperialism, nationalism, religion, or money; Stephen, however, is not alone in constructing alternative histories in *Ulysses*.

Stephen’s new take on history is manifested in “Wandering Rocks,” an episode consisting of nineteen different sections, which take place simultaneously throughout the city. The various perspectives alone counter that of Ireland’s official history, which views events only through the lens of the English oppressor. Stephen imagines history to be dependent upon creativity and memory, instead of an objective science or an assumed right of those in power; history becomes, thereby, His[$]tories, a multiplicity of perspectives from a broad spectrum of people regardless of power status. History is subjective because it is reliant upon translations to and from the original event, sensory perception, memory, and narration, in addition to the changing perspective of the historian. Realizing this subjectivity, as Stephen does in “Nestor,” allows the Irish to create new His[$]tories, which happens most overtly in “Wandering Rocks.” In her
article, “States of Memory: Reading History in ‘Wandering Rocks,’” Anne Fogarty argues for a historiographical rereading of “Wandering Rocks” that acknowledges a multiplicity of histories present throughout the Dublin cityscape in the form of landmarks (statues, roads, bridges, etc.) and its citizens. Fogarty explains that the episode “sets out to break the strangulating hold of history on Irish society by pointedly concentrating on the here-and-now,” and, furthermore, by “departing from its Homeric intertext” (59). Not only does the episode depart from a linear history, but it creates its own histories. For example, during the episode, histories are composed in the minds five characters. Fogarty describes them:

Fr. Conmee reflects on the Talbots of Malahide and toys with the idea of recording the history of the Jesuit foundations in Ireland; Ned Lambert narrates the story of Silken Thomas’s rebellion in St. Mary’s Abbey and also recounts the anecdote about the arson attack by Garret Mór, the Great Earl of Kildare, on the cathedral at Cashel; O’Madden Burke wants to write a history of St. Mary’s Abbey; Rev. Hugh C. Love is in the process of writing a chronicle about the Geraldines; while Kernan muses on the execution of Robert Emmet and the capture and betrayal of Lord Edward Fitzgerald (66).

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7 Fogarty notes that although the Clashing Rocks, or Symplegades, are mentioned in the Odyssey, Odysseus never actually passes between them as Jason did in the Argonautica (59). The episode’s very inclusion in Ulysses is a departure from history.
All of these characters are remembering their histories, and, because memory is a creative process, they are reinventing them as a result. Fr. Conmee, for instance, exits a tram car onto Malahide road and the name of the street cues his memory, by which he forms a history of his own creation:

The joybells were ringing in gay Malahide. Lord Talbot de Malahide, immediate hereditary lord admiral of Malahide and the seas adjoining. Then came the call to arms and she was maid, wife, and widow in one day. Those were old worldish days, loyal times in joyous townlands, old times in the barony. (U 10.156-60)

The name of a road, Malahide, first invokes an Irish poem, which Gifford and Seidman cite as, “The Bridal of Malahide,” by Gerald Griffin, and this road immediately links history to the creative arts, as Stephen does in “Nestor” (263). Also notable is that the history that Fr. Conmee thinks of is an actual book entitled, Old Times in the Barony, which his true-life counterpart wrote. The book deals with the beginnings of English colonization of Ireland in the twelfth century: it was Lord Talbot who received the town of Malahide from Henry II, the English monarch whom Dermot MacMurrough invited into Ireland. But Conmee’s history differs from the history his real life counterpart wrote. Gifford and Seidman note that the story about the woman who was “maid, wife and widow in one day” is actually “about Mr. Hussey, the son of Lord Galtrim, and his betrothed, Maud, the daughter of Lord Plunkett. The bridegroom was called from the altar to lead his troops against a marauding party and was killed,” making his intended
wife a maid, wife, and widow (Gifford and Seidman 263). Conmee presents a complex example of the manipulation of history through creative remembrance in *Ulysses*.

Fr. Conmee not only represents an Irishman taking up English history and recreating it from his perspective, but he also represents contradictory ideals, showing the complexity of historical matters. Fr. Conmee, though he is a figure of the Church, and, Fogarty asserts, he “appropriate[s] and kowtow[s] to English imperial values in the interest of self-advancement,” he also serves “as nativist spokesperson for the forgotten zones of an authentic Ireland” (69). Fr. Conmee’s views seem contradictory; however, it is important to recognize the “pluridimensionality,” as Fogarty says, of Joyce’s work and also of history. Fr. Conmee’s contrasting ideals reveal that the dichotomies between the Irish and the English or the Irish and the Church are too simple to characterize the complex political movements of the time, for there were also struggles among Irish nationalist groups. As Michael Levenson states in his article, “Living History in ‘The Dead,’” the variety of nationalist movements was as striking as the passion they incited (166). He lists such movements as Home Rule, Sinn Fein, the Gaelic League, the Irish Literary Theatre, and D.P. Moran’s opposition toward Protestants and call for an Irish Ireland, all of which differ from each other on various issues.

As Stephen grapples with history in order to create his own story apart from the influence of Ireland’s cyclic history, it becomes apparent that history is subjective because it is formed and recreated through personal memory. As *Ulysses* continues from “Nestor” to “Wandering Rocks,” His[$]tories or his stories grow increasingly more complex, while history, in the traditional sense, degenerates into an all-too-simple lens
through which to view the multidimensional world—as insufficient as standardized time. History asserts a view that assumes black and white in world of gray, or perhaps it is more accurate to call it kaleidoscopic, like “Wandering Rocks,” a collage of perspectives overlapping and happening simultaneously. This episode illustrates that at any moment many histories are made, remembered, recreated, and forgotten. While such a vision of history seems chaotic, it also seems a better representative of the universe of *Ulysses*, which itself is founded upon countless memories and histories from Homer’s *Odyssey* to the contemporary nationalist movements. Declan Kiberd sums up quite well Joyce’s use of history in *Ulysses*, when he says,

> By setting the past and present into dialectical tension, the mythic method undermined the European enlightenment’s notions of time and linear progress. Instead, it evoked a world of cycles and spirals, which mocked the view of history as a straight line and they set in its place another, very different model. (Kiberd 340)

Joyce’s concept of history is that of an open bag in which one can retrieve and recycle the material of the past to create a new present and future. Just as Stephen daydreams of a never-murdered Pyrrhus and Julius Caesar, and just as Joyce re-invents the *Odyssey*, so the potential of the past is as commodious as the future.
CHAPTER IV

NAVIGATING THE PAST: MEMORY AS COMPASS IN A PORTRAIT AND ULYSSES

Time and the ways in which time is measured and controlled, poses an integral problem for Ireland and its citizens within the pages of Ulysses—a problem for which Ulysses offers some solutions. In my chapter on standardized time in Ulysses, I have shown how Leopold Bloom is stripped of his capacity to temporally and spatially orient himself due to his inability to see the clock on the façade of the bank, his confusion about whether the Ballast Office time ball drops at 1:00 P.M. Greenwich Mean Time or Dunsink Time, and his ignorance of the meaning of the word “parallax.” In the latter scenario, Bloom imagines himself attempting to flatter Professor Joly in order to figure out the meaning of parallax, only to be shown the door for even mentioning a scientific theory which places the power of temporal and spatial orientation in the hands of the individual subject. Molly Bloom’s monologue offers a contrast to Leopold’s helplessness. In “Penelope,” Molly asserts her own subjective time, uncontrollable and immeasurable by any means of standardized time. Molly’s stream-of-consciousness time regains the power that Bloom lost earlier in the novel and returns it to the mind and body of the individual. For an Ireland anxious to rid itself of its English oppressors, Molly’s temporal control is a step toward removing the shackles of imperialism. In my chapter concerning Stephen’s rejection of history, I observed Stephen’s struggles to escape the
paralyzing bonds of Ireland’s cyclic history, a nightmare from which he must awake or else face the bleak future that Gabriel Conroy senses encroaching upon him at the end of “The Dead.” To do so, Stephen begins to question the authority of history in “Nestor,” imagining it as a fable that may be changed. This questioning allows him the opportunity to create his own personal story unhindered by history; however, Stephen must handle other social constructs in order to create freely, such as his betraying friends, his father’s voice, the bondage of Catholic dogma, and Irish nationalist groups, as well as cultural groups such as the Irish Literary Theatre and the Gaelic League.

