CHAPTER 2

"Hellenise It"
Joyce and the Mistranslation of Revival

"I am distressed and indignant," declared T. S. Eliot (1888–1965).[1] "[D]iscreet investigations" were warranted, he told Sylvia Beach (1887–1962), for a "conspiracy" against James Joyce's newly published novel, *Ulysses*, seemed to be afoot in England.[2] In the months since the book's 1922 printing in Paris, a number of English literary critics had come forward seeking press copies, but few actual reviews of the novel had appeared in British magazines and journals. Disheartened, Joyce himself explained to Harriet Shaw Weaver (1876–1961) that "certain critics" seemed keen to obtain the novel if only to then "boycott the book."[3] Eager to promote Joyce, Eliot interceded on his behalf, offering to "give publicity to the affair, if that were possible and desirable" while promising to review *Ulysses* himself.[4] Eliot saw in Joyce a sympathetic mind, for his "moulding a contemporary narrative upon an ancient myth" was "of interest to Yeats, Pound and myself," he explained, "though I have not yet found that it interests anyone else!"[5] His review, "*Ulysses*, Order, and Myth," appeared in *The Dial* in November 1923, but Eliot became despondent over what he had written for Joyce, believing his essay provided little "reason to be proud."[6] "I shall simply lose my reputation," he told the *Dial*'s editor, Gilbert Seldes (1893–1970), "and disgrace the periodicals for which I write."[7] Nevertheless, Eliot's "badly written" review, specifically its discussion of the "mythical method," left a lasting impression on Joyce.[8] "I like it and it comes opportunely," he told

[1] T. S. Eliot, "To Sylvia Beach, 4 April 1922," in Eliot *LTSE1* (2009) 658.
[2] Eliot *LTSE1* (2009) 658.
[3] James Joyce, "To Harriet Shaw Weaver, 10 April 1922," in Joyce *LJJ* (1957) 183.
[4] Eliot *LTSE1* (2009) 658.
[5] Eliot, "To Gilbert Seldes, 6 February 1923," in Eliot *LTSE2* (2009) 39.
[6] Eliot, "To Gilbert Seldes, 31 December 1923," in Eliot *LTSE2* (2009) 289.
[7] Eliot *LTSE2* (2009) 289.
[8] Eliot *LTSE2* (2009) 289; Eliot (1923) 483.

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Harriet Weaver, "I shall suggest to him when I write to thank him that in alluding to it elsewhere he use or coin some short phrase, two or three words, such as one he used in speaking to me 'two plane'."[9] The "two plane" style at work in *Ulysses*, as Eliot saw it, was part of a small but influential movement, a movement that embraced a new way of composing poetry and narrative fiction in English: the "mythical method" drew on psychology, ethnology and, above all, the mythologies of ancient civilizations and their long reception histories. These elements Joyce had fused together in the collage of *Ulysses*, all to give "a shape and a significance" to the "immense panorama" of anarchy and unrest Eliot believed present in modernity.[10]

For Eliot, the influence of Homeric epic over *Ulysses* was unmistakable. However, too few critics, he thought, had taken Joyce's use of the Greek poet seriously, failing "to appreciate the significance of the method employed – the parallel to the Odyssey, and the use of appropriate styles and symbols to each division."[11] Many had been aware, no doubt, of the Homeric parallels at work in each episode of the novel, but too often these parallels were dismissed as "an amusing dodge, or scaffolding erected by the author for the purpose of disposing his realistic tale, of no interest in the completed structure."[12] Even Richard Aldington's article for *The English Review* had mistaken the novel's stylistic complexity for an "invitation to chaos," born from a "great undisciplined talent … more dangerous than a ship-load of Dadaistes."[13] Eliot, for his part, however, was unwilling to ship Joyce out with the Dadaistes: *Ulysses* was no invitation to new forms of "vulgarity and incoherence" but the result rather of something admirably "classical in tendency" at work in Joyce and other modern writers.[14] That tendency, he explained, had not pushed him "like some contemporary writers" to turn "away from nine-tenths of the material which lies at hand … selecting only mummified stuff from a

[9] Joyce, "To Harriet Shaw Weaver, 19 November 1923," in Joyce *LJJ3* (1966) 83.

[10] Eliot (1923) 483. On Eliot's mythical method and its reception, see Nikopoulos (2017) 292–311.

[11] Eliot (1923) 480.

[12] Eliot (1923) 480.

[13] Eliot (1923) 481; Aldington (1921) 339. Having outgrown his "fine precise prose" and the "Naturalisme of *Dubliners*," Joyce had chosen, Aldington insisted, to squander "his marvellous gifts" on a "more bitter, more sordid, more ferociously satirical" book intended only "to disgust us with mankind." A "tremendous libel on humanity," *Ulysses*' considerable influence was bound to be bad. "Young writers," Aldington claimed, "will be dominated by his personality; they will copy his eccentricities instead of developing their own minds. If only we could treat Mr. Joyce as Plato recommends; give him praise and anoint him with oil, and put a crown of purple wool on his head, and send him to the United States." Aldington (1921) 335, 336, 338, 336, 338, 336, 339–40.

[14] Aldington (1921) 341; Eliot (1923) 482.

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museum."[15] Joyce was classical rather by having done "the best one can with the material at hand," by having been "responsible" to the "living material" born of the contemporary moment, a moment that encompassed what Eliot called a "whole complex of interests and modes of behaviour and society of which literature is a part."[16] Rather than reduce that complexity, Joyce employed a collage of experimental techniques to recast the "futility and anarchy" of the present, drawing on Homeric mythology and the reception history of the *Odyssey* to forge what Eliot called "a continuous parallel between contemporaneity and antiquity."[17] In advance of his time, he had not slipped into labyrinthine chaos but used rather prior receptions of antiquity to evolve new styles, to break down the English novel's obsolescent frame in pursuit of a "deep memorial palimpsest", one where various traces of Homeric receptions – fragments drawn up from the "penumbral zone residua of past impressions" – could be overwritten through Irish modernity.[18]

However, in so doing – contrary to Eliot's insistence upon order and structure – Joyce did not principally engage receptions of Homer to stabilize the so-called chaos or futility of the contemporary world. Rather, he felt what Steven Yao has called the "radical inability of established artistic forms and genres to confront and accurately represent the new realities of the world."[19] The classical past and the present moment were drastically incommensurate, and in his work Joyce sought to break the chain of recent Homeric receptions as sutured together in Ireland – to upset a philhellenic insistence on the coming of a new 'epic' order. Recent scholarship has stressed how pervasive the phenomenon of so-called non-translation – the "deliberate refusal to provide translations of foreign words, phrases and quotations" – was across prominent works of Anglo-American and Irish modernism.[20] While Joyce's refusal of Irish Hellenism did indeed employ the effects of multilingual collage, it was not built purely of 'non-translations' but also of intentional mistranslations, or slanted retranslations, of the Homeric. The "aesthetics of irreverence" Joyce cultivated not only challenged standardization, literalism and

[15] Eliot (1923) 482.
[16] Eliot (1923) 482.
[17] Eliot (1923) 483.
[18] De Quincey (1845) 742; *United States v. One Book Called "Ulysses."* 5 F.Supp. 182 (1933) – District Court, S. D. New York, December 6, 1933. See also Davenport (1987) 53–63.
[19] Yao (2002) 7.
[20] Harding and Nash (2019) 7. On the "theory of mistranslation" as an "aesthetics of irreverence," see Sergio Waisman's study of Jorge Luis Borges (1899–1986), *Borges and Translation: The Irreverence of the Periphery* (2005).

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readerly expectation of translation but also made comical notions of broad semantic equivalence across languages and clear cultural correspondence between the ancient and the modern.[21] "[S]trategies of deliberate mistranslation," as Vera Kutzinski suggests, often enact "an aesthetics of theft and infidelity, in which even a so-called original can betray its translation."[22] As Joyce saw it, unwitting theft and infidelity had reigned over Revival-era receptions of the Homeric, but in that imaginative space – a space rife with mistranslation, misreading and misconstruction – he too saw possibilities for intentional acts of stylistic larceny in *Ulysses*. Words mistranslated, Irish receptions retranslated – though perhaps void of any literal fidelity to the Greek – could be turned to ironize the Revival's bold claims of "authoritative originality" and Homeric likeness.[23] To expose such claims – to attack what Gregory Castle has called "the ambivalent social position of Anglo-Irish Revivalists pursuing a project of cultural redemption" – *Ulysses* transposed the Revival's "obsessive alignment" with the Homeric world, mocking its incongruities and the distinctive authority Homer possessed among Joyce's contemporaries.[24] Rather than manipulate a correspondence with antiquity to bring on an Irish vision of Homeric order, Joyce drew on partial knowledge of ancient Greek, on classical scholarship and on recent 'Wardour-Street' styles of translationese to misalign mythological types and mistranslate the novel's correspondence with the *Odyssey*. With this hybridized, 'imperfect' idiom, *Ulysses*' irreverent aesthetic not only spurned neoclassical imitation but questioned the very authority of Greek in Ireland. No aggressive appropriation of classics or its prestige – no reading them "in the original" – could resuscitate an authentic past or somehow bring about a more Celtic future.[25]

According to Eliot, the mythical method as practiced by Joyce was not an entirely new phenomenon: the novelist, he claimed, had been drawn to it aware of it being "already adumbrated by Mr Yeats."[26] As Denis

[21] Waisman (2005) 124.
[22] Kutzinski (2012) 100–1.
[23] Kutzinski (2012) 100.
[24] Castle (2001) 30–31; Platt (1998) 110. The novel's use of mistranslation in 'corresponding' with Homer is present at the outset of the book when Buck Mulligan comically renders οἴνοπα ('wine-dark') as both "scrotumtightening" and "snotgreen" while admonishing Stephen Dedalus to read the Greeks "in the original." Joyce *Ulysses* (1986) 4–5 (1.77–81). See Chapter 2, pp. 115–19.
[25] Joyce *Ulysses* (1986) 4–5 (1.79–80).
[26] Eliot (1923) 483.

