

# GENETIC INROADS INTO THE ART OF JAMES JOYCE

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# ‘Love, yes. Word known to all men.’

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To the memory of  
Kinga Thomas  
Attentive first reader<sup>1</sup>

James Joyce wrote *Ulysses*—as the saying goes. The phrase—as far as it goes—is true. Yet it is a shortcut. It compresses a complex web of simultaneously sequential mental and scripted processes into one material result, a word in the past tense: he ‘wrote’ *Ulysses*. The fact that Joyce’s (or any writer’s, author’s) processes of language composition interacted in thought and in draft to result in a material record preserved, is the pre-condition for text we possess in transmission. Material records of writing have, often enough it is true, come down to us only in descent through derivative removes from their authors’ own first materialising their composition in written text. In the case of James Joyce, consecutive early writing—inscription on paper in his own hand or in the hands of scribes and typesetters—has very largely been preserved. Joyce’s holograph/autograph writing itself frequently shows distinct traces of its pre-material ancestry, or offers at least the possibility of intuiting pre-material moments or processes of composition. What is more: the material records of Joyce’s composition and writing frequently survive in series of states of descent, from authorial drafts and fair copies in

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1 A student assistant in our editorial team forty years ago, Kinga Thomas pursued her stint to check the editing of *Scylla & Charybdis*. I had (clearly) given it but routine attention (two paragraphs to be restored? OK.). She read in depth and, excited, came to my office. She saw and felt the significance of our restoring the two paragraphs that had gone missing, and so of ascertaining as *Ulysses* text Stephen Dedalus’s self-assurance that he knew what he was talking about. Kinga Thomas, still a student, died mountaineering.

Joyce's hand to typescripts and proofs, often multiply derivative one from the other, in transcript by others. Typescripts and proofs were always basically the work of typists and printers' compositors. Variation, by contrast—that is: text changes on top of surviving typescripts and proofs—were Joyce's, again in his own hand.

\* \* \*

One third of the way into the ninth episode of *Ulysses*, Stephen Dedalus is in full swing performing his Hamlet lecture to his listeners, a circle of librarians in Dublin's national library. He draws from Shakespeare's last plays the names of their protagonists' daughters and recalls from *Pericles* how Marina, Pericles' daughter, searches out her father. A section of Stephen Dedalus' speech to the Dublin librarians in the episode as published runs as follows:<sup>2</sup>

—Marina, Stephen said, a child of storm, Miranda, a wonder, Perdita, that which was lost. What was lost is given back to him: his daughter's child. *My dearest wife*, Pericles says, *was like this maid*. Will any man love the daughter if he has not loved the mother?

—The art of being a grandfather, Mr Best gan murmur. *L'art d'être grandp.....*

—His own image to a man with that queer thing genius is the standard of all experience, material and moral. Such an appeal will touch him. The images of other males of his blood will repel him. He will see in them grotesque attempts of nature to foretell or to repeat himself.

To prepare for a scholarly edition, one undertakes a search into the spread of all documented instantiations, often variant, of the text in transmission. When Joyce, accomplishing the novel one episode after another, felt he had sufficiently stabilised a given episode, he would write it out in fair copy.<sup>3</sup> In the fair-copy rendering of the passage that concerns us, the text reads as follows:

—Marina, Stephen said, a child of storm, Miranda, a wonder, Perdita, that which was lost. What was lost is given back to him: his

2 Or ran as follows from the first edition of *Ulysses* in 1922 onwards before a scholarly edition, the Critical and Synoptic Edition, was established in 1984. The episode and line reference for the critically edited text of 1984 is: (*U* 9, 421-435).

3 The fair copy of Scylla & Charybdis survives in the Rosenbach manuscript, archived in the Rosenbach Museum in Philadelphia.

daughter's child. *My dearest wife, Pericles says, was like this maid.* Will any man love the daughter if he has not loved the mother?

—The art of being a grandfather, Mr Best murmured.

—Will he not see reborn in her, with the memory of his own youth added, another image? Do you know what you are talking about?

Love, yes. Word known to all men. *Amor vero aliquid alicui bonum vult unde et ea quae concupiscimus\_...*

—His own image to a man with that queer thing genius is the standard of all experience, material and moral. Such an appeal will touch him. The images of other males of his brood will repel him. He will see in them grotesque attempts of nature to foretell or to repeat himself.