In addition to stream-of-consciousness and the subjectivity of history, memory offers a solution to the passage of time in *Ulysses*, for it is memory that connects the past and present, allowing one to navigate the Scyllae and Charybdises which lie ahead. In line with the seafaring metaphor—appropriate in a discussion of *Ulysses*, with its Odyssean heritage—memory is a tool, a compass. It is a tool of empowerment for the individual who understands its creative potential. As quoted earlier, Frank Budgen states, “Forgetting and remembering are creative agencies performing all kinds of tricks of selection, arrangement and adaption” (Budgen 62-63). History, a created cultural memory, can manipulate the identities and futures of those it governs. As Garry Leonard illustrates, the practice of creating history helps support an imposed national narrative that limits the future of the nation’s citizens and subjects (170). Personal memory can work in the same way, both as oppressor and empowerer, if one is aware of the power of history and memory, as Stephen Dedalus is. The individual controls memory, or at least actively and creatively engages with it, thereby subjecting memory to the individual’s
latent and explicit motivations. Memory puts the past at the fingertips of the subject, unlike official history, which perpetuates the power narrative of the colonial oppressor.

On the one hand, memory is a tool at the disposal of the novel’s individual characters. Yet memory is infinitely important to the composition of *Ulysses* itself. Joyce relies on memory for the development of his characters, content, structure, and aesthetics. For a moment, imagine reading *Ulysses* without a memory. Consider having no means to record instances of Stephen’s haunting guilt for not having prayed for his dying mother, instances which are marked by the phrase, “Agenbite of inwit” (*U* 1.481); contemplate the inability to connect the fragments from the naughty letter Leopold Bloom receives from his pen pal, Martha Clifford, such as, “I do not like that other world,” and “are you not happy in your home,” that recur in his thoughts during 16 June 1904 (*U* 5.245, 246). These phrases reverberate throughout the text, accumulating meaning and connecting the text as they reappear in different times and places. Such seemingly minor details orient the reader within the experimental structure of the novel just as, for instance, the minute detail of the cloud that covers the sun, witnessed by Stephen in “Telemachus” and Bloom in “Calypso.” Stephen sees a cloud which begins “to cover the sun slowly, wholly,” and Bloom sees the same cloud, also “covering the sun slowly, wholly” (*U* 1.248, 4.218). The significance of this detail is that the sightings take place three episodes apart, yet the reader is meant to understand that the two protagonists see the cloud simultaneously because of the nearly identical structure and wording of the sentences that alert the reader to the detail. First, Stephen notices the cloud from atop the Martello Tower at 8:00 A.M., and then Bloom sees it while returning home from
purchasing his pork kidney at Moses Dlugacz’s butcher shop. This detail informs the reader that, when Bloom notices the sun being covered by the cloud, the time of the novel has returned to the time that Stephen saw the cloud, approximately 8:00 A.M.; the reader, therefore, comes to understand that both episodes unfold on the same morning, in close proximity to one another. One can infer much from such a detail. For instance, Bloom and Stephen should be compared and contrasted, scrutinized as a unit. All of this is noticed by the attentive reader who remembers and rereads. Like many other details in *Ulysses*, these small strands of memory attach themselves to greater strands which give the reader deeper insight into the characters’ worlds and the world of *Ulysses* in general. Indeed, if one were to trace all of the strands, one would discover a very complex web of intertwined narratives.

Memory is essential to understanding *Ulysses*, as well as Joyce’s other works. As John Rickard says in *Joyce’s Book of Memory*, “[Joyce’s] fascination with memory amounts to a philosophical and psychological obsession that profoundly influences not only the content but the form of his work” (2). In fact, in the article, “‘Preparatory to anything else,’” John Paul Riquelme illustrates how *Ulysses*’ “diversity of perspectives” requires the reader “to understand [the novel] through memory of various kinds” (11). Riquelme identifies four types of memory that recur in *Ulysses*. They are as follows:

1.) **Cultural or intertextual memory**: “often of the literary sort, that had registered . . . details of other works that are significant precursors for the text at hand” (Riquelme 12).
2.) **Intratextual memory**: “a memory of the details of language and narrative that we encounter in the process of reading,” which consists of retrospective and proleptic perspectives, looking backward and forward in sequential time, respectively (13).

3.) **Personal memory**: the reader’s and characters’ memories, both of which help to develop characters, as well as create an intimate bond between reader and character as “we begin to share the characters’ memories,” says Riquelme, “because in our attentive reading, we remember them, too.”

4.) **Historical memory**: which requires not just a familiarity with facts, but “the recognition of overlapping contextualizing narratives . . . that provide frames for understanding the action and the often challenging formal aspects of *Ulysses*” (13-14). The historical narrative used most often is that of English imperialism and Irish nationalism.

These categories are imperfect because the types of memories are indefinite. They often occur together with no clear boundary between one another. When a character remembers a literary text or song (personal and cultural memory), the song carries its own cultural memory, but the character’s memory of hearing the song may be inseparable from the cultural memory. Bloom, for example, thinks of many songs which cue memories of Molly performing them; he also remembers a song which reminds him of
Molly’s impending affair with Blazes Boylan: “Seaside Girls.”¹ In another scenario, a character might remember an historical event (personal and historical memory) in which a similar blending of memories results. Further still, one can imagine instances in which a character might draw from a blend of cultural and historical memories, such as when Stephen is lecturing in the National Library on the father/son relationship in *Hamlet* (cultural memory) in relation to William Shakespeare’s relationship with his son, Hamnet (historical memory), in order to rectify his own paternal problems with his father, Simon (personal memory). Again, these situations do not consider the intratextual memory of the novel itself—the myriad cross-references that Joyce includes that develop characters, structure, and styles. Also, *Ulysses* bears its own intertextual memory of Joyce’s earlier works, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, Giacomo Joyce, Dubliners*, and even unpublished work such as *Stephen Hero*. Indeed, these earlier works, some more than others, harbor proleptic memories of *Ulysses*, as *Ulysses* bears retrospective memories of them. Such memories influence aesthetic devices, characters, and plot lines. This intertextuality also holds true for *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* (1939), which Joyce imbues with proleptic and retrospective intertextual memories of one another. It is no wonder that Joyce’s works are interconnected by memory because Joyce’s memory was

¹ Bloom associates the song with Boylan because of a postcard from his daughter, Milly, part of which reads, “. . . he sings Boylan’s (I was on the pop of writing Blazes Boylan’s) song about those seaside girls” (*U* 4.08-9). The song becomes so closely related to Boylan, in Bloom’s mind, that some readers, myself among them, believed this song to be by Hugh “Blazes” Boylan.
so strong. In a conversation with Joyce, Frank Budgen asked him “how long he had been working on *Ulysses*” (Budgen 22). Joyce responded that he had been at work for “[a]bout five years, . . . But in a sense all my life.” Truly, there is a lifetime of memories in *Ulysses*, making his remark a difficult one to refute.

This chapter will discuss the roles of memory in the microcosms of the protagonists, Stephen and Bloom, and the ways in which memory has helped shape their identities. Both characters are experiencing loss and must navigate their own metaphorical Scyllae and Charybdises—Stephen’s are political, while Bloom’s are familial. Analyzing Stephen and Bloom’s use of memory presents a balanced perspective of memory in the historical context and the personal context of *Ulysses*.