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Donoghue has suggested, Eliot believed that, on reading the 1910 collection *The Green Helmet and Other Poems*, Joyce may have taken note of both "A Woman Homer Sung" and "No Second Troy," two poems in which Yeats had "presented a personage distinct from himself; and did so precisely by relating that personage to a legendary or mythic figure more distant still."[27] Although Ezra Pound had praised "No Second Troy" as emblematic of "the spirit of the new things" in literature, whether Joyce held that poem in high regard is unclear.[28] What is clear was Eliot's desire to cast Joyce as 'classical' and to set *Ulysses*' Homeric contours in a line of descent emerging from Yeats. That, however, obscures more than it reveals, for from as early as 1901, when Joyce published his pamphlet "The Day of the Rabblement" in protest against the Irish theatre, he questioned the genius of Yeats.[29] Later, on first meeting the poet, he told Yeats "his own little book" of poems, *Chamber Music*, was a greater achievement than Yeats' recent work, because it "owed nothing to anything but his own mind which was much nearer to God than folklore."[30] Yeats retorted that "one gets great art, the art of Homer, and of Shakespeare, and of Chartres Cathedral" when the life of the artist is married to the collective will and popular imagination of a nation's "folk life."[31] However, for Joyce, the notion of making art wholly reliant "on emotions or stories" taken from folklore and mythology seemed passé.[32] No conscription of antiquity, Celtic or classical, could make the Literary Revival worthwhile – no matter how often Yeats insisted that he could

> make the land in which we live a holy land as Homer made Greece, the Anciant [*sic*] Indians India & the Hebrew Prophets Judea … for the celtic races love the soil of their countries vehemently, & have as great a mass of legends about that soil as Homer had about his … the life that is in legends is still the life of Homers [*sic*] people.[33]

[27] Donoghue (1997) 215. See Introduction, pp. 33–34, Chapter 3, pp. 135–38, and the Conclusion, pp. 248–50.
[28] Ezra Pound, "23: Ezra Pound to Margaret Cravens, 27 November [1910]," in Pound (1988) 61.
[29] Joyce, "The Day of the Rabblement" (1901), in Joyce *CWJJ* (1989) 68–72.
[30] Ellmann (1950) 625.
[31] Ellmann (1950) 626.
[32] Ellmann (1950) 625.
[33] Yeats, "To Richard Ashe King, 5 August [1897]," in Yeats *CL2* (1997) 129, 130. Yeats often reiterated this view of Greek antiquity during the Revival. Lecturing in 1901 before the Literary Society of Dublin, he likened Irish legends to those of Greece: "The Greeks looked within their borders, and we, like them, have a history fuller than any modern history of imaginative events; and legends which surpass, as I think, all legends but theirs in wild beauty, and in our land, as in theirs, there is no river or mountain that is not associated in the memory with some event or legend … I would have Ireland recreate the ancient arts, the arts as they were understood in Judaea, in India, in

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Despite Joyce's skepticism, however, Yeats had persuaded many nationalist sympathizers to believe in Ireland's "correspondence with classical Greece."[34] As Fiona Macintosh has observed, "many efforts to 'celticise' Ireland from the 1880s onwards were … veiled attempts to 'hellenise' Ireland by aligning the burgeoning nation with what was perceived to be the ideal nation-state."[35] Suggested first perhaps in the popular histories of Standish James O'Grady (1846–1928), the insistence upon an essential likeness – on a close analogical link – between the Gael and the Greek had become by the turn of the century "a standard feature" in "the jargon of contemporary critical approval amongst revivalists," so much so that Yeats felt in hearing "my own unfinished *On Baile's Strand* … Greek tragedy, spoken with a Dublin accent."[36] Joyce, however, had no desire to imitate that accent. While still an undergraduate, he denigrated those who believed that ancient Greek poetry still held sway over modern letters, whether in Ireland or elsewhere. Speaking at University College, Dublin, in 1900, Joyce warned that blind adherence to antiquity's "code of laws," the "syllabus of greenroom proprieties and cautions to authors" that had emerged on the Peloponnese, would only kill the coming of new genius.[37] "[P]urblind wisdom," he explained, had advanced the conventions of Greek poetry "to the dignity of inspired pronouncements," but so far as these pronouncements pertained to modern theatre at least, Joyce insisted it was the "literal truth to say that

Scandinavia, in Greece and Rome, in every ancient land; as they were understood when they moved a whole people and not a few people who have grown up in a leisured class and made this understanding their business." Yeats, "Ireland and the Arts" (August 1901), in Yeats *CW4* (2007) 151–52. See Chapter 1, pp. 57–61, 65–67. Yeats inherited this 'folk' view of Homer not only from William Maginn's ballad-style translations but also from his devotion to Samuel Ferguson, whose critical reception was often framed with Homeric comparisons. Ferguson's *Congal* (1872) was widely praised as a work possessing "Homeric felicity." "No poem," one contemporary wrote, "so Homeric in the march of the narrative, in the character of the heroes, or in the resonant majesty of the versification, has appeared in our time, and withal it is thoroughly and in essence Celtic." Ferguson (1888) 5. See also O., "The Poetry of Sir Samuel Ferguson, The Epic of 'Congal'" *The Irish Monthly* 12 (1884) 218.

[34] Platt (1998) 113.

[35] Macintosh (1994) 4.

[36] Platt (1998) 112, 113. Yeats *CW3* (1999) 331. In *History of Ireland: Critical and Philosophical* (1881), O'Grady claimed for Ireland a history deeper than that of Greek civilization. "I cannot help," he wrote, "regarding this age and the great personages moving therein as incomparably higher in intrinsic worth than the corresponding ages of Greece. In Homer, Hesiod, and the Attic poets, there is a polish and artistic form, absent in the existing monuments of Irish heroic thought, but the gold, the ore itself, is here massier and more pure, the sentiment deeper and more tender, the audacity and freedom more exhilarating, the reach of imagination more sublime, the depth and power of the human soul more fully exhibit themselves." O'Grady (1881) vol. 1: 201. See also Platt (1998) 111–13.

[37] Joyce, "Drama and Life" (1900) in Joyce *CWJJ* (1989) 39.

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Greek drama is played out. For good or for bad it has done its work, which, if wrought in gold, was not upon lasting pillars."[38] Like the ghostly Michael Furey – whose "partial darkness … standing under the dripping tree" tormented Gabriel Conroy – ancient *exempla* were nostalgic enticements, a menace to artistic invention.[39] No past moment, no past form could be effectively resurrected, and to saddle contemporary writers with the burden of revival, whether it be of Gaelic Ireland, Homeric Greece or any other ancient civilization, was to invite not new achievement but an insidious romanticism.[40] For this reason, "Hellenism" itself, he declared in 1904, was a "European appendicitis" – one whose advent in Irish literature would nurse only "regressive dreams of a return to the past."[41]

Nevertheless, Joyce remained attracted to the difficulties presented by Hellenism in European literature, and in early 1907, as he was trying to summon Dublin's "ingenuous insularity and its hospitality" in writing "The Dead," his focus turned again to its assertion in Ireland.[42] Though living abroad, Joyce was then engrossed with recent news from Dublin. Late that January, John Synge's new play, *The Playboy of the Western World* (1907), had premiered at the Abbey Theatre to riots and violent protest. According to the *Irish Independent*, those "who had the opportunity of seeing, and hearing, the play on its first production, with few exceptions, left the Abbey Theatre with a sense of having been fooled" by what the newspaper called an "act of inexplicable stupidity" and a "perpetration of this gross offence against Art and Truth."[43] *The Freeman's Journal*, similarly, pronounced the *Playboy* an "unmitigated, protracted libel upon Irish peasant men, and worse still, upon Irish peasant girlhood," whose "squalid, offensive production, incongruously styled a comedy in three acts" made its repulsiveness "quite plain."[44] Although the Abbey was "seriously and widely recognised as a home of drama" possessing "culture and thoughtfulness," there was then a "need for a censor."[45] In the face of these accusations, Synge himself reportedly "had little to say" (though he did sarcastically allude to "having at last got something like a fair

[38] Joyce *CWJJ* (1989) 39.
[39] Joyce *Dubliners* (1993) 383.
[40] On Joyce's view of romanticism, see Power (1974) 98–99.
[41] Joyce (1965) 91; Kiberd (1996) 329.
[42] Joyce, "To Stanislaus Joyce, 25 September 1906," in Joyce *SLJJ* (1975) 110.
[43] "The 'National' Theatre," *Irish Independent* (January 31, 1907) 4.
[44] "The Abbey Theatre, *The Playboy of the Western World*," *The Freeman's Journal* (January 28, 1907) 10, in Kilroy (1971) 7, 9.
[45] *The Freeman's Journal* (January 28, 1907) 10, in Kilroy (1971) 7, 9.

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hearing").[46] Yeats, however, was eager to use the dispute to further advance his vision of the theatre. The week following the premiere, Yeats led a public debate at the Abbey on "the Freedom of the Theatre."[47] According to *The Freeman's Journal*, its arguments were "noisy, farcical, and at one period disgusting."[48] Taking stage with the journalist P. D. Kenny (1862–1944), the poet was met with a "very mixed reception" that evening, "cheers and hisses" rising from an audience that was, in part at least, "in favour of the creation of a censorship in Ireland."[49] The poet, however, was adamant that the "dispute" that

> lay between them [between the Abbey and the public] was one of principle (A Voice – 'That won't wash'). There was one thing no one there would say he flinched from his fight (cheers). He was not a public entertainer (laughter), he was an artist (renewed laughter), setting before them what he believed to be fine works (hisses and laughter), to see and insist that they shall receive a quiet and respectful attention (laughter, hisses, and cheers).[50]

Writing to his brother from Rome, Joyce delighted in imagining the Abbey convulse under public pressure. Synge's "very gross and wanton insult to the Irish people" and the ensuing discussion "must have been very funny," he quipped, for the "pulpit Irishman is a good fellow to the stage Irishman … As I told you before I think the Abbey Theatre is ruined. It is supported by the stalls, that is to say, Stephen Gwynn, Lord X, Lady Gregory etc., who are dying to relieve the monotony of Dublin life."[51] The support Yeats had thrown behind the Abbey Theatre had long been a source of both wonder and loathing for Joyce. Years earlier, he had implored Yeats to break "with the half-gods" of the Dublin stage; otherwise how could it be known, he exclaimed, whether or not Yeats, in fact, "has or has not genius."[52] What Yeats did have, he argued, was "a floating will," as well as a "treacherous instinct of adaptability" for which one could blame his association with the Abbey Theatre, "a platform from which even self-respect should have urged him to refrain."[53] 'Self-respect'

[46] "Mr. Synge 'Beaming'," *Evening Herald* (February 1, 1907) 5.
[47] "The 'Freedom of the Theatre'," *The Freeman's Journal* (February 5, 1907) 7. On the debate, see Yeats *CL4* (2005) 862–85.
[48] "Parricide and Public – Discussion at the Abbey Theatre," *The Freeman's Journal* (February 5, 1907) 6.
[49] *The Freeman's Journal* (February 5, 1907) 6.
[50] *The Freeman's Journal* (February 5, 1907) 6.
[51] *The Freeman's Journal* (January 29, 1907) 6; Joyce, "To Stanislaus Joyce, 11 February 1907," in Joyce *LJJ2* (1966) 211–12.
[52] Joyce *CWJJ* (1989) 71.
[53] Joyce *CWJJ* (1989) 71.