As Stephen pauses briefly from his first rhetorical question: 'Will any man love the daughter if he has not loved the mother?', Mr Best mumbles: '—The art of being a grandfather, Mr Best murmured.' Thereafter, this fair-copy instantiation of the passage includes two paragraphs that are lacking in the novel's first edition as published (my first quote above). Unresponsive to Mr Best's interjection, Stephen climaxes his rhetorical questions with the second: '—Will he not see reborn in her, with the memory of his own youth added, another image?' This is the climax to Stephen's rhetorical questions. Apostrophising 'reborn', it refers specifically, too, to a core motif in Shakespeare's last plays. Above all: at this point Stephen pauses in his performance. He is moved to a self-querying silent reflection: 'Do you know what you are talking about? Love, yes. Word known to all men. *Amor vero aliquid alicui bonum vult unde et ea quae concupiscimus\_...*' Only thereupon does he pick up again his performance to the librarians in the National Library.

The Critical and Synoptic Edition of *Ulysses* restores this pair of paragraphs. The restoration has been controversial in Joyce criticism for the past forty years. The bone of contention has been that, from within the second of the restored paragraphs, it renders available three sentences in English from which springs, in turn, a long, yet still only half-finished quote in Latin. The three sentences in English read: 'Do you know what you are talking about? Love, yes. Word known to all men.' They alone have drawn attention. That they do not resurface and so remain absent in the subsequent transmission was taken to indicate that they were consciously deleted. Little thought was given to the situation in full.

Two whole paragraphs, short but complete, are no longer present in the book *Ulysses*. Hence, we need to know and to understand on what grounds these two paragraphs got lost together, in the first place; and why they were editorially restored together again in the scholarly edition. Additionally, there arises within these two paragraphs of text a particular question, contextually complex, in the light of *Ulysses* as a whole. Does Stephen Dedalus here, or ever in the novel, himself articulate the '[w]ord known to all men'? This specific question, however, is not for the reader or critic to decide. Nor can the editor follow a mere hunch that either to leave it out, or else to restore it, results in the text as it should be.

In analysing, arguing, and decision-making, the editor follows principles of editorial procedure. The task is comprehensively to assess the textual situation, to recognise and adjudicate whether there is a problem to be solved—not with regard to the presence vs. absence of three sentences, but comprehensively to the flow of the narrative of the two paragraphs *in toto*, as a unit of writing and consistent argument—and to take editorial measures, or not, accordingly. With respect to the records in material transmission, there is, in the first instance, only one question to be answered: were the two paragraphs in revision deleted, or were they passed over by accident in the text's descent through copying from one document to the next? This one question, binary as it is, is independent of the content and meaning, in whole or in part, of the text contained in the variant in question.

Knowledge of Joyce's working practice needs at this stage to be adduced in terms of how an episode established for *Ulysses* was handed over to those responsible for its typing and eventual typesetting. In principle, the fair-copy text was meant without delay to go into typescript and thence into proof. Yet there were time gaps between finishing fair copies and passing on the text to prepare typescript copy for typesetting at the printing house. In these intermittent periods, Joyce would have further ideas about touching up the fair-copy text. How and where were they to be inserted in standing documents? In the early *Ulysses* episodes, he would tend to revise in the fair copy itself. Yet this impaired the clean appearance of the fair copy. For a succession of episodes from about episode five onwards, he therefore went back to the final document from which he had established the fair copy. This final working draft does not

survive. But from rich collation, it has been analytically established that there existed a 'final working draft' document from which the fair copy (the Rosenbach manuscript) was written out, and to which he went back to enter revisions after finishing the fair copy. In our brief excerpt alone, we stumble over two instances. The phrasing 'Mr Best gan murmur. *L'art d'être grandp.....*' is a variant in the first edition beyond the text of the fair copy. The same goes for the change from 'his brood' to 'his blood' ['will repel him'] in the last paragraph of our passage. In terms of document analysis and collation, it is clear that the changes passed on into the typescript from the final working draft. Hence we safely conclude that the episode Scylla & Charybdis was typed not from the fair copy, but from the final working draft. The typescript in turn served as copy for the typesetting of the first edition. 'Mr Best gan murmur. *L'art d'être grandp.....*' and 'his blood' are therefore Joyce's revisions beyond the fair copy in the final working draft, and were so ultimately established, and italicised for Mr Best's French, in the published text.