**a. Stephen’s Whetstones**

In his introduction to *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, Seamus Deane writes that Stephen Dedalus “is his own creation. . . . he refuses to become a ‘character’” of Ireland, like those people who have “allowed themselves to be constructed by the social, economic and political circumstances of their lives” (xlii-iii). Stephen renounces the social constructs he refers to as masters, such as English imperialism, the Holy Roman Apostolic Church, and Irish nationalism. He does not even feel comfortable with the English language, as the ‘tundish’ scene with the Dean of Studies illustrates. These oppressive forces that Stephen ousts present him with an identity crisis, which becomes apparent in a conversation between Stephen and Cranly in *A Portrait*:
—It is a curious thing, do you know, Cranly said dispassionately, how
your mind is supersaturated with the religion in which you say you
disbelieve. Did you believe in it when you were at school? I bet you did.
—I did, Stephen answered.
—And were you happier then? Cranly asked softly. Happier than you are
now, for instance?
—Often happy, Stephen said, and often unhappy. I was someone else
then.
—How someone else? What do you mean by that statement?
—I mean, Stephen said, that I was not myself as I am now, as I had to
become. (AP 261)

Though Stephen claims to have flown by the nets of oppression, they still haunt him, and,
so, as the quote above shows, Stephen must adapt his identity, or, rather, will himself to
become another I. Stephen attempts to fashion an identity outside of the social forces he
claims to renounce, specifically those which pertain to Ireland and Irish nationalism, but
also false friends, and his father’s voice.

“Cranly’s arm”: Detecting False Friends

Early in Ulysses, the reader witnesses Stephen’s memory at work, protecting him
against a possible betrayer, Buck Mulligan. In “Telemachus,” Buck Mulligan offers the
idea that he and Stephen “work together,” he says, “we might do something for the
island. Hellenise it” (U 1.157-58). What follows immediately is Stephen’s stream-of-
consciousness thought, a memory linking this scenario to one in A Portrait: “Cranly’s
arm. His arm,” his memory alerts him (U 1.159). This personal and intertextual memory establishes a connection between the Stephen of A Portrait and of Ulysses, as well as an association between Cranly and Buck Mulligan. The mention of Cranly’s arm recalls a specific conversation that Stephen and Cranly had, during which Stephen makes his stance clear:

“I will not serve that in which I no longer believe whether it call itself my home, my fatherland or my church: and I will express myself in some mode of life or art as freely as I can and as wholly as I can, using for my defence the only arms I allow myself to use—silence, exile, and cunning.

(AP 268-69)

As Stephen lists his arsenal, Cranly asserts his own: “Cranly seized [Stephen’s] arm and steered him so as to head back to Leeson Park” (AP 269). Like a shepherd, he turns Stephen around, as if by physically steering Stephen, he could guide his mind away from such thoughts. In a similar manner, Stephen senses that Mulligan is trying to steer him toward another Irish cause or that he is going to betray him in some way. This association strengthens throughout the novel. For example, during Stephen’s Hamlet lecture in the National Library, he associates the two betrayers more explicitly when he thinks, “Where is your brother? Apothecarie’s hall. My whetstone.² Him, then Cranly.

² That Stephen refers to his friends as whetstones reveals that his hopes to will himself free from social constructs are impossible. He must have something against which to create himself; therefore, it is more accurate to say that Stephen is trying to will an identity against or in opposition to the social constructs surrounding him.
Mulligan” (*U* 9.977-78). Cranly is a friend, who Stephen feels was disloyal, and Mulligan is encroaching upon similar territory. In addition to *A Portrait*, Stephen’s thoughts harbor an intertextual memory to another of Joyce’s texts, *Stephen Hero* (which later became *A Portrait*), in which he has a brother, Maurice Daedalus. Gifford and Seidman expand upon this reference, noting that the list, “Him, then Cranly, Mulligan,” refers to “the sequence of Stephen’s intellectual companions: first Maurice Daedalus, who is described in *Stephen Hero* (p. 26) as ‘having aided the elder Stephen bravely in the building of an entire science of aesthetic. . . .’” (Gifford and Seidman 246). Maurice, however, was omitted and replaced in *A Portrait* by Cranly, who, “suspected by Stephen of betrayal at the end of *A Portrait*, is displaced in favor of Mulligan; and now Mulligan has become suspect” (Gifford and Seidman 246). What is interesting about this personal, intertextual memory is that it should have been a gap in the reader’s shared memory with Stephen. *Stephen Hero* was published posthumously in 1944; therefore, at the publication of *Ulysses* in 1922, no one who had not read *Stephen Hero* would have understood who the brother associated with the apothecaries hall was. As a result, we know a bit more about Stephen and his memory than Joyce originally intended. Nonetheless, the association of Buck Mulligan with Cranly establishes an association with Stephen’s past, a narrative of betrayal, which a reader of *A Portrait* is able to interpret in *Ulysses*.

“*My consubstantial father’s voice*”: *The Father / Son Conundrum*

Another whirlpool which Stephen must circumnavigate in order to establish himself as an artist separate from social constructs is the voice of his father, Simon
Dedalus. This is no easy feat, and one which, by the novel’s end, is difficult to determine the success or failure of. The father’s voice is an all-encompassing theme, which Stephen struggles with throughout *Ulysses* as much as any of the oppressive forces that beset him. It is also deeply connected with the religion that he claims to have left in *A Portrait* but which continues to haunt him in *Ulysses*.

The first narrative and narrative voice that the reader associates with Stephen is the one told by his father and the one which introduces Stephen: “Once upon a time and very good time it was there was a moocow coming down along the road and this moocow that was coming down along the road met a nicens little boy named baby tuckoo. . . . His father told him that story” (AP 3). Simon Dedalus’ words begin *A Portrait*, and they quite possibly comprise the first narrative engrained in Stephen’s memory. The novel also ends with an invocation of his father: “27 April: Old father, old artificer, stand me now and ever in good stead” (AP 276). The father figure is, therefore, the beginning and the end, the alpha and omega, of *A Portrait*, and it continues to be an important theme in *Ulysses*. In fact, it is a primary theme of *Ulysses*, as the father/son narrative greatly informs the intertextual memory of the novel and the characters. Consider these texts and literary figures from which *Ulysses* borrows: The *Odyssey* (Odysseus and Telemachus), *Hamlet* (Hamlet and King Hamlet), the myth of Daedalus and Icarus (implied by Stephen’s surname), and the Almighty Father (Father, Son, and Holy Ghost). The influences of these narratives greatly inform the structure and stories within *Ulysses*. The *Odyssey* provides a foundational structure and general plot for the novel; *Hamlet*, particularly Prince Hamlet, serves Stephen with a literary figure experiencing loss and
betrayal; the myth of Daedalus and Icarus offers the other side of the father/son narrative in *Hamlet*, focusing on the loss of a son instead of a father; and the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost narrative of Catholicism imposes a narrative in which the Holy Trinity are all God, the Father and Son are one.

It is through the last of these paternal relationships that Stephen bears the most anxiety; hence, this subsection’s title, “My consubstantial father’s voice” (*U* 3.62).