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once again did not keep Yeats from defending the Abbey, and courting "the favour of an Irish mob and its leaders" before whom he appeared, Joyce thought, "a tiresome idiot … quite out of touch with the Irish people."[54] The poet's disaffection was perhaps most evident in the exaggerated claims he made trying to persuade others of Synge's worth. As the philologist, R. I. Best (1872–1959) later recalled, Yeats did not merely think Synge equal with the greatest of Greek tragedians; he was convinced that he possessed no less than "all the talent of Aeschylus and Sophocles combined."[55] For that reason, Synge seemed, to Yeats at least, the ideal playwright to advance in Ireland "a dramatic art which the Englishman of the time of Shakespeare and the Greek of the time of Sophocles and the Spaniard of the time of Calderon and the Indian of the time of the Kaladasa would have recognised as akin to their own great art."[56] Joyce himself made few remarks on the essential quality of Synge's work, except to say that by 1907 he had "read only one play of his *Riders to the Sea*," but even then he amusedly noted that that play had "made Yeats first think of the Greeks (who are always with us)."[57]

For the rest of the winter, the crisis roiling the Abbey Theatre hung over Joyce. "This whole affair has upset me," he told his brother, "I feel like a man in a house who hears a row in the street and voices he knows shouting but can't get out to see what the hell is going on."[58] To clear his mind, he turned to preparing a series of lectures he had been asked to give at Trieste's Università del Popolo. Yet rather than directly address the present controversy in Dublin, he chose instead to scrutinize the political and cultural history of Ireland, examining in part the ground on which claims of an alleged "Greek kinship" might be based.[59] "Is this country destined," he wondered, "to resume its ancient position as the

[54] S. Joyce (2003) 181; Joyce, "To Stanislaus Joyce, (11 February 1907)," in Joyce *LJJ2* (1966) 211; on Yeats' behavior during the debate, see Kilroy (1971) as well as Kavanagh (1950) 53–60. See also A. Murphy (2017) 94–96.

[55] Rodgers (1973) 104.

[56] Yeats, "To the Editor of the *United Irishman*, c. 21 April 1902," in Yeats *CL3* (1994) 179. See also Flannery (1976) 65–67.

[57] Joyce, "To Stanislaus Joyce, 11 February 1907," in Joyce *LJJ2* (1966) 212.

[58] Joyce, "To Stanislaus Joyce, 11 February 1907," in Joyce *LJJ2* (1966) 212.

[59] The phrase "Greek kinship" was used by John Synge in a 1904 review of Marie Henri d'Arbois de Jubainville's *The Irish Mythological Cycle and Celtic Mythology* (1903), translated from the French by Richard Irvine Best. Synge praised the book, arguing that it demonstrated how "Irish mythology has been found to give, with the oldest mythology that can be gathered from the Homeric poems, the most archaic phase of Indo-European religion." Synge, "Celtic Mythology" (April 2, 1904) in Synge (1966) 365. On Synge's view of "Homeric realism" and Ireland's relation to the "classics of Greece," see also Stephens (1974) 65–67. See also Chapter 1, pp. 67–68.

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Hellas of the north some day?"[60] The irony of Joyce's question masked the antipathy for revivalism and certain forms of cultural nationalism that motivated the first lecture, "Ireland, Island of Saints and Sages." There, he suggested that nations all too often eagerly cultivate their own "ego," quickened by the desire to "attribute to themselves qualities and glories foreign to other people."[61] "[F]rom the time of our ancestors, who called themselves Aryans and nobles," he explained, this tendency was all too common, pervasive even among "the Greeks, who called all those who lived outside the sacrosanct land of Hellas barbarians. The Irish, with a pride that is perhaps less easy to explain, love to refer to their country as the island of saints and sages."[62] Rather than recall antiquity to commend the nationalist fervor at work in Ireland, Joyce drew on the alleged likeness with ancient Greece to cast a cold eye on the broad practice of cultural appropriation rife within the Literary Revival. "We Irishmen," he declared, quoting a statement Yeats often attributed to Oscar Wilde, "have done nothing, but we are the greatest talkers since the time of the Greeks."[63] Yet no matter how "eloquent" – how 'talkatively' Hellenic the Irish seemed – Joyce insisted that "a revolution is not made of human breath and compromises."[64] Though Ireland's "fountain of nationality" was said to be classical at its source – the "root-stories of the Greek poets are told to-day at the cabin fires of Donegal," Yeats asserted – Joyce felt such claims were a "convenient fiction" for a country and people that could endure no more "equivocations and misunderstandings."[65] If Ireland were again "to enrich the civil conscience with new discoveries and new insights," if 'she' were "truly capable of reviving, let her awake, or let her cover up her head and lie down decently in her grave forever."[66] An authentic revival could neither be predicated on nostalgia for past achievements nor be realized by heaping "insults on England for her misdeeds in Ireland."[67] So long as Joyce's contemporaries were content to confront English influence with "bitter invectives" and "empty boasts," he asserted, no "revival of this

[60] Joyce, "Ireland, Island of Saints and Sages" (1907) in Joyce *CWJJ* (1989) 172.
[61] Joyce *CWJJ* (1989) 154.
[62] Joyce *CWJJ* (1989) 154.
[63] Cited in Joyce *CWJJ* (1989) 174.
[64] Joyce *CWJJ* (1989) 174.
[65] Yeats, "To the Editor of *United Ireland*, 17 December 1892," in Yeats *CL1* (1986) 340; Yeats *CW9* (2004) 210. See also Joyce *CWJJ* (1989) 166, 174. See Chapter 1, pp. 53–63.
[66] Joyce *CWJJ* (1989) 173, 174.
[67] Joyce *CWJJ* (1989) 166.

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race" would come.[68] Even though "the art of miniature in the ancient Irish books, such as the *Book of Kells*, the *Yellow Book of Lecan*, the *Book of the Dun Cow*" was said to "date back to a time when England was an uncivilized country," being "almost as old as the Chinese," appropriating that past guaranteed little for Ireland's future.[69] "If an appeal to the past in this manner were valid," Joyce explained, "the fellahin of Cairo would have all the right in the world to disdain to act as porters for English tourists."[70] Joyce associated this naive, romantic view of national history not only with cultural nationalists in Ireland but, later, with the Italian irredentism he encountered in Trieste as well. As John McCourt has noted,

> the Triestine irredentists turned a blind eye to the complexities of the past in order to present a mythical vision of it which they hoped to re-create in the future … Joyce would never accept this use of history, whether it was written by [Attilio] Tamaro or [Pádraig] Pearse, whose version of patriotism, as enunciated in 1914, was close to what the irredentists sought from their supporters in Trieste.[71]

Yet to disavow the "pejorative conception of Ireland" would not be easy, Joyce thought; the past was not a repository for the "old national soul" of Gaelic Ireland, a place from which one could recover a purity of Celtic race and language.[72] Because the Revival had popularized fear of further mongrelization, the language movement had been eager to rediscover a 'classical' integrity in Irish – the 'purer' tongue whose revitalization would help rid Ireland of what D. P. Moran (1869–1936), the founder of the nationalist paper *The Leader*, once called the "English-speaking, English-imitating mongrel."[73] As Joyce saw it, however, the languages and histories of Irish civilization had always been marked by continual infusions and repeated intrusions from a variety of foreign influences: "What race, or what language," he exclaimed, "can boast of being pure today? And no race has less right to utter such a boast than the race now living in Ireland."[74] The linguistic, racial, religious and indeed the cultural complexities of the Irish had never been "pure and

[68] Joyce *CWJJ* (1989) 173.
[69] Joyce *CWJJ* (1989) 173.
[70] Joyce *CWJJ* (1989) 173.
[71] McCourt (2000) 99.
[72] Joyce *CWJJ* (1989) 171, 173.
[73] Moran (2006) 35. On Irish Gaelic as a "repository of Irishness," see Crowley (2005) 128–63 as well as the Introduction, pp. 12–27 and Chapter 1, pp. 49–53.
[74] Joyce *CWJJ* (1989) 165–66.

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virgin" but especially hybridized – what he called "a vast fabric, in which the most diverse elements are mingled, in which nordic aggressiveness and Roman law, the new bourgeois conventions and the remnant of a Syriac religion are reconciled."[75] Thus any attempt to extract a pure thread, an authentic or original thread that might "exclude from the present nation all who are descended from foreign families," was both intellectually bankrupt and socially repugnant.[76] "[T]o deny," he declared, "the name of patriot to all those who are not of Irish stock would be to deny it to almost all the heroes of the modern movement."[77] A figure no less powerful and compelling than Charles Stewart Parnell (1846–1891) had "not even a drop of Celtic blood," though he appeared to Joyce, at least, "the most formidable man that ever led the Irish."[78] No resurgence of nationality could take place if the "backward and inferior" people now dwelling in the country held intractably to a time, place and language beyond reach of resurrection.[79] "Ancient Ireland is dead," he asserted, "just as ancient Egypt is dead. Its death chant has been sung, and on its gravestone has been placed the seal."[80]

If an authentic sense of nationality were to emerge, it had to "find its reason for being rooted in something that surpasses and transcends and informs changing things like blood and the human word."[81] Paraphrasing Pseudo-Dionysius' *De Coelesti Hierarchia* – that Ἔστησε γὰρ ὁ ὕψιστος ὅρια ἐθνῶν κατὰ ἀριθμὸν ἀγγέλῶν θεοῦ (9.2), (in Joyce's translation, "God has disposed the limits of nations according to his angels") – Joyce suggested that nationality could be better aligned with the Greek notion of ἔθνος.[82] Broadly signifying – though not indisputably so – "a number of people living together," ἔθνος was preferable to γένος because "in Ireland the Danes, the Firbolgs, the Milesians from Spain, the Norman invaders, and the Anglo-Saxon settlers have united to form a new entity."[83] That new entity, that "new Celtic race …

[75] Joyce *CWJJ* (1989) 165. See also Platt (1992) 259–66.
[76] Joyce *CWJJ* (1989) 161–62.
[77] Joyce *CWJJ* (1989) 162.
[78] Joyce *CWJJ* (1989) 162.
[79] Joyce *CWJJ* (1989) 166.
[80] Joyce *CWJJ* (1989) 173. On Joyce's "exposé of an Ireland frozen in servitude," see Kiberd (1996) 334–38.
[81] Joyce *CWJJ* (1989) 166.
[82] For *De Coelesti Hierarchia,* see Heil and Ritter (1991) 37; Joyce *CWJJ* (1989) 166. See also Deuteronomy 32:8.
[83] Joyce *CWJJ* (1989) 166; on Greek notions of race and ethnicity, see Jones (1997); Cohen (2009) as well as Hall (1997) and Jones (1996) 315–20. Joyce gave partial expression to this view of nationality in Leopold Bloom's generous though waffling definition of a nation in *Ulysses*. See Joyce *Ulysses* (1986) (12.1419–1431) 271–72.