One feature, however, can be assessed only by hypothesis, due to the material absence of the final working draft itself. In the fair copy (extant) in Joyce's hand, it is notable that words and phrases to be italicised are underlined throughout. No doubt Joyce himself so italicised the fair copy. There is thereupon, as said, a gap in the document descent. The final working draft—revised after the fair copy—is missing. The text reappears in the typed transcript from it. The typescript provides Mr Best's post-fair-copy mumble in revised wording '[...] Mr Best gan murmur. *L'art d'être grandp.....*'. The pressure of Stephen's ongoing performance curtails Mr Best's interjection, doesn't leave room for him to finish his sentence even under his breath. Significantly, it is Stephen's climax that follows: '—Will he not see reborn in her, with the memory of his own youth added, another image?', which makes narrative sense of the cutting-in-half of Mr Best's murmur in French. But that climax is missing in the typescript, as is Stephen's silent reflection following upon it, before he resumes his performance to the librarians. The gap in the typescript text, and in *Ulysses* as first published, thus comprises two distinctly separate elements of Joyce's composition at this juncture: the climax of Stephen's argument about fathers and daughters in Shakespeare's late plays, and his silent reflection on whether he knows what he is talking about. Our hypothesis on which to ground the restoration of the sequence of

paragraphs as Joyce composed them relies on a strictly formal feature of his writing in the fair copy, projected also onto the post-fair-copy revision in the final working draft. We confidently assume that Joyce underlined '*L'art d'être grandp.....*' in the revision he added to the final working draft. For this, we even have indirect evidence in the fact that the half-phrase was manifestly (albeit shakily, most likely by a scribal hand) underlined in pencil in the typescript. Notably, this half-phrase in French ends with four dots. We proceed then (according to the fair-copy text) through the two paragraphs that the fair copy features (but the documents from typescript to first-edition printing in 1922 do not). The second of these paragraphs in the fair copy ends in a long passage in Latin, which, again, we confidently assume was underlined for italics in the final working draft, just like Mr Best's interjection actually is in the typescript, and again peters out into four dots.

In this situation, the discipline of scholarly editing and the bibliographical evidence together guide us to the only consistent assessment and consequent solution. On account of the visual near-identity of the closing phrases of the paragraphs as styled in the final working draft, both underlined (as we hypothesise) for italics and ending in rows of dots, the typist fell victim to an eye-skip from the end of one paragraph to its counterpart, both ends being underlined for italics and running out into dots. This solution is neatly text-independent. No critical assessment is required based on reading, understanding, and interpreting the text and its meaning. The restoration of two paragraphs simply corrects a human error. In particular, the question never arises whether or not Joyce might have considered, or approved of, the removal of the three sentences that Stephen thinks in silence. Whether or not Joyce ever had second thoughts about them is simply unknown. 'Authorial authorisation' does not exist other than that inscribed in the second of the two paragraphs in Joyce's fair copy. To consider, let alone claim, authorial authority for the disappearance specifically of the three sentences within the second missing paragraph is, without authorial affirmation in word or writing, wholly speculative. Without such affirmation, editorial scholarship, on the foundation of the text's material transmission, upholds the integrity in composition of the two paragraphs in their entirety. In other words, editorial scholarship operates in situations like this not with reference to 'authority', whether



authorial or legitimised otherwise, nor can—or does—it speculate on what the author might have intended. It proceeds from the material evidence of the text transmission. Responsible to it, and to professional competence, it establishes the critical scholarly edition. The three sentences within the two paragraphs that disappeared entirely between fair copy and typescript in Scylla & Charybdis belong in this segment of the materially transmitted text as Joyce wrote it. They belong in *Ulysses* as book (and in the material instantiation of the work *Ulysses* that the book represents, in its turn), and have thus, through critical editing, been restored to their place of composition in the novel's ninth episode.