“Consubstantial,” in the theological sense, as Stephen uses it, is defined as, “[s]aid of the three Persons in the Godhead; esp. of the Son as being ‘one in substance’ with the Father” (“consubstantial, *adj.*”). That Stephen allows Catholic dogma to burden his mind may seem strange, considering his conversation with Cranly (“I will not serve that in which I no longer believe whether it call itself my home, my fatherland or my church” (*AP* 268)) in which he renounces his religion; only moments earlier in that same conversation with Cranly, Stephen explains that it is this aspect of religion, the sheer mass of doctrine and dogma, which he fears: “I fear more than that the chemical action which would be set up in my soul by a false homage to a symbol behind which are massed twenty centuries of authority and veneration” (*AP* 265). In a way, it is the collective memory of the Church which Stephen fears. Nonetheless, Stephen believes in consubstantiality, and, therefore, that his voice is his father’s. This presents a dilemma for Stephen, an artist who wants to create himself as freely and wholly as he can, because as Seamus Deane explains, there is a connection between the Holy Trinity and Stephen’s voice:
Thus, the grammatical idea of the male person, first, second and third, is closely allied with the theological doctrine of the three Persons of the Trinity; they in turn are incorporated into Stephen’s male-gendered aesthetic system, with the Holy Ghost, the third Person, representing the inspiration that makes the Father speak through the Son and the Son speak through the Father. The Holy Ghost is the voice of the Father who is speaking the narrative of the Son. (xxiv)

Many times throughout *Ulysses*, Stephen thinks of his voice as his father’s. For example, he thinks in his father’s voice in the “Proteus” episode. As he wonders whether he should visit his Aunt Sally and Uncle Richie, he imagines his father’s response, “Did you see anything of your artist brother Stephen lately? No? Sure he’s not down in Strasburg terrace with his aunt Sally? Couldn’t he fly a bit higher than that, eh? . . . The drunken little costdrawer . . .” (*U* 3.62-6). Stephen’s imitation is corroborated later, when, during Paddy Dignam’s funeral procession, his father, Simon Dedalus, remarks to Bloom, who spotted Stephen out of the carriage window, “—Down with his aunt Sally, I suppose, Mr Dedalus said, the Goulding faction, the drunken little costdrawer . . .” (*U* 6.51-2). As well as developing the father/son relationship between Stephen and Simon, this instance provides an example of intratextual memory—the novel referencing itself proleptically and retrospectively, nonetheless, through a character’s personal memory. This example gives insight into how layered and complex the functions of memory are in *Ulysses*.

The challenge still persists, however. Stephen must dissociate himself from such a force as paternity. Stephen’s obsession with the father/son relationship explains his
preoccupation with *Hamlet* because he feels that if he can prove through reason that Shakespeare’s ghost is Hamlet’s grandfather, then he can reason that “[p]aternity may be a legal fiction. Who is the father of any son that any son should love him or he any son?” (*U* 9.844-45). Therefore, Stephen is attempting to reason himself out of the bonds set by consubstantiality (Holy Trinity), by means of another narrative (*Hamlet*).

Stephen’s *Hamlet* theory is not his only strategy for breaking the bonds of consubstantiality; there is another technique reminiscent of his previous break with the Church, which required him to become a different I. He does this by drawing from cultural and historical memory. His access to the past is apparent in “Proteus,” as he “walk[s] into eternity along Sandymount strand,” and he ponders the historical past of Dublin (*U* 3.18-19). But Stephen does not just ponder, he recreates himself. For instance, Stephen inserts himself into one historical memory of the ancient tribes that inhabited Ireland. This historical memory focuses on a time of “[f]amine, plague and slaughters,” beginning with the invasion of the “Lochlanns” (Norwegians) to the freezing of the Liffey, which *Thom’s* cites as occurring in 1338 (qtd. in Gifford and Seidman 59; *U* 3.300-9). Stephen connects with his ancestors, “a horde of jerkined dwarfs, my people, . . . Their blood is in my waves. I moved among them on the frozen Liffey, *that I*, a changeling” (emphasis added, *U* 3.306-8). This creative memory links historical memory with a forged personal memory, the wording of which evokes his earlier conversation with Cranly in which he states that he was a different person when he believed in Catholicism, but he has changed since renouncing it: “I was not myself as I am now, as I had to become” (*AP* 261). In order to create himself anew, Stephen thinks of himself as
one of his ancient ancestors, “that I,” as well as a constantly changing entity bonded by memory: “But I, entelechy, form of forms, am I by memory because under everchanging forms. I that sinned and prayed and fasted. A child Conmee saved from the pandies. I, I and I. I” (U 9.208-212). Stephen is a profusion of I’s from the past as well as the future to come. Stephen, therefore, explains, “—As we, or mother Dana, weave and unweave our bodies, Stephen said, from day to day, their molecules shuttled to and fro, so does the artist weave and unweave his image” (U 9.376-78). Unlike his contemporaries who strive to become one pure, Irish entity, Stephen strives to become as multifaceted as he can be, by accepting his ancient invaders as well as the tribes that were conquered. Stephen draws on his historical memory, creating a pastiche of I’s; thus, he imitates the creative nature of national history, which is consciously constructed to perpetuate a national myth. Stephen manipulates the same tools used to create a history of subjugation in Ireland to free himself from such nets as English imperialism and Irish nationalism.

A Polished Looking-glass for Ireland

In addition to Stephen’s struggle with consubstantiality and the father/son conundrum, he feels he must separate himself from the Irish nationalist and cultural groups which shared a fantasy of reviving a pre-Anglicized Ireland. In A Portrait, Stephen asserts his anti-nationalist and anti-revivalist sympathies plainly. One need only read Chapter V of A Portrait to grasp his distaste for the nationalist movements, to which his friends begin to subscribe. He views these nationalist groups as absurd and contradictory. For instance, upon learning that his friends have signed a petition for
universal peace in accordance with Tsar Nicholas II’s 1898 Peace Rescript, Stephen approaches one of them, Davin, whom he knows to own a copy of the Fenian Handbook, which features military instructions (Deane 314). Seeing the paradox between Fenianism and universal peace, Stephen says to Davin, “—Now that you have signed that petition for universal peace . . . I suppose you will burn that little copybook I saw in your room” (AP 218). But he does not cease his ridicule after exposing Davin’s political contradiction. Stephen then derides the Fenians, who trained for the aborted Fenian Rising of 1867 with hurley sticks (Deane 316). A few lines later, Davin asks Stephen why he has stopped attending the Irish language lessons. These classes were an attempt by the Gaelic League to revive the Irish language and restore it as Ireland’s national language. Stephen responds to Davin’s question, “—My ancestors threw off their language and took another, Stephen said. They allowed a handful of foreigners to subject them. Do you fancy I am going to pay in my own life and person debts they made? For what?” (AP 220). In other words, Stephen asks why he should fight for Ireland to return to a past of subjugation; what is so glorious about Ireland’s history that warrants a return to it? Ultimately, this argument leads to two of Stephen’s most well-known lines describing Ireland’s political atmosphere: “When the soul of a man is born in this country there are nets flung at it to hold it back from flight. You talk to me of nationality,

3 Davin was based on one of Joyce’s classmates at University College, Dublin, by the name of George Clancy. Clancy, whom Ellmann notes “subscribed ardently to every aspect of the national movement, was murdered by the Black and Tans while he was Mayor of Limerick” (61).
language, religion. I shall try to fly by those nets,” and “Ireland is the old sow who eats her farrow” (AP 220). These lines demonstrate, as Stephen perceives it, the paralyzing political atmosphere of Ireland and the capability of the past (the old sow) to consume the present (her farrow).