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compounded of the old Celtic stock and the Scandinavian, Anglo-Saxon, and Norman races," needed collective expression, but one that embraced all aspects of Ireland's cultural hybridity, better articulating the many complexities in its "national temperament."[84] Weakened by "centuries of useless struggle and broken treaties," Ireland's poor "economic and intellectual conditions" had increasingly left the prospects for "individual initiative … paralysed."[85] For that reason, he explained, "[n]o one who has any self-respect stays in Ireland, but flees afar as though from a country that has undergone the visitation of an angered Jove";[86] and no appropriation of Greek antiquity, he insisted, could dim that anger or further mend the "old national soul that spoke during the centuries through the mouths of fabulous seers, wandering minstrels, and Jacobite poets."[87]

Following the lecture, Joyce grew, it seems, more reluctant to publicly address matters of national significance.[88] Even as armed attempts at revolution broke out in Ireland over the next decade, even as war erupted across Europe, he wrote comparatively little on these matters. That reticence led Yeats to assume that Joyce wanted little "to do with Irish politics, extreme or otherwise."[89] "I think he disliked politics," the poet told Edmund Gosse (1849–1928):

> He always seemed to me to have only literary and philosophic sympathies. To such men the Irish atmosphere brings isolation, not anti-English feeling. He is probably trying at this moment to become absorbed in some piece of work till the evil hour is passed. I again thank you for what you have done for this man of genius.[90]

Joyce was indeed "absorbed in some piece of work" at that time, but Yeats mistook his relative silence on political matters for a lack of civic commitment.[91] In March 1914, Joyce had in fact approached the publisher Angelo Formiginni (1878–1938) of Modena about collecting nine essays on contemporary politics in Ireland, essays that he had written for the Triestine newspaper *Il Piccolo della Sera* over the previous

[84] Joyce *CWJJ* (1989) 161.
[85] Joyce *CWJJ* (1989) 171.
[86] Joyce *CWJJ* (1989) 171.
[87] Joyce *CWJJ* (1989) 173–74.
[88] Joyce was asked to deliver three lectures at Trieste's Università del Popolo in 1907, but after completing a draft of a second lecture on the poet James Clarence Mangan he gave only the first. See Ellmann (1982) 258–60.
[89] Yeats, "To Edmund Gosse, 28 August [1915]," in Yeats *LWBY* (1955) 601.
[90] Yeats *LWBY* (1955) 601.
[91] Yeats *LWBY* (1955) 601.

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decade. "[T]he Irish problem has reached an acute phase," he explained, and "England, owing to the Home Rule question, is on the brink of civil war."[92] Though Joyce felt the essays possessed "absolutely no literary value," he was convinced they still set out current problems facing Ireland "sincerely and objectively."[93] Yet the book *L'Irlanda alla Sbarra* never went to press.[94] Nonetheless the energy Joyce intended for the revision of these essays he began to rechannel into what Georgio Melchiori has characterized as a recovery of his "creative powers."[95] That recovery eventually found radical expression in "Cyclops," where Joyce expanded the critique of revivalism he had begun in 1907, working it into the episode's contorted manipulation of perspective, pleonasm and hyperbolic description – elements Joyce drew, in part, from his complex reception of Homer and Greek antiquity.

In the summer of 1919, as reports of social unrest and violence against the Royal Irish Constabulary reached Joyce (by then living in Zurich), he began to break his silence. He had long been disabused of the notion that a peaceful, legislative solution to the question of Irish sovereignty would come about, but as Richard Ellmann observed, these "recent events" did not please him "even though they represented the triumph of the Sinn Féin principles which in Rome and Trieste he had vigorously espoused."[96] With the election of December 1918, the fortunes of the moderate Irish Parliamentary Party (IPP) had been crushed: of the sixty-seven seats the IPP held before the election, only six remained.[97] In their stead, Sinn Féin prevailed, promising both to withdraw "Irish Representation from the British Parliament" and to oppose "the will of the British Government or any other foreign Government to legislate for Ireland."[98] By refusing to stand in Westminster, Sinn Féin intended to establish in Dublin a "counter-state," the first *Dáil Éireann* on January 21, 1919.[99] The country was soon declared a nation free to take action "in arms against foreign usurpation," against English rule that "always has been, based

[92] Joyce, "To Angelo Formiginni" (March 25, 1914) in Melchiori (1981).
[93] Melchiori (1981).
[94] Melchiori suggests that Joyce's letter to Formiginni was "never answered" due to the outbreak of the First World War, which complicated pathways for communication for those living in Trieste.
[95] Melchiori (1981).
[96] Ellmann (1982) 533.
[97] The election proved to be a decisive defeat not only for the IPP but for moderates within Sinn Féin as well. See Townshend (2014) 58–63, as well as Knirck (2006) 45–48.
[98] Éamon De Valera, *The Testament of the Republic* (c. 1924) 4. On Sinn Féin's post-election strategy, see Townshend (2014) 64–66.
[99] See the chapter "Building the Counter-State" in Mitchell (1995) 43–119.

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upon force and fraud and maintained by military occupation against the declared will of the people."[100] Amid these circumstances, Joyce tried to begin "Cyclops," aware perhaps that the sweeping historical change and political turmoil then taking place in Ireland would make stylizing an episode focused on 'one-eyed' nationalism difficult.[101] For "the changing styles of *Ulysses*," as W. J. McCormack writes,

> do not so much chronicle the events of one specific day as they seek to come to terms with the changing perspectives upon a 'fixed' day which a revolutionary period generated. *Ulysses* is thus historical in two senses, first in that it takes as its setting a date which is progressively seen as historical; and second, as a stylistic consequence, the process of composition itself is historicized.[102]

Complicating matters further was the fact that the experimental character of *Ulysses* had increasingly divided opinion among both friends and critics. The recently completed episode, "Sirens," had been received tepidly in London, where Ezra Pound complained of Joyce's "*obsessions* arseore-ial."[103] One could "fahrt with less pomp & circumstance," he argued, "any obsession or tic shd. be very carefully considered before being turned loose. Besides. Bloom has been disproportionately on ??? or hasn't he. Where in hell is Stephen Tellemachus?"[104] Further, Joyce, it seems, found himself mired in a "state of blank apathy out of which it seems that neither I nor the wretched book will ever more emerge … If the *Sirens* have been found so unsatisfactory I have little hope," he told Harriet Shaw Weaver, "that the *Cyclops*, or later the *Circe* episode will be approved of: and, moreover, it is impossible for me to write these episodes quickly. The elements needed will only fuse after a prolonged existence together."[105] Though progress was halting, Joyce did fuse a draft of "Cyclops" together by September 1919, in part by revisiting his 1907 lecture and the scrutiny he gave to Irish Hellenism. Intent on exposing its absurdities, Joyce manipulated the structure of "Cyclops" broadly, misaligning the 'high' and 'low' idiomatic registers that had been used to stylize – to hallow even – Ireland's 'Greek kinship' in revivalist writing.

[100] Éamon De Valera, *The Testament of the Republic* (c. 1924) 8.
[101] McCormack (1985) 280–81.
[102] McCormack (1985) 280.
[103] Ezra Pound, Letter to James Joyce (June 10, 1919) in Pound (1970) 158. See also Ellmann (1982) 459.
[104] Pound, Letter to James Joyce (June 10, 1919) in Pound (1970) 158.
[105] Joyce, "To Harriet Shaw Weaver (20 July 1919)," in Joyce *LJJ* (1957) 128.

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It has been widely noted – by Hugh Kenner and by Ron Bush – that *Ulysses* was composed at a time when scholarship on the ancient Greek world rapidly altered not only popular perceptions of Homeric antiquity but artistic engagements with Homer as well.[106] The once provocative controversy that had engulfed the Homeric question in the nineteenth century – namely whether the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were works, as F. A. Wolf had argued, of multiple authors or whether the epics were, as Matthew Arnold insisted, the work of a grand style and very likely one noble mind – had given way, as Bush notes, to a greater consideration of the "Trojan cycle's social world."[107] The Victorian debate over authorship exerted significant influence in Yeats' and others' efforts to rework ballads drawn from Irish folklore into a new national epic.[108] By the turn of the century, though, the dominant questions surrounding the nature of Homeric epic had shifted, as wide-ranging scholarly speculation into the concrete, 'real' conditions of archaic Greece took hold – namely, speculation into the geography, topography, demography and historical character of the epics' so-called "sticks and stones."[109] These areas of inquiry were derived in part from recent archaeological discoveries surrounding Troy and Ithaca, principally Heinrich Schliemann's excavation at Hissarlik and Wilhelm Dörpfeld's work at Lefkada, but also, by parallel course, from the "mythological bias" espoused by the Cambridge Ritualists, namely E. B. Tylor (1832–1917), F. M. Cornford (1874–1943), Jane Harrison (1850–1928) and, popularly, Gilbert Murray (1866–1957).[110] Collectively, the "heavy food" from these new forms of "historical and scientific knowledge," as Eliot once called them, had brought the findings of ethnography, archaeology and cultural anthropology "to the aid of philology" and thereby "superannuated in a stroke the Victorian Homer, whose noble outline rendered details unimportant."[111] According to Eliot, if antiquity were to have a "vitalizing effect" once again – to be "as present to us as the present" – poets and translators had to do more than "pick up some of the more romantic crumbs of Greek literature."[112]

[106] Kenner (1969) 285–98. Bush (2019) 322–57. See also Bush (1976) 125–34. On the broader influence of primitivism in Joyce's work and within the Revival at large, see Castle (2001), Mattar (2004), as well as McGarrity (2009) 133–52, 17–39.