\* \* \*

With regard to Joyce's novel *Ulysses* as a whole, this brings up a text occurrence in the novel's fifteenth episode, Circe, that might seem inconsistent with Scylla & Charybdis as authentically restored. Stephen Dedalus encounters his dead mother and is drawn into anguished exchanges with her. In their course, he urges her: 'Tell me the word mother, if you know now. The word known to all men.' (*U* 15, 4192-93) Is Stephen—shaken by fear and thoroughly drunk as he is—hoping to learn from his mother now, dead though she is, what she never assured him of in her life? Or else: does the re-balancing of the text of *Ulysses*, by restoring two paragraphs in Scylla & Charybdis, establish also a restored basis for reading and interpreting Stephen's encounter with his mother in Circe? Stephen challenges her to speak at last, from beyond death, that word of which he, alive, is certain. In silently reflecting upon what he is holding forth about to his listeners in Scylla & Charybdis, he 'know[s] what [he is] talking about'. The subsequent progress of *Ulysses* gives no indication of his wavering from that certainty now. 'Now' is the key to Stephen's attitude to his mother, dead though she is, in Circe. In the first draft of the passage, his appeal at the onset reads: 'Tell me the word mother, if you know', yet it is above the line on the instant revised to: 'Tell me the word mother, if you know now.' Behind his appeal is not a sense that his mother died with a knowledge she had kept to herself in her lifetime. Rather, Stephen craves that she admits to having gained a knowledge now, beyond her death, that, for all her motherly care, she never grasped in life. Stephen on the contrary has, since the ninth episode of *Ulysses*, remained certain in thought and emotion of knowing

the word known to all men. Which we as Joyce's readers, know, too, to be the ultimate word of affirmation, the last word of *Ulysses*: 'Yes.'

and the night we missed  
 the boat at Algeciras the watchman going about serene with his  
 lamp and O that awful deepdown torrent O and the sea the sea  
 crimson sometimes like fire and the glorious sunsets and the figtrees  
 in the Alameda gardens yes and all the queer little streets and the  
 pink and blue and yellow houses and the rosegardens and the  
 jessamine and geraniums and cactuses and Gibraltar as a girl where  
 I was a Flower of the mountain yes when I put the rose in my hair  
 like the Andalusian girls used or shall I wear a red yes and how he  
 kissed me under the Moorish wall and I thought well as well him as  
 another and then I asked him with my eyes to ask again yes and  
 then he asked me would I yes to say yes my mountain flower and  
 first I put my arms around him yes and drew him down to me so he  
 could feel my breasts all perfume yes and his heart was going like  
 mad and yes I said yes I will Yes.  
 Trieste-Zurich-Paris  
 1914-1921

'Do you know what you are talking about? Love, yes. Word known to all men.' Despite all accidents that befell the transmission in descent through its processes of pre-publication, careful attention to the text, scholarly, genetically critical, and editorial, has proved capable still of fine-tuning the novel *Ulysses* again to its core affirmation.

## Appendix

James Joyce's 1916 version of his Hamlet chapter for *Ulysses* is lost.<sup>4</sup> His draft for developing it towards the novel's ninth episode, Scylla & Charybdis, is datable to October or even November 1918. The episode's fair copy was underwritten in autograph on New Year's Eve 1918. It is fascinating to observe how minutely within this brief timespan Joyce revised the context and text of Stephen Dedalus' silent reflection on his query to himself: 'Do you know what you are talking about?' Here in parallel lines is a synopsis of the versions. The text achieved is in bold print. The passages in regular font above give the passages and wordings antecedent to their bold-print versions.

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4 See in more detail essay 08. James Joyce's *Hamlet* Chapter.

## Synopsis

the child of seastorm, childish  
—Marina, Stephen said, a child of storm, Miranda, a wonder,

Imogen, [left blank]

**Perdita, that which was lost.**

That which was lost in youth is reborn strangely in his wane of life:  
**What was lost is given back to him: his daughter's child.**

[ not yet present ] But who will  
*My dearest wife, Pericles says, was like this maid. Will any man*  
**love the daughter if he**

I don't know. [ not yet present ]  
**has not loved the mother? —The art of being a grandfather,**  
**Mr Best murmured.**

But will in her recreated and added to her  
—Will he not see reborn in her, with the memory of his own  
youth added,

the images which first awakened his love?  
**another image?**

[ not yet present ]

**Do you know what you are talking about? Love, yes. Word**  
**known to all men. *Amor vero aliquid alicui bonum vult unde et***  
***ea quae concupiscimus...***

—A man of genius above all whose own image is to him, morally  
and materially, the Handmaid of all experience. He will be touched  
by that appeal as he will be infallibly repelled by images of other  
males of his brood in whom he will see grotesque attempts on the  
part of nature to foretell or repeat himself.

—His own image to a man with that queer thing genius is the  
standard of all experience, material and moral. Such an appeal  
will touch him. The images of other males of his brood will repel  
him. He will see in them grotesque attempts of nature to foretell  
or to repeat himself.