According to Ellmann’s biography, *James Joyce*, Joyce held very similar anti-nationalist and anti-revivalist sentiments as Stephen. For instance, Ellmann mentions that Joyce did quit attending Irish language lessons because his instructor, Patrick Pearse, constantly uplifted the Irish by bashing the English⁴ (Ellmann 61). Joyce did not agree with such talk because he felt Ireland was as responsible as England for the current state of Ireland. Stephen, as his reason for quitting his Irish lessons reveals, also felt that the Irish gave up their language. Of the other revivalist groups, Joyce did not agree because he realized that the idea of returning to a de-Anglicized Ireland was impossible. He expounds upon the topic of racial purity, which he deems a fiction, in his 1907 lecture, “Ireland, Island of Saints and Sages,” delivered in Trieste, Austria-Hungary:

> Our civilization is a vast fabric, in which the most diverse elements are mingled, . . . In such a fabric, it is useless to look for a thread that may have remained pure and virgin without having undergone the influence of neighboring threads. What race, or what language . . . can boast of being

⁴ Another reason Joyce stopped attending the Irish language classes was that Pearse thought the word “thunder,” one of Joyce’s favorites, “a verbal inadequacy” (Ellmann 61). This story is wholly believable after reading Stephen’s sensitivity to one word, in the “tundish” scene of *A Portrait*. 
pure today? And no race has less right to utter such a boast than the race now living in Ireland. \textit{(Critical Writings} 165-66)\To de-Anglicize Ireland would be an impossible feat and an undesirable one, at that, because it would have completely disregarded the reality of Ireland’s situation, at that moment. The strategies which the Irish nationalist groups employed to return Ireland to a virgin state seemed, to Joyce, to be the same as those of the British oppressors who used harsh measures to civilize the Irish. Declan Kiberd finds it “hardly surprising,” that Ireland struggled to invent a new Ireland separate from the Anglicized one, “for the builders of the modern nation-states were expected to dismantle the master’s house and replace it with a better one, using only what tools the master cared to leave behind” (338). This metaphor of rebuilding the future with tools and materials from the past coincides with my metaphor of using memory of the past as a compass to navigate the future. Whether or not the Irish were navigating or building, Kiberd argues that the Irish lacked proper tools; according to Joyce and Stephen, however, the Irish did not lack the tools, but they were afraid to use them.

One tool which Ireland possessed was the Irish Literary Theatre, a tool which Joyce felt its founders misused. In 1901, James Joyce wrote a castigating article on the Irish Literary Theatre (ILT). Joyce saw in the ILT the potential to introduce great art to Ireland, but the ILT soon began to succumb to public demand, presenting only Irish works. Joyce was upset by the new direction the ILT was taking, so he responded with an article titled, “The Day of the Rabblement.” To no surprise of anyone aware of Joyce’s history with publishers, he was denied publication in \textit{St. Stephens}, a student-run
magazine at University College, Dublin. As a result, he and a friend, Francis Skeffington, whose article was also denied, combined their essays into a pamphlet, printed them privately, and dispersed them personally. In the article, Joyce addressed the goal of the Irish Literary Theatre, and described the alternative route it had taken for the worse:

The Irish Literary Theatre is the latest movement of protest against the sterility and falsehood of the modern stage. . . . The Irish Literary Theatre gave out that it was the champion of progress, and proclaimed war against commercialism and vulgarity. It had partly made good its word and was expelling the old devil, when after the first encounter it surrendered to the popular will. Now, your popular devil is more dangerous than your vulgar devil. . . . He has prevailed once more, and the Irish Literary Theatre must now be considered the property of the rabblement of the most belated race in Europe. (CW 69-70)

When the ILT could have been presenting plays by “Ibsen, Tolstoy or Hauptmann,” the first of which revolutionized drama in Norway and would have provided a useful template for the Irish, they instead presented works that pleased the greater audience (CW 71). This was not the revolution that Joyce expected. The Irish Literary Theatre was not a movement of reinvention but revival, not an acceptance of Ireland’s present and advancement of the new but a pining for a virginal Ireland that never was. One needs look no further than “The Dead” for Joyce’s stance on nostalgia; therefore, Joyce aligned himself with neither political nor cultural movements that found a noble cause in
regaining an irretrievable past, rife with subjugation and betrayal, and neither did Stephen in *Ulysses*.

It is against these forces that Stephen must create himself, and his strategy is invention by creatively remembering the past. In “Nestor,” Stephen begins thinking of history as a tool by which the state controls its own mythology and its subjects. Stephen must apply the same rules on his own memory, in order to form another identity free from the nets of social constructs in Ireland. However, it is not just the creative remembering of the past, but the narration of the memory which creates a personal history and memory. This is apparent when Stephen asks Cochrane where one of Pyrrhus’s battles took place. Cochrane is unable to remember the location, but he remembers a phrase which Pyrrhus is supposed to have said concerning the battle, “Another victory like that and we are done for;” to which Stephen thinks, “[t]hat phrase the world had remembered” (*U* 2.14-15). If it is through a legacy of phrases—narratives—that Stephen must will himself, then the reader should be skeptical of Stephen’s success.

In *A Portrait* and *Ulysses*, Stephen creates a few narratives, but none which support his claim to forge the uncreated conscience of his race (*AP* 276). Stephen’s desire to create a new narrative is evident as early as *A Portrait*, when, near the end, Stephen recites part of Yeats’s poem, “Michael Robartes Remembers Forgotten Beauty,” in his entry for April 6th: “Michael Robartes remembers forgotten beauty and, when his arms wrap her round, he presses in his arms the loveliness which has long faded from the world,” but after writing this, Stephen differentiates himself from the nostalgia of the
poem: “Not this. Not at all. I desire to press in my arms the loveliness which has not yet come into the world” (emphasis added, *AP* 273). Stephen wishes to create the new from the past, not to revive a past which cannot be brought back.

The trouble comes when Stephen tries to create a narrative through which he can display himself. He must create a narrative that will properly express his self-willed identity, and which others will remember him by. Ironically, his lines of dialogue in Joyce’s work are some of the most famous; however, when one examines Stephen’s own attempts at artistic creation and narration, they fall short. For instance, in *Ulysses*, Stephen is composing a poem in his head: “He comes, pale vampire, through storm his eyes, his bat sails bloodying the sea, mouth to her mouth’s kiss” (*U* 3.397-98). But contemporary readers of Joyce might have recognized these lines from Douglas Hyde’s final stanza of “My Grief on the Sea,” from the *Love Songs of Connacht*. It is ironic that Stephen, who strives to create the new, would recreate a poem that was originally published in Irish by the man who founded the Gaelic League, which instituted the very Irish language classes that Joyce and Stephen rejected.

Later in *Ulysses*, in “Aeolus,” while Stephen visits the offices of the *Freeman’s Journal* and the *Evening Telegraph*, he tells Professor MacHugh his idea for a story, titled *A Pisgah Sight of Palestine* or *The Parable of the Plums* (*U* 7.922-1027). The story bears a nascent resemblance to *Ulysses* in its treatment of two ordinary Dublin women, Anne Kerns and Florence MacCabe, who simply wish to look on Dublin from the top of Nelson’s Pillar. They save up the money to make the day trip, and on the way they buy bread and plums. When they reach the top of the pillar, they eat the bread. Then, they
move closer to edge to look at the churches and the statue of Lord Nelson, which stands atop the pillar. Lastly, they eat the plums, spitting the stones between the railings. The story, if it can be called a story at all, is strange and subtle, with political undertones, much like *Ulysses*. The narrative is original, while recycling the much older story of Moses, when he looked on the Promised Land but never reached it. Though there seems to be potential in Stephen’s story, it is unlikely that anyone will remember Stephen by it, as Cochrane remembers Pyrrhus’ by his phrase.

While Stephen imagines himself as one untouched by social constructs, he does not succeed in expressing himself as such. He reaches into the grab bag of history and memory, choosing the I’s from which he will construct an identity, and while he finds the ingredients, he does not find a sufficient narrative structure to compile them. Stephen appears to be stuck in the literary forms that his education was steeped in. Perhaps it was his Jesuit education which incapacitates his ability to think beyond the narrative structure that he knows. Likewise, Kiberd suggests that “[Stephen] is a dire example of the provincial intellectual weighed down by the learning of the European literary tradition” (Kiberd 346). If there is a place where Stephen and Joyce differ from one another the most, it is in the fact that Stephen did not find a new means of expression within the pages of *Ulysses*, and Joyce did.