[107] Bush (2019) 322.

[108] See Chapter 1, pp. 65–76.

[109] Kenner (1969) 285.

[110] Bush (1976) 125. See also Kenner (1978) 109–10. On modernist attraction to primitive myth and religion, see Gere (2009), Carpentier (2016) 69–99, as well as Gere (2019) 200–25.

[111] Eliot (1920) 70; Bush (1976) 125. See also Kenner (1969) 296–97.

[112] Eliot (1920) 66, 70, 69.

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"[M]uch greater exertions" were to be given over to recent scholarly considerations, not merely to the increase in "historical knowledge" but to the then pervasive "curious Freudian-social-mystical-rationalistic-higher-critical interpretation of the Classics."[113]

Joyce, it seems, anticipated this admonition, for, as Bush notes, he was already by then bringing to bear in the "extraordinarily dense texture … and willed obscurity" of *Ulysses* the "complexity insinuated by late nineteenth-century theories about the *Odyssey*'s geographical, demographic and archaeological strata."[114] The background to his vision of the Homeric world was indebted not merely to Samuel Butcher and Andrew Lang's 1879 version of the *Odyssey* – a version imbued with Arnoldian notes stressing Homer's "charm, his bright and equable speed" – but also to turn-of-the-century scholarship and translations, principally Samuel Butler's renditions and his treatise *The Authoress of the Odyssey* (1897) and Victor Bérard's *Les Phéniciens et l'Odyssée* (1902–1903) as well as the ritualist thought of Tylor, Murray, and Harrison.[115] Coupled with Joyce's exposure to a variety of Anglicized Homers – his "museum of Homers" as Kenner called it – these analyses of Greek religion and mythology and their place in archaic epic helped mold the 'mistranslated' styles of correspondence Joyce developed across "Cyclops."[116] Before finishing the episode in 1919, he had also been trying to further remedy his ignorance of ancient Greek, hoping to improve his ability to read Homer. The Zurich copybooks dating from 1916 demonstrate, rather crudely, his increasing interest in practicing the language and the difficulty of mastering it, whether ancient or modern. Scrawling long notes and vocabulary lists in the language, Joyce marked down, in addition, two short passages from the *Odyssey* in careful handwriting (though with inaccurate accentuation).[117] Yet, despite such eagerness, "insufficient knowledge" of

[113] Eliot (1920) 70, 68.

[114] Bush (2019) 324.

[115] Butcher and Lang (1879) vii. On the eccentricity of Butler's commentary, see Bush (2019) 323–24.

[116] On Joyce's knowledge of Harrison's thought, see Carpentier (2016) 71–76.

[117] These notebooks are reproduced in facsimile in the Garland edition: "Greek (Buffalo VIII.A.6.a–j, 4, 2, 1)." See Joyce (1979) 288–352. At this time Joyce also annotated interlinear Greek–Italian editions of *The Odyssey*, notably the third edition of *L'Odissea: Testo, costruzione, versione letterale e argomenti. Libro I*, published in 1905 by Societá Editrice Dante Alighieri di Albrighi, as well as a version of book 14 entitled, *Il libro XIV dell'Odissea* (1915). Schork notes: "this school edition of book 1" contained "copious notes of every sort and a line-by-line translation into grotesquely literal Italian. On several pages of this book Joyce wrote occasional notes, almost all of them involving a mechanical transfer of a vocabulary word from the commentary into the text." Schork (1998) 85. See also Gillespie and Stocker (1986) 120–21. Rodney Wilson Owen dates Joyce's Greek notebooks, Buffalo VIII.A, to late 1916 through early 1917. See Owen (1983) 96–104.

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Greek continued to plague him, and the fact "he was not a Greek scholar by high academic standards" became, as Frank Budgen (1882–1971) later recalled, a "sore point with him."[118]

> I told him that I left school and went to work in my thirteenth year, but that the only thing I regretted about my lack of schooling was that I was never able to learn Greek. He thereupon regretted his insufficient knowledge of that language but, as if to underline the difference in our two cases (or so I interpreted it), he said with sudden vehemence: "But just think: isn't that a world I am peculiarly fitted to enter?"[119]

Although Joyce never learned enough Greek to read Homer without the crutch of translation, his reliance on translation proved especially critical for "Cyclops," where parodic imitations of English 'translationese' were drawn from the Englished Homers he knew very well.[120] Amusing passages such as "And lo, as they quaffed their cup of joy, a godlike messenger came swiftly in, radiant as the eye of heaven" were, Kenner noted, what seemed like "a fair approximation to the rhetoric" of Samuel Butcher and Andrew Lang's version, and perhaps also that of Charles Lamb.[121] Yet it was not only these translations that mattered. In contrast to Butcher and Lang's unapologetic use of "Biblical English" – a "language which" though it "does not come spontaneously to the lips" was nonetheless considered by them as "nearly analogous to the Epic Greek, as anything that our tongue has to offer" – Joyce admired also Samuel Butler's prose versions of Homer and found in *The Iliad* of 1898 and *The Odyssey* of 1900 compelling alternatives to Butcher and Lang's approach.[122] Butler had attempted to modernize Homer's epics in a "plain

[118] Budgen (1972) 359.

[119] Budgen (1972) 359. On whether this statement betokens a common "nostalgia" for Greek on Joyce's part, see Farrell (2012) 60–61.

[120] Kenner (1969) 297. See also Kenner (1978) 110–12. It is unclear precisely how many translations of Homer Joyce consulted when writing *Ulysses*. Kenner notes Samuel Butcher and Andrew Lang's 1879 version, a finding that is supported by the recollection of Frank Budgen. Joyce's brother, Stanislaus, also recalled that the author knew Charles Lamb's 1808 adaptation of George Chapman's translation as well as William Cowper's 1791 version. On Joyce's use of translation as well as his knowledge of Greek, see Ames (2005) 15–48; Schork (1998) 118–23; McCleery (1994) 557–63; and McCleery (1990) 635–39.

[121] Joyce *Ulysses* (1986) 245 (12.244–45); Kenner (1969) 288. It is notable that one of the earliest scholars of Joyce's work, Stuart Gilbert (1883–1969), contributed greatly to the reception of Butcher and Lang's edition in subsequent analyses of *Ulysses*. He did so, however, not because of clear substantive links to the composition of the novel but because he thought their Wardour Street English "better to convey the spirit of the original" Greek "than any of the more modern versions." Gilbert (1950) ix.

[122] Butcher and Lang (1879) ix.

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prose," a colloquial and seemingly contemporary idiom that possessed what he called "the same benevolent leaning, say, towards Tottenham Court Road that Messrs Butcher and Lang have shewn towards Wardour Street."[123] The Homeric originals were for Butler "so luminous and so transparent," so much so that he saw little point in further elevating or distancing Homer from "English readers."[124] Instead he aimed "fearlessly and without taint of affectation at making a dead author living to a generation other than his own."[125]

> Shakespeare tells us that it is Time's glory to stamp the seal of time on aged things. No doubt; but he will have no hands stamp it save his own; he will rot an artificial ruin, but he will not glorify it; if he is to hallow any work it must be frankly secular when he deigns to take it in hand – by this I mean honestly after the manner of its own age and country.[126]

Just as some of the very places in which the dramatic action of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* had unfolded had been dug out and rediscovered recently, so too, he thought, could the language of Homer be dug out in English – transfused into the lived experience of a contemporary idiom.

The incongruities that resulted from these rival approaches to translation, to say nothing of their contrasting visions of the Homeric – Butcher and Lang's elevated, antique and noble Homer versus Butler's "accessible, domestic, realistic, and robust" Homer – suggested a powerful solution for fusing "Cyclops," namely to develop, by counterpoint, divergent narrative styles of correspondence across the episode.[127] One largely reflected the Victorian pose encouraged by Arnold, Butcher and Lang, while the other stressed the coarse demotic realities of Dublin. The importance of Butler's "many gifts" in this solution – his "resurrection of the *Odyssey* precedes *Ulysses*" – cannot be underestimated, but they are inflected also by the significant influences of both Victor Bérard and Jane Harrison.[128] Bérard's "minute exploration of Homer's geography" spoke to Joyce's "temperamental fascination with topographical detail," but perhaps more attractive was his insistence that the *Odyssey*

[123] Butler (1893) 2. On Wardour Street English, see Ballantyne (1888) 585–94 as well as Venuti's discussion in *The Translator's Invisibility* (2008) 117–18.
[124] Butler (1893) 1; Butler (1898) xi.
[125] Butler (1898) vi.
[126] Butler (1898) vi.
[127] Raby (1991) 240.
[128] Davenport (1997) 41.

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constituted *un périple phénicien (de Sidon, de Carthage ou d'ailleurs), transposé en vers grecs et en légendes poétiques* – a Phoenician/Semitic collection of earlier stories later Hellenized and transposed into Homeric Greek.[129] This evoked, by parallel, something akin to Joyce's reflections on the cultural hybridity of Ireland itself, his belief that the country had no center of civilizational purity but was instead a "vast fabric, in which the most diverse elements are mingled."[130] Moreover, the idea that the very *periploi* of Homer were not original but rather readapted versions of earlier Semitic tales or legends bolstered Joyce's desire to forge in *Ulysses* a stylized evolution of the Homeric. Both Butler and Butcher and Lang had presented divergent idiomatic expressions of Homer, and their influence could be employed to overwrite the 'original' Greek and develop a kaleidoscopic layering across the novel, a collage of competing receptions. This interest in stylistic stratification resonated also with the scholarship of Jane Harrison whose 1903 book *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion* had claimed that "a theological stratification" existed within the religious practices of the ancient Greeks.[131] Despite the "superficial serenity" often attributed to Greek religion, Harrison insisted that "within it and beneath it" there remained "elements of a darker and deeper significance."[132] "[T]wo diverse, even opposite, factors" were present in its rites and rituals: the Olympian and the Chthonic, elements that could be characterized in turn by "*service* (θεραπεία)" and "*aversion* (ἀποτροπή)."[133] "The rites of *service*," she explained,

> were connected by ancient tradition with the Olympians, or as they are sometimes called the Ouranians: the rites of *aversion* with ghosts, heroes, underworld divinities. The rites of service were of a cheerful and rational character, the rites of aversion gloomy and tending to superstition.[134]

As Harrison saw it, the rites of "burnt-sacrifice, of joy and feasting and agonistic contests" were linked to the *do ut des* ("I give that you may give"), transactional mode of prayer and sacrifice to the Olympians.[135] That "cheerful and rational" model of relative divine beneficence bore very little likeness, she maintained, to the *do ut abeas* rites of the "gloomy

[129] Bush (2019) 324. Bérard (1902) 4. On Bérard's influence in *Ulysses*, see Seidel (1976).
[130] Joyce *CWJJ* (1989) 165.
[131] Harrison (1903) 11.
[132] Harrison (1903) 10.
[133] Harrison (1903) 10.
[134] Harrison (1903) 10.
[135] Harrison (1903) 11, 7.

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underworld."[136] Its ceremonies of aversion fostered "a lower and more 'fearful' stratum of religion" whose purpose was largely employed for "the promotion of fertility by the purgation of evil influences."[137]

> The formula of that religion was not *do ut des* "I give that you may give," but *do ut abeas* "I give that you may go, and keep away." The beings worshipped were not rational, human, law-abiding *gods*, but vague, irrational, mainly malevolent δαίμονες, spirit-things, ghosts and bogeys and the like, not yet formulated and enclosed into god-head.[138]

Because the contrast between these elements seemed "so marked," Harrison concluded that the 'rational' rites of the Olympian had been progressively "superimposed" on an "underlying stratum," a "primitive, barbarous, even repulsive" order of worship.[139] By parallel, Joyce stratified idiomatic mistranslations across "Cyclops," casting the episode with competing styles of expression, principally two rival ways of presenting a correspondence with Greek antiquity. Putting a "bloody mangy mongrel" demotic on the lips of the drunks at Barney Kiernan's, he then overwrote that chthonic vernacular of the Dublin underworld with an exaggerated 'Olympian' translationese, an idiom Joyce mimicked with conventions he knew from recent translations of Homer and from popular 'classicized' versions of Irish folklore as well.[140] The dissonance generated in setting an allegedly barbarous form of speech against this noble idiom animates the satire in "Cyclops": the bloody, "sudden reality" of barroom obscenities smashing to "a pulp" the high-minded "romanticism" with which Homer had been embraced.[141]

Despite Joyce's use of classical scholarship and a variety of anglicized Homers in "Cyclops," these were never the principal targets of the episode's humor. With Yeats' 1893 declaration that Ireland was still in its "epic or ballad period" of literary development – ready for a 'Northern Homer' to appear – many revivalist writers had insisted that Irish folklore could be best 'Englished' with an idiom infused by allegedly archaic, Homeric grandiloquence.[142] The Greek poet's "perfect … lovely grandeur," as Arnold once called it, also had life in ancient Irish legend, it was thought, and thus the task of the translator was to articulate that life

[136] Harrison (1903) 10, 11.
[137] Harrison (1903) 7, ix.
[138] Harrison (1903) 7.
[139] Harrison (1903) 11, ix, 29.
[140] Joyce *Ulysses* (1986) 242 (12.119–20).
[141] Joyce, as quoted in Power (1974) 98.
[142] Yeats *UP1* (1970) 273. See also Chapter 1, pp. 55–61.

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in an English reminiscent of the style used to elevate the Victorian nobility of Homer.[143] However, from as early as 1890, prominent scholars of Irish warned their contemporaries: the difficulty of making "a good translation from Irish into English," let alone one that could be justly thought Homeric, was profound, for "no two Aryan languages" were, as Douglas Hyde argued, "more opposed to each other in spirit and idiom."[144] Richard Henebry, Professor of Irish at University College, Cork, went further, claiming that Irish was practically untranslatable. Ancient Irish remained the "one literature that was never Hellenised" amid the other literatures in Europe whose "standard is the Hellenic," and for that reason it was said to have a primitive, strange force lingering from the period of "Indo-Keltic unity," a time before England and the rest of Europe had sought to imitate "the fundamental canon of Greek art."[145] The comparative unlikeness of the "Keltic standard" to that of Hellenic under whose influence English had fallen meant that translation from Irish into English would be difficult.[146] The reader "whose mind is charged with English," Henebry argued, would hear in Irish only sounds

> strange, uncouth and foreign. To one reared in Irish it is the same tune he always heard: he knows it. But how define its tone, its atmosphere for the foreigner? It cannot be done, it is the other way, it differs in everything and entirely from the way of the strange people. Nor can it be translated.[147]

Nonetheless, Yeats, Hyde and others still insisted that an "unidiomatic English" might approximate some Irish effects in the target language, and possibly help even "build up a national tradition, a national literature … none the less Irish in spirit from being English in language."[148] Poets and translators could therefore be less careful about philological accuracy: "more literary, less scholarly works" of translation and adaptation, like those of P. W. Joyce (1827–1914), Standish O'Grady, A. H. Leahy (1857–1928) and Eleanor Hull (1860–1935), rested on "two largely unspoken premises: that the old stories should not merely be translated – for the scholars … but reshaped according to modern fictional criteria and

[143] See Matthew Arnold's lecture "On Translating Homer" (1860–61) in Arnold (1960) 168.
[144] Hyde (1890) xlvii.
[145] Henebry (1909) 522, 524. See Introduction, pp. 16–19.
[146] Henebry (1909) 524.
[147] Henebry (1909) 524.
[148] Hyde (1890) xlviii; Yeats *CL1* (1986) 338. See Introduction, pp. 2–3; Chapter 1, pp. 53–55; and Chapter 4, pp. 163–65.

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expectations; and second, that the new-told tales … should promote the cause and redound to the glory of modern Ireland."[149] These expectations pushed Yeats and Lady Gregory to new stylistic extremes. As discussed in the previous chapter, drawing on influence from Shelley, Swinburne as well as William Morris and other recent English poets, Yeats' early 'Celtic' work employed a decadent English, infused with neologism, unconventional syntax and archaisms. As one critic later noted, "the lavish foreground of the Pre-Raphaelites" present in his "fragments of the Ossianic cycle" spun out "bright tapestries of legendary figures" and "decorative pictures of imaginary lands … into dyeshot gossamer with Tennysonian heroics and Swinburnian rhetoric."[150] Lady Gregory, by contrast, believed that a more unadorned, alliterative idiom could capture something authentic from Gaelic legend. Her translation of the Ulster cycle *Cuchulain of Muirthemne* (1902) claimed the "plain and simple words" of her Kiltartan parish, words she recalled "in the same way my old nurse Mary Sheridan used to be telling stories from the Irish long ago."[151] Eschewing the far-flung aestheticism of Yeats' early Celticism, her "wonderfully simple and powerful language" garnered praise for resembling "a good deal the peasant dialect of the west of Ireland," but Gregory too had not dispensed with the ambition of inventing a suitably epic style for Irish literature.[152] Rather than simply imitate a rustic dialect, she balanced "plain and simple words" with what Geraldine Higgins has called "an amenable nineteenth-century idiom and mode" bearing some likeness to the pseudo-archaic Butcher and Lang.[153] Her translation was "made venerable by archaism" but seasoned as well with the apparent "spontaneity of storytelling and speech patterns."[154] The result impressed Yeats, who boldly declared Gregory's work "the best that has come out of Ireland in my time. Perhaps I should say it is the best book that has ever come out of Ireland."[155] "As she moved about among her people," he effused,

> she learned to love the beautiful speech of those who think in Irish, and to understand that it is as true a dialect of English as the dialect that Burns

[149] Foster (1987) 23.
[150] Bullough (1934) 29.
[151] Gregory (1970) 5. On the mixed reception of Gregory's work within the wider network of the Gaelic language revival, see O'Leary (1994) 223–79 as well as Higgins (2012) 47–48. On some of the "virtues of Gregory's style," see Kiberd (2001) 399–419.
[152] J. M. Synge, "An Epic of Ulster," *The Speaker* (June 7, 1902), in Synge (1966) 367.
[153] Gregory (1970) 5; Higgins (2012) 47.
[154] O'Connor (2006) 76.
[155] Yeats, "Preface" (1902), as in Gregory (1970) 11.

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> wrote in. It is some hundreds of years old, and age gives a language authority. We find in it the vocabulary of the translators of the Bible, joined to an idiom which makes it tender, compassionate, and complaisant, like the Irish language itself. It is certainly well suited to clothe a literature which never ceased to be folk-lore even when it was recited in the Courts of Kings.[156]

As Yeats saw it, the Revival, it seems, finally had the balanced literary vernacular it needed: Gregory had generated a "kind of English that fitted" Ireland's legends "as the language of [William] Morris's prose stories – the most beautiful language I had ever read – fitted his journeys to woods and wells beyond the world."[157] As the "book of the National Stories of Ireland," *Cuchulain of Muirthemne* was "meant for everybody the Iliad of a people," a book that promised to do "great service to the nation."[158]

Despite Yeats' endorsement, questions about the book's value abounded, and no claims of Homeric likeness dispelled these questions, especially among hardline devotees of Irish Ireland and the Gaelic Revival. *The Freeman's Journal* did admit that Gregory's *Cuchulain* was "in truth, the Irish Homer, done into that division of the Anglo-Irish dialect which still preserves many of the forms of the Gaelic idiom," but the paper eviscerated Yeats' promotion of the book.[159]

> [I]t is pitiable that a work like Lady Gregory's should be introduced by such a statement as that "to us Irish these personages should be more important than all others, for they lived in the places where we ride and go marketing, and sometimes they have met one another on the hills, that cast their shadows upon our doors at evening. If we will but tell these stories to our children the Land will begin again to be a Holy Land, as it was before men gave their hearts to Greece and Rome and Judea." Literary blaspheming of this kind is not only repulsive but silly. The Land has never ceased to be a Holy Land to the Irish or their children, and it is only the Anglo-Irish blindness that may miss the fact.[160]

[156] Yeats, "Preface" (1902), as in Gregory (1970) 12.