**b. Bloom: Family Matters**

While Stephen’s memories allow the reader to see past some of his abstract thoughts and connect with the signals which cue his memories, Bloom offers the reader a much more relatable and sympathetic character. Whereas Stephen’s identity depends on
his relationship to political and social issues, Bloom’s identity is based on his familial cosmos. He is a family man, whose greatest joy comes from having a full house. His memories in the “Lestrygonians” episode confirm that his sources of happiness are family relationships within the home. The following passage illustrates a typical Bloomian memory: “Happy. Happier then. Snug little room that was with the red wallpaper. . . . Milly’s tubbing night. American soap I bought: elderflower. Cosy smell of bath water. Funny she looked soaped all over. Shapely too. Now photography” (U 8.170-73). Bloom’s memories are full of colors, smells, and feelings which he associates with resulting emotions: happiness and comfort. A few lines down from his memory of Milly, Bloom recalls a memory of Molly, structured similarly:

Remember her laughing at the wind, her blizzard collar up. Corner of Harcourt road remember that gust. Brrfoo! . . . Remember when we got home raking up the fire and frying up those pieces of lap of mutton for her supper with the Chutney sauce she liked. . . . Milly tucked up in beddyhouse. Happy. Happy. That was the night …… (U 8.191-201)

Again, Bloom remembers an idyllic moment shared with Molly and his consequent emotions. Bloom categorizes these fond memories with the repeated phrase, “Happy,” but, as readers learn from Ulysses, things are not always as they seem. Likewise, Bloom is not as happy as his memories claim.

Just as Stephen has a dialectical relationship with social constructs—the figural whetstones against which he sharpens his identity—so too are there struggles within Bloom. Though his memories seem to be predominately happy, each memory actually
ends in loss. For instance, the memory of Milly transitions from her childhood to her present. “Photography now,” thinks Bloom, a reminder that Milly has temporarily moved away to Mullingar for a photography apprenticeship (which is itself suggestive of memory). But the mention of photography is actually a retrospective memory cue because it reminds the reader of a prior event in the text. It is already known that Milly is in Mullingar studying photography because earlier, in “Calypso,” Bloom reads a postcard he received from Milly. The postcard was sent the previous day, June 15, 1904, the day of Milly’s fifteenth birthday, thanking her father for the new tam which he sent as a gift. After reading the letter twice, Bloom’s thoughts proceed: “Her first birthday away from home. Separation” (U 4.415-1). Bloom misses his daughter, as one can understand through his fond memories of Milly’s childhood; however, he is also cognizant of her current position as a maturing young lady. This explains why a phrase from Milly’s postcard recurs to Bloom after reading it: “Young student,” (U 4.426). This reference cites the sentence from Milly’s postcard, which reads, “There is a young student comes here some evenings named Bannon . . .” (U 4.406-7). As any concerned father, Bloom worries about Milly, but he tries to reassure himself: “O, well: she knows how to mind herself. But if not? No, nothing has happened. Of course it might . . . Destiny.

According to Molly, Bloom sent Milly away to Mullingar because she was encroaching upon Molly’s private space. Molly also thinks that Bloom sent her away to allow Molly and Boylan to pursue their affair: “only hed do a thing like that all the same on account of me and Boylan that’s why he did it Im certain . . . I couldnt turn round with her in the place lately unless I bolted the door first . . .” (U 18.1007-10).
Ripening up now. Vain: very” (U 4.426-31). All of these recounted memories and emotions from Bloom’s reading of Milly’s postcard are associated in the phrase, “Photography now,” which ends Bloom’s idyllic memory of her childhood (U 8.173). A memory that began with an innocent, soapy, clean Milly, ends with a reminder that she lives away from home at the moment, and she is reaching the age where her innocence will inevitably be lost.

The memory cues, “Milly” and “photography,” are not limited to Bloom’s personal memory. There is also an intratextual memory connecting Milly and Bannon in the first episode, when a young man at the swimming area outside of the Martello Tower announces to Mulligan, “I got a card from Bannon. Says he found a sweet young thing down there. Photo girl he calls her” (U 1.684-85). While reading the first episode, the virgin reader does not yet know that “photo girl” is Milly Bloom, let alone who Milly Bloom is. For this reason, the young man’s mention of Milly and Bannon is proleptic, pointing to a future event. Many of Bloom’s memories adhere to the dialectic structure of happiness/sadness, birth/death, and past/present, which portray a more realistic representation of the human memory than one in which an entire memory is a halcyon scene of warmth and happiness.

It is no surprise that Bloom should remember his past with such fondness, when his present consists of loss upon loss: Blazes Boylan, in a sense, usurped Bloom’s position as husband to Molly, Milly moved away temporarily, Rudy died eleven years prior leaving Bloom without a son, and Bloom’s father committed suicide eighteen years ago. All of his roles—husband, father, and son—are in peril, and the past, where he often
takes refuge, offers memories of wholeness. In a Stephen-like thought, Bloom thinks, “I was happier then. Or was that I? Or am I now I?” echoing the idea that everything changes as time passes (U 8.608). Bloom’s thoughts continue, “Would you go back to then? Just beginning then. Would you?” (U 8.611-12). The answer seems obvious. Bloom finds happiness from a wholeness which he only finds in his memories of the past. Oddly enough, though, Bloom answers five episodes later in “Nausicaa,” “No. Returning not the same. . . . The new I want” (U 13.1103-4). Realizing the impossibility of experiencing the same event twice, Bloom finds reliving the past a futile fantasy—“Can’t bring back time. Like holding water in your hand” (U 8.610-11). Bloom’s feelings about the past coincide with Stephen’s opinion of revivalist groups. History repeating itself is a source of anxiety for Bloom, as it is for Stephen; however, Bloom takes a much less active path toward changing his future, than Stephen does. In fact, Bloom’s thoughts of identity occur when he is moments away from falling asleep in “Nausicaa,” and during a hallucination in “Circe,” whereas Stephen’s thoughts about his identity tend to arise during moments of sobriety and clarity. Similar to Stephen’s use of the Hamlet narrative to free himself from the law of consubstantiality, Bloom’s anxiety manifests itself in the recurrence of the “Rip Van Winkle” tale, which also acts as an warning, foreshadowing his future.

The tale of Rip Van Winkle provides a well-known intertextual memory and an alternative narrative, which helps the reader understand Bloom’s anxiety toward the past and his struggle to maintain his identity. The tale is also similar to the other essential texts in Ulysses (the Odyssey, Hamlet, and Daedalus and Icarus), as it deals with the
absence of a father/husband figure, a father/son relationship, and the relationship between home and identity. Of course, there are many superficial similarities between Rip and Bloom, besides the larger themes noted above, which make “Rip Van Winkle” and Leopold Bloom’s story compatible. Rip is a henpecked husband, fearful of the outspoken Dame Van Winkle, and Bloom is a passive, submissive husband; each retreats from their respective homes to escape the harsh reality that awaits them; both are always ready to help fellow citizens, as Bloom helps Mrs. Dignam with her deceased husband’s insurance policy and Rip “would never even refuse to assist a neighbor in the roughest toil” (Irving 457); and both are animal lovers, as confirmed by Bloom’s talking to and feeding his cat and Rip’s relationship with his canine companion, Wolf. Beyond these character traits, which initiate a comparison between Rip and Bloom, the narrative of “Rip Van Winkle” informs Bloom’s anxiety toward cyclic time.

The “Rip Van Winkle” Narrative

The narrative of “Rip Van Winkle” first appears in the “Nausicaa” episode, in which Bloom retreats to the beach at Sandymount Strand, like Rip, to evade his home. The episode transpires between the hours of 8:00 and 9:00 P.M., a time at which Bloom acknowledges that he should head home: “Better not stick around here all night like a limpet. . . . Must be getting on for nine by the light. Go home,” but Bloom decides against it, “No. Might be up still” (U 13.1211-13). The thought of facing Molly keeps Bloom out of his house. During the episode, Bloom drinks in the sights of Gerty MacDowell’s legs, much like Rip imbibes of the Dutch liquor. Aroused by Gerty’s peep show, Bloom masturbates until orgasm and falls asleep on the strand; likewise, Rip
drinks himself into a twenty-year slumber. It is during the time between ejaculation and sleep that Bloom thinks, “History repeats itself,” like a “[c]ircus horse walking in a ring” (*U* 13.1093, 1111). Bloom’s anxieties about cyclic history begin to show, which, in pure Bloomian fashion, lead him to memories of the past.

Bloom’s thoughts wander to Rip Van Winkle indirectly, via a memory of a game of charades, played at Luke Doyle’s house in 1887, when Bloom acted out Rip Van Winkle. He remembers how he acted out the name for Molly: “Rip Van Winkle we played. Rip: tear in Henny Doyle’s overcoat. Van: breadvan delivering. Winkle: cockles and periwinkles” (*U* 13.1112-13). Then he remembers a couple details of the story, “Rip Van Winkle,” “[t]wenty years asleep in Sleepy Hollow. All changed. Forgotten. The young are old. His gun rusty from the dew,” but he confuses the location of the story with another of Washington Irving’s stories, “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow,” (*U* 13.1115-16). This part of the story that Bloom refers to is when Rip awakes to find his environment changed. The path by which he arrived at the amphitheatre in the woods where the Dutchmen played nine-pins was now a stream, his house was in a state of decay, his dog did not recognize him, his wife and friends had all died or left town, a strange flag fluttered near the inn where a tree once stood, and the portrait hanging in the inn of King George III was replaced with that of General George Washington. Not only had his home changed, but its citizens did not recognize him, and when Rip identifies himself as “a poor quiet man, a native of the place, and a loyal subject of the King,” a ruckus ensues, and he is assumed a tory and a spy (Irving 463). Part of Bloom’s fear is expressed through the strange newness of his home which seems to have forgotten him;
the other fear, however, arises from the apparent repetition of time. Rip’s and, therefore, Bloom’s, anxiety over the repetition of time is evoked when Rip desperately asks if anyone remembers Rip Van Winkle. In response, a few people point to a man they know as Rip Van Winkle, who happens to be his son, also named Rip, and whose identical appearance causes Rip to “[doubt] his own identity, and whether he was himself or another man”: “‘I’m not myself—I’m somebody else—that’s me yonder—no—that’s somebody else . . . I’m changed, and I can’t tell what’s my name, or who I am!’”⁶ (464). This scene provides an alternative narrative to help the reader understand Bloom’s fear of losing his position in his home, the position that defines his identity.

A similar scenario unfolds in “Circe,” which also demonstrates Bloom’s fear of history repeating itself. During a hallucination, Bloom imagines Bello, the masculine version of Bella Cohen, the madam of a brothel in Nighttown, ruthlessly taunting Bloom by imposing the Rip Van Winkle narrative on him:

BELLO

(ruthlessly) No, Leopold Bloom, all is changed by woman’s will since you slept horizontal in Sleepy Hollow your night of twenty years. Return and see.

(Old Sleepy Hollow calls over the world.)

SLEEPY HOLLOW

Rip van Wink! Rip van Winkle!

⁶ Rip’s fear of his identity being imperiled by his son also coincides with Stephen’s concern about consubstantiality and sharing his father’s voice.
BLOOM

(in tattered mocassins with a rusty fowlingpiece, tiptoeing, fingertipping, his haggard bony bearded face peering through the diamond panes, cries out) I see her! It’s she! The first night at Mat Dillon’s! But that dress, the green! And her hair is dyed gold and he ….

BELLO

(laughs mockingly) That’s your daughter, you owl, with a Mullingar student. (U 15.3152-66)

This hallucination reminds the reader of Milly’s postcard, in which she mentions a Mullingar student who visits her in the evenings, and it legitimizes the anxiety which underlies the phrase that Bloom remembers from the postcard, “Young student.” But there is a deeper connection to history repeating itself, here. For Bloom mistakes a matured Milly for his wife, Molly, who he imagines is having another affair. Bloom fears that history repeating itself means a repetition of the pain and jealously he feels because of Molly’s affair with Blazes Boylan. Though the narrative of “Rip Van Winkle” is changed in Ulysses—Bloom confuses his daughter for his wife, instead of his son for himself—it is fitting. Just as Rip’s identity comes into question when he confuses his son for himself, Bloom’s identity is at stake when the people who define him, his whetstones, become objects of other men. In other words, without Molly, Bloom is not a husband, and without Milly, he is not a father. The two roles which bring Bloom happiness are at risk of usurpation.
This intertextual memory of “Rip Van Winkle” alerts Bloom to what a cyclic history bears: the perpetual usurpation of his positions in his home to other men. The “Rip Van Winkle” narrative also acts as a navigational tool for the future. If Bloom is to have a chance of keeping his family together, retaining his roles as husband and father, and ultimately saving his identity, then he must act in some way other than Rip Van Winkle’s method of submission, passivity, and flight. (Notice the striking similarity between Rip’s methods and Stephen’s arsenal of silence, exile, and cunning).

The reader of *Ulysses* can only speculate on the future of the Blooms; however, there is a small detail that hints at an incipient transformation in Bloom’s character, indeed about as promising as Stephen’s *Parable of the Plums* story for his future as an artist. This hint lies within the first two lines of Molly’s monologue, and it reveals the inchoate change in Bloom: “Yes because he never did a thing like that before as ask to get his breakfast in bed with a couple of eggs since the City Arms hotel . . .” (*U* 18.1-2). A seemingly small request, this fracture of a decade-long habit proves a dramatic change from the Bloom introduced eighteen hours earlier—the doting Bloom who takes requests from his wife, brings her tea, and fetches her mail. Bloom’s more assertive role may be the answer to his marital problems. For unlike Rip, whose wife comically died of a

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7 If the reader can trust the Catechistic narrator of “Ithaca,” then it appears that the Blooms lived in the City Arms Hotel between the years 1893 and 1894. The narrator reveals that Mrs. Dante Riordan, “during parts of 1893 and 1894 . . . had been a constant informant of Bloom who resided also in the same hotel” (*U* 17.482-84). If this is true, then it has been a decade or more since Bloom has asked Molly to serve him breakfast.
broken blood vessel “in a fit of passion at a New-England pedlar,” Bloom has the opportunity and the foresight thanks to his personal intertextual memory to change his future (Irving 464). If Bloom’s comment in “Lestrygonians” offers any kind of prediction for the future, than Bloom’s request for breakfast in bed may mean the Blooms’ marriage will endure: “Coming events cast their shadows before” (U 8.526).

Memories are tools that Stephen and Bloom use in order to interpret and even recreate the past to bring about a better future for themselves. They are a means to creating a future in which they can succeed in their own pursuits, whether constructing the conscience of a race or simply restoring a position in a family. Memory is essential to the development of Stephen and Bloom, but it also weaves together complex narratives which connect the past to the present, personal memories to personal, cultural, and historical memories. While memories are the glue which connect the individual to the larger whole of Dublin, memory also holds the universe of Ulysses together.