[157] Yeats, "Preface" (1902), as in Gregory (1970) 12. By contrast, Douglas Hyde was skeptical of Gregory's idea of "harmonising Cuchulain" in English. She reported in December 1900 that "Hyde rather snubs my idea of harmonising Cuchulain – I think his feeling is a scholar shd do it – & he is bewildered at my simple translations … 'Of course an epic should not be translated in colloquial style' he says – which accounts for his translations of epic bits being heavy & formal, quite different from his folk tales & peasant poem translations – However he gave his consent, which is all I wanted." Gregory (1996) 293.

[158] Yeats, "To the Editor of the *United Irishman* [May 23, 1902]," in Yeats *CL3* (1994) 188.

[159] Donovan (1902) 5.

[160] Donovan (1902) 5.

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Yeats was "wholly at sea" in his view of the translation, too prone, the paper argued, "to read into the Irish peasant mind the notes of his own."[161] His extravagance seemed "anything but Irish" but instead rather the product of his "affectation of neo-Paganism … a corruption of the French decadent school," corruption that if left unchecked might do serious injury to the Revival.[162] The "polite condescension" of W. P. Ryan (1867–1942) from *The Leader* was less generous.[163] While *Cuchulain of Muirthemne* seemed to him a "temporary and incidental good,"

> we may trust that in ten or twenty years' time it will be regarded as entirely out of date, or as possessing a sort of historical interest as a specimen of the contrivances that served a useful purpose as Ireland returned from the desert. Lady Gregory means well by Irish Ireland, and as we know, works well for it, and so no one will be gladder than she herself at the outcome in question.[164]

While Gregory's Kiltartan "idiom now and then has an Irish turn and flavour," he continued, the dialect she had largely invented could serve no enduring literary purpose for "[p]eople cannot make true speech or literature out of languages that they do not understand, nor should they attempt new 'dialects' in foreign tongues … [s]he treats a half-way house as a goal, and we have too much of such compromise in Ireland."[165] Despite Yeats' praise, Ryan saw the book as a place "[w]here information and knowledge failed," a place rife with "imaginings or conjectures … hence we have had much that is fantastic. We have had a little of Cuchulain and a deal of modern fancy and phantasm. The folk in question have not been able to re-create that older Ireland as it existed in the daytime."[166]

Joyce, for his part, wrote little of Gregory's translation, but he cared less for the commendations Yeats had made. Yet *Cuchulain of Muirthemne* and its Homeric acclaim presented a further opportunity for satire. With Yeats in mind, Joyce set Buck Mulligan on the poet's pretension, imitating the "Yeats touch … mopping, chanting with waving graceful arms" while intoning that *Cuchulain* was without doubt, of course, "The most beautiful book that has come out of our country in

[161] Donovan (1902) 5.
[162] Donovan (1902) 5.
[163] O'Leary (1994) 226.
[164] Ryan (1902) 297–98.
[165] Ryan (1902) 298.
[166] Ryan (1902) 299.

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my time. One thinks of Homer."[167] Whether or not others were induced to think of Homer, Gregory's translation had made Yeats think of the Greek or, perhaps more accurately, the Englished Homer he admired most. Fifteen years earlier, William Morris (1834–1896) – England's "only true story-singer since Chaucer" according to Oscar Wilde – had published "the most perfect and the most satisfying" version of the *Odyssey* in English.[168] As Wilde put it, Morris was "best qualified by nature and by art to translate for us the marvellous epic of the wanderings of Odysseus" with "lovers of Greek literature … so eagerly" looking forward to his version.[169] *The Odyssey of Homer Done into English Verse* (1887–1888) did not disappoint: its "use of archaic words and unusual expressions" had made tangible for the modern reader what the "Athenian of the fifth century B.C." would have experienced on first hearing Homer's "old-world romance and old-world beauty" in Greek.[170] Yeats likewise esteemed the style of Morris, finding that his "little tricks of speech" exuded "spontaneity and joy."[171] Yet to others Morris' liberal use of "old words" felt forced, as though they had robbed his version of "true Homeric simplicity," a quality Matthew Arnold had described as "the pure lines of an Ionian horizon, the liquid clearness of an Ionian sky."[172] As the critic Archibald Ballantyne observed, Morris' English – an idiom of such an "antique and archaic cast" – did little to clarify Homer's Greek but showed instead only the "strange linguistic ways" of Morris himself.[173] Criticism from *The Quarterly Review* likewise suggested that its "clumsy travesty of an archaic diction" was "an extreme form of that affectation which plumes itself on despising the thoughts, manners, and needs of its own time."[174] "[S]ham Saxon" was not "literary English of any date" but rather what Ballantyne mocked as "Wardour-Street Early English – a perfectly modern article" born from a contemporary "linguistic craze" for the archaic.[175] Too often, he insisted, modern readers

[167] Joyce *Ulysses* (1986) 178 (9.1161–65).
[168] "Mr. Morris's Odyssey," *Pall Mall Gazette* (April 26, 1887) in Wilde (1909) 153, 154. On Wilde's view of classical translation and regard for Morris, see Ross (2013) 90–96.
[169] Wilde (1909) 153, 154.
[170] "Mr. Morris's Completion of the *Odyssey*," *Pall Mall Gazette* (November 24, 1887) in Wilde (1909) 216, 218.
[171] Yeats *CW3* (1999) 131.
[172] Wilde (1909) 217, 216; Arnold (1960) 168. On the demand for idiomatic simplicity in English poetry, see Ruthven (1979) 33–50 as well as Emerson R. Marks' chapter "Matthew Arnold" in Marks (1998) 197–215.
[173] Ballantyne (1888) 588.
[174] Morris (1888) 407.
[175] Ballantyne (1888) 588, 589, 592.

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had been subjected to hearing stories in which heroes from antiquity cavorted "among the men-folk, and the god-folk, and the thrall-folk, and the sheep-kind; here servants are swains of service, and butlers are wine-swains."[176] The fabrications wrought in these "mock Anglo-Saxonisms" mirrored a common practice in the London trade of fake antiques, where "one of the well-known tricks," he explained,

> is the production of artificial worm-holes in articles of modern manufacture. The innocent amateur, seeing the seemingly worm-eaten chair or table, is filled with antiquarian joy, and wonders how so precious a relic of the past can be so exceedingly cheap. So in the Wardour Street of literature. Take whole handfuls of dights and cow-kinds and men-folk; season, according to taste, with howes and mayhappens and smithying-carles: and you have an English literary article which – well, which the professional dealer knows is not in genuine English language of any period at all.[177]

Nevertheless "antiquarian joy" and the desire for "artificial worm-holes" were sweeping across the British Isles where a growing "industry" had emerged, as one critic put it, to make accessible "these heroic tales … to a public hungry for the ancient literature of Ireland."[178] With its 'Hiberno-English' and its claims on being classical, no book, it seems, fed such popular demand more than *Cuchulain*.[179] The poet Æ confessed to "have long wanted a book of these legends," and Lady Gregory had "acted the fairy godmother to me and to many Irish people by bringing the good gift our hearts desired. The prose seems wonderfully fitted for the purpose."[180] The *Tuam Herald* agreed. Gregory presented the ruggedness of ancient Irish life in a "plain Chaucerian English" whose "simple Saxon style" possessed a "fitness" for translating Gaelic legend.[181] Synge, however, was more circumspect in his remarks – disappointed by Gregory's arrangement of legends as well as her omission of "certain barbarous features" from the original Irish text.[182] Nonetheless he admitted that *Cuchulain* remained "a part of my daily bread," though

[176] Ballantyne (1888) 588.
[177] Ballantyne (1888) 590, 589–90.
[178] Ballantyne (1888) 589. "An Irish Epic," *Dundalk Democrat* (June 4, 1904) 8.
[179] "Within ten years four editions were sold out, and even through the twenties, the book continued to make money." Daniel Murphy, Foreword to Augusta Gregory, *Cuchulain of Muirthemne* (1902) in Gregory (1970) 10.
[180] As quoted in Murphy, Foreword to Augusta Gregory, *Cuchulain of Muirthemne* in Gregory (1970) 10.
[181] "Lady Gregory on Cuchulain," *Tuam Herald* (May 17, 1902) 4.
[182] J. M. Synge, "An Epic of Ulster," *The Speaker* (June 7, 1902) 285, as in Synge (1966) 370; see also Valente (2011) 179.

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even he could not shake a strong distaste for the "needlessly archaic" English by which many contemporary writers had stylized Irish legend.[183] The Wardour Street industry had gone far enough, and nothing seemed "quite so worthless" as the "tawdry commonplace jingle" made "from it in Ireland during the last century."[184] In his own writing, therefore, Synge eschewed archaicism and aimed not at a high-minded Homeric or classical grandiloquence but "a nearer appreciation of the country people, and their language."[185]

Unlike Synge, however, Joyce found the "worm-holes" of Wardour Street compelling, if absurd, and in 1919 its industry standards proved especially useful in "Cyclops."[186] As Michael Groden has noted, the composition of this episode marked a radical departure from *Ulysses*' previous narrative experiments: Joyce resolved "to drop the monologue technique, which he had already distorted practically beyond recognition in 'Sirens'," but initially he lacked a straightforward idea of what might replace it.[187] In the earliest drafts, Joyce did not begin with the one-eyed pub argot of "[b]arney mavourneen's" but instead with a parody of James Clarence Mangan (1803–1849), whose "Prince Aldfrid's Itinerary Through Ireland" recalled something of the faux world of Wardour Street.[188] Eager to expose its conventions – the "verbal paraphernalia" that aligned the Victorian Homer with the nobility of a folk Gaelic past – Joyce kept nothing sacred.[189] He grossly amplified Mangan's idiom, embellishing the bounty of "Inisfail the fair" while enumerating, list upon list, the dense varieties of all its pleasures.[190]

> In ~~green Erin of the west~~ <Inisfail the fair> there lies a land, the land of holy Michan. There rises a watchtower beheld from afar. There sleep the dead as they ~~slept in life~~ <in life slept>, warriors and princes of high renown. There wave the lofty trees of sycamore; the eucalyptus, giver of good shade, is not absent: and in their shadow sit the maidens of that land, the daughters of princes. They <sing and> sport with silvery fishes, caught in silken nets; their fair white fingers toss the gems of the <fishful>

[183] As quoted in Gregory (1976) 403; J. M. Synge, "A Translation of Irish Romance," *Manchester Guardian* (December 28, 1905) 5, as in Synge (1966) 373.

[184] Synge (1966) 372.