The reader looking for an ending in which the uncreated conscience of a race is undoubtedly forged or a marriage certainly saved may be disappointed by Ulysses and doubly disappointed with the conclusion of this chapter. Truly, Joyce leaves the reader of Ulysses with a plum stone of hope for Stephen’s writing career and a scrambled egg’s worth for the Blooms’ marriage, and, yet, in doing so, Joyce represents life, both outside of the body and inside the mind, more realistically than many authors. Joyce’s elaborate portrayal of memory and its inseparable relation to his novel are masterfully crafted. His philosophy of history and memory as types of grab bags for creative material, presents his fiction and his characters with endless potential.
CHAPTER V
CONCLUSION

Stephen, Bloom, and Molly are battling oppressive forces in order to regain a sense of individual identity, in a Dublin fractured by English imperialism, the Church, and a number of Irish nationalist and cultural groups. The oppressed forces have seeped into the very measurement of time and recording of history. Bloom is caught in a temporal battle between Greenwich Mean Time and Dunsink time, and standardized time and multiple temporalities, which ultimately leaves him feeling bereft of his ability to orient himself in his city. He even relinquishes his power of perspective because he does not understand the word “parallax.” It is not until the final episode that Molly recovers the individual’s power to orient herself temporally. Molly does not measure time according to any standardized measurement. Instead, she defies time by navigating her past, present, and future in one fluid stream-of-consciousness monologue. During her monologue, standardized time seems to be yearning for recognition in the form of tolling church bells; Molly, however, only recognizes standardized time when she desires to know what time Leopold came to bed. Molly’s monologue and Ulysses, in general, relegate standardized time to the list of temporalities that exist in the elaborate workings of the human memory and the intricacies of a twentieth-century city.

Stephen Dedalus finds himself in a temporal bind as well. Caught in a history perpetually repeating itself, Stephen is yoked by a trinity of nooses, symbolizing the past
asphyxiating his present and future. To break the figurative nooses, he invokes the creative Muse of Memory, Mnemosyne, to call into question the objectivity of history. Doing so permits him to escape Ireland’s paralyzing, cyclic history which England, the Church, and financial poverty have perpetuated since Dermot MacMurrough invited Henry II’s armies to Ireland, in 1166 C.E. In addition to English oppression, Stephen also must navigate his way through Ireland’s own oppressive forces, evinced in the form of betrayers, his father’s voice, and Irish nationalist groups and cultural groups such as the Irish Literary Theatre. Stephen does not want to be shackled by the English, nor by the Irish, who he believes uses similar methods to de-Anglicize Ireland as the English did to “civilize” it. Stephen desires to will his own identity free from social constructs, English and Irish alike. Bloom, on the other hand, merely wants to regain lost ground. Blazes Boylan threatens his position as husband to Molly; the “Young student,” Bannon, portends the loss of Milly’s innocence; Stephen does not show any interest in finding a father figure in Bloom, to fill the void left by Bloom’s deceased son and heir, Rudy. It is the inter-textual memory of “Rip Van Winkle,” that, oddly enough, wakes Bloom from his submissive slumber, resulting in his request that Molly make him breakfast. Leopold’s request hints at a change of dynamics in the Bloom household that may reassure us that the marriage will endure.

It is Stephen, though, whose future casts the most doubt. Where will he sleep, for instance, after he leaves Bloom’s house in the early morning hours of June 17, 1904? At the end of “Telemachus,” Stephen says, “I will not sleep here tonight” (U 1.739-40). From what job will he earn a wage? In a conversation with Corley, Stephen offers his
position at the school in Dalkey: “—There’ll be a job tomorrow or next day, . . . in a
boys’ school at Dalkey for a gentleman usher” (U 16.157-58). It is very unlikely that
Stephen will return home when the ghost of his mother still haunts him, his father’s voice
causes him much affliction, and the sight of his sister, Dilly, provokes emotional duress:
“She is drowning. . . She will drown me with her, . . . Misery! Misery!” (U 10.875-80).
Stephen’s immediate and eventual future is uncertain, and it seems unlikely that any
recognition or financial security will come from his writing any time soon.

While the end of Ulysses justifies Stephen’s brooding and displeased disposition,
it also signifies the success of his real life counterpart, James Joyce. Where Stephen’s
narratives (The Parable of the Plums, his rendering of a stanza of Hyde’s poem, the
nuncle Richie narrative, and his “fox burying his grandmother under a hollybush” riddle)
evoke confusion and blank stares from readers and listeners, Joyce’s narrative, Ulysses,
stimulates reflection and intellectual freedom, unhindered by a hatred for English
imperialism and unfettered by Irish nationalism. Joyce even casts off the shackles of
time and history using stream-of-consciousness narrative and regenerating narratives of
the past such as the Odyssey, Hamlet, the Holy Trinity, Daedalus and Icarus, and “Rip
Van Winkle.” Joyce succeeded where Stephen did not because he collapsed the limits of
the English language and of narrative, whereas Stephen tried to express himself within
the boundaries set by English literature:

We recognize that process of emergence in the narrative at times and in
styles that extend and transform the resources of the English language in
ways that are not anticipated in the history of English fiction. By leaving
the English novel in his wake, Joyce redefines its limits and opens up possibilities that are political as well as aesthetic. (Riquelme 14)

In a political sense, Joyce is revolting against the nineteenth century novel, which he found unfit to express a distinct Irish literature. Joyce’s reaction is similar to the stance against standardized time that Molly takes. As standardized time demands that one live their life by the hours, minutes, and seconds of the clock, the nineteenth century novel demands writers and readers conform to a certain narrative form which calls for chronological progression of time, a particular use of the English language, and a focus on materials. In *Ulysses*, Joyce “restored time’s mystery” by experimenting with structure, style, and development of characters (Kiberd 340). The language he employs is that of ordinary Dubliners, and the subjects of the novel are primarily of the mind. Joyce may not have created the conscience of his race, but he did give the Irish a distinctly Irish voice, instead of an English rendering.

In essence, Joyce wrote a novel about Ireland in 1904, struggling to separate and distinguish itself from English rule, and, in doing so, Joyce himself created something uniquely Irish. As Molly defies time, as Stephen questions history, and as Bloom applies inter-textual memories, so too does Joyce. He creates multiple temporalities using different styles of writing, as in “Oxen of the Sun” and “Aeolus,” and he recreates history and recycles inter-textual memories when he fashions a modern-day *Odyssey* out of an eighteen-hour window of time, in 1904 Dublin. In a sense, *Ulysses* is a universe. When we broaden our gaze and look at *Ulysses* en masse, a cosmos appears. After reading “Penelope,” and realizing that the human mind is itself a microcosm of memories
interconnected to past, present, and future, we might recognize the sheer intricacy of the universe that Joyce created. The reader, who has devoted countless hours reading the thoughts of Stephen, Leopold, and Molly, on June 16 and 17, 1904, might also grasp an overwhelming concept: all which Joyce did not incorporate. Of course, after reading *Ulysses*, we might feel like Joyce included everything, but consider the innumerable microcosms spinning in the minds of other citizens in Dublin, in Ireland, and in the world, which were not included. For instance we might wonder, what has the Englishman, Haines, written for his book on the Irish; how has his relationship toward the Irish influenced his perspective; how will he portray the Irish? Or we might wonder what happened in Martha Clifford’s life that she responds to Leopold’s advertisement for a “smart lady typist to aid gentleman in literary work,” and why she continues to write back, after Bloom’s real desire for a naughty pen pal becomes apparent? (*U* 8.326-27). These pieces of periphery are not answered, but we can be sure that in them an entire odyssey lies waiting to be discovered. Joyce, by defining the complexity of his characters’ worlds, has created a principle for all other characters: their lives too are microcosms. He has also created a new standard for readers. Reading *Ulysses* helps us to recognize the sheer mass of intricate worlds within literary texts, explored and unexplored. After experiencing *Ulysses*, we might never approach a piece of literature in the same way. Joyce teaches us that there are always multiple perspectives to view a narrative.
WORKS CITED

Anyfanti, Alexandra. “Time, Space, and Consciousness in James Joyce's *Ulysses*.”