[185] Synge (1966) 367.

[186] Ballantyne (1888) 589.

[187] Groden (1977) 118.

[188] Joyce *Ulysses* (1986) 241 (12.59). Mangan based his own version of the poem on John O'Donovan's unrhymed translation of a seventh-century Irish ballad, first published in the *Dublin Penny Journal* (September 1832).

[189] "Nineteenth-century translations from Irish sources – except for the proper names – would have been replete with the same verbal paraphernalia as is the Butcher and Lang rendition of the Odyssey." Schork (1998) 122.

[190] Joyce *Ulysses* (1986) 241 (12.68).

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> sea, ruby and purple of Tyre. And men come from afar, heroes, the sons of kings, to woo them for they are beautiful and all of noble stem.[191]

As Leah Flack observes, the vision of Gaelic antiquity forged by Mangan reappears ironically: its "abundant apparel," its interminable catalogues of the "ornaments of the arboreal world" and the "fishful streams … too numerous to be enumerated" lampoon Butcher and Lang's extravagant account of all "the splendid gifts of the gods in the palace of Alcinous."[192] In addition to mistranslating Mangan, Joyce's mock heroic idiom repositions the poem's setting, moving it from an idyllic pastoral landscape to the dirty byways of contemporary Dublin, specifically the city Corporation's Fruit, Vegetable, and Fish Market. Bound to the west by St. Michan's Street and to the north by Mary's Lane, the market had once been described by Joseph Meade, Lord Mayor of Dublin (1839–1900), as "'second to none in the empire.'"[193] First opened in December 1892, its completion became a "lasting symbol" of the city's broad efforts to enact municipal regulations to improve the quality of urban life, not least of which was the imposition of new "safety standards on food offered for sale";[194] and it was the market's local reputation as a place of plenty that pushed Joyce to the exaggerations of Wardour Street. He would 'English' its venerable place, rendering its phenomena as faux archaic while mimicking the very stylistic conceits by which many revivalists of the previous generation had aligned Irish and Greek antiquity. In so doing, Joyce held up to scrutiny a Wardour Street style once said to be so full of "eccentricities and caprice" that it appeared as "the most odious shape that false culture can assume."[195]

Throughout *Cuchulain of Muirthemne* Lady Gregory had sought to merge a reputedly peasant idiom with a higher style born, in part at least,

[191] Groden (1977) 130–31. See also Herring (1977) 152–53. The selection drawn from this poem also recalls the opening of Joyce's 1907 lecture, "Ireland, Island of Saints and Sages." There he began with an Italian rendition of the poem's opening quatrain. The corresponding passage in Mangan's version:

> I found in Innisfail the fair,
> In Ireland, while in exile there,
> Women of worth, both grave and gay men,
> Many clerics and many laymen.
> I travelled its fruitful provinces round,
> And in every one of the five I found,
> Alike in church and in palace hall,
> Abundant apparel and food for all.
> Gold and silver I found, and money;
> Plenty of wheat and plenty of honey;
> I found God's people rich in pity
> Found many a feast and many a city. Mangan (1846) 61–62.

[192] See Flack (2015) 108–13; Joyce *Ulysses* (1986) 241–42 (12.68–86); Butcher and Lang (1879) 105–07.

[193] Joseph Meade, as quoted in Lysaght (1996) 43.

[194] Dickson (2014) 415.

[195] Morris (1888) 408, 407.

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from the conventions of recent classical translation. Joyce, by contrast, was not so eager to fuse styles in "Cyclops" as to exploit a clear stylistic divergence between high and low registers of English, between the affectations of *sermo nobilis* and the coarse ejaculations of *sermo vulgaris*. Thus the episode's comic pith was developed largely by juxtaposition – the lofty extravagance of Wardour Street set against an equally "colossal vituperativeness" that Joyce drew not from the idealized Hiberno-English of Ireland's country folk but from the working-class, Irish-infused slang of local drunks, most notably that of the Citizen.[196] His invidious delusions about nationality are outdone only by his hatred of those "bloody brutal Sassenachs and their *patois*."[197] Combining the muscular, Irish Ireland rhetoric of D. P. Moran (1869–1936) with the brutal nativism of Michael 'Citizen' Cusack, founder of the Gaelic Athletic Association (1847–1906), the Citizen's outsized, "vigorous and manly" speech offers through guttural insults "giant work for the preservation of the Irish race."[198]

> – Their syphilisation, you mean, says the citizen. To hell with them! The curse of a goodfornothing God light sideways on the bloody thicklugged sons of whores' gets! No music and no art and no literature worthy of the name. Any civilisation they have they stole from us. Tonguetied sons of bastards' ghosts … They're not European, says the citizen. I was in Europe with Kevin Egan of Paris. You wouldn't see a trace of them or their language anywhere in Europe except in a *cabinet d'aisance*.[199]

As the Citizen unburdens "his soul about the Saxo-Angles in the best Fenian style," Joyce offset his vulgarity with bloodless passages of epic parody, passages he thought appeared "explanatorily 'He spoke of the English, a noble race, rulers of the waves, who sit on thrones of

[196] Joyce, "To Frank Budgen, 19 June 1919," in Joyce *LJJ* (1957) 126.

[197] Joyce *Ulysses* (1986) 266 (12.1190–91).

[198] [Michael Cusack], "The G.A.A. and the Future of the Irish Race," *The Celtic Times* (February 19, 1887) 4. Cusack was also editor of the short-lived newspaper *The Celtic Times*, where he insisted on the necessity of sport to the racial well-being of Ireland, drawing parallels between Ireland and ancient Greece, a practice Joyce made use of in "Cyclops." See Joyce *Ulysses* (1986) 260 (12.897–926). "Ancient Ireland, like ancient Greece," wrote Cusack in 1887, "was universally known as a home of athletics. Hurling – pre-eminently the national game – was indulged in to an extraordinary extent, and we read that at one time a war was caused by a disputed hurling contest between two provinces, so great was the interest taken in that manly game by the highest as well as the humblest in the land. The name of Ireland, like that of Greece, then, and indeed through succeeding ages, was synonymous with bravery. This characteristic of two of the most celebrated nations of antiquity is directly attributable to the nature and extent of athletic practices." [Michael Cusack], "The G.A.A. and the Future of the Irish Race," *The Celtic Times* (February 19, 1887) 4. On Cusack's contributions to the Gaelic Athletic Association and his complicated relationship with nationalist politics of the period, see Mandle (1987) 20–31, 153–55.

[199] Joyce *Ulysses* (1986) 266–67 (12.1197–1201, 1203–05).

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alabaster, silent as the deathless gods'."[200] Although both styles are set in dueling opposition, both creatively transpose the episode through circumlocutory mistranslation. Stylistically this only sharpens the division between Bloom and the Citizen. Neither 'one-eyed' idiom through which the reader sees Barney Kiernan's conveys the humane and ambiguous contours of Bloom's character or registers the considered debate about nationality he might at first like to have. One idiom aggrandizes the matter at hand into legendary conflict, while the other debases it into *ad hominem*, anti-Semitic attack. Where the 'best Fenian style' shows clear deficiencies in advancing understanding, the epic parody – as translation – merely amplifies that inadequacy through its verbose forms of explanation, its "loanwords or loan-translations, neologisms" and "circumlocutions."[201] In this sense, the exploitation of translation in "Cyclops" does not free the episode "from obsessive concerns with continuity and purity" but instead mocks that very "Cyclopean fixation," one that would regard "culture as static and immutable."[202]

Although "Cyclops" marked a further stylistic expansion of Joyce's Homeric satire, its stress on mistranslating Homeric parallels and mixing high and low registers of language has antecedents early in *Ulysses*, most notably at the novel's opening in "Telemachus." Atop the Martello Tower, Buck Mulligan gazes over Dublin Bay, blurting out:

> – God! he said quietly. Isn't the sea what Algy calls it: a great sweet mother? The snotgreen sea. The scrotumtightening sea. *Epi oinopa ponton*. Ah, Dedalus, the Greeks! I must teach you. You must read them in the original. *Thalatta! Thalatta!* She is our great sweet mother. Come and look … God, Kinch, if you and I could only work together we might do something for the island. Hellenise it.[203]

Mulligan's vision brings together not merely an accurate transliteration of the Greek but the deliberate misapplication of οἴνοπα's literal significance "in the original." Where one might perhaps have expected something literally translated, or even a poeticism reflecting the somber character of "what Algy calls it" – a mother "fed with our dead" in whom Swinburne once hoped to "hide … with all thy waves" – Buck Mulligan traces the epithet with scatological abandon.[204] Joyce had written out

200 Joyce, "To Frank Budgen, 19 June 1919," in Joyce *LJJ* (1957) 126.
201 Jakobson (1959) 234.
202 Cronin (1996) 168.
203 Joyce *Ulysses* (1986) 4–5, 6 (1.77–81, 157–58).
204 See Swinburne (1904) 34–47.

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verses from the *Odyssey* containing the phrase επι οἶνοπα πόντον ("on the wine-dark sea") in his Greek copybooks dating from Zurich 1916–18. He did so, however, less than carefully. Compare this transcription (a) with the *Odyssey*'s established text (b):

(a) τοῖσιν δ᾽ικμενον οὖρον ῗει γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη
ἀκραῆ Ζέφυρον, κελαδοντ᾽επι οἶνοπα πόντον.[205]
(b) τοῖσιν δ᾽ ἴκμενον οὖρον ἵει γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη,
ἀκραῆ Ζέφυρον, κελάδοντ᾽ ἐπὶ οἴνοπα πόντον. (*Od.* 2.420–21)

And grey-eyed Athena sent them a favourable gale, a fresh West Wind, singing over the wine-dark sea.[206]

What began, no doubt, as common student mistakes in Greek transcription – some missing accents and incorrect breathings – developed into a fraught 'betrayal' of the original Greek in "Telemachus." Mulligan's impromptu anglicizing of οἴνοπα thwarts readerly expectation, ironically usurping Homer and the wine-dark 'purity' of the *Odyssey* with "snotgreen" and "scrotumtightening" conscription. This moment of intentional mistranslation prefigures something of the *agon* that Joyce later expanded across "Cyclops." Here the novel foregrounds the broad pendulum on which *Ulysses* set the dynamic forms of its engagement with Homeric translation, its oscillation between the vulgar and reputedly noble, between vernacular slang and a 'classical' mode. Throughout Joyce was eager to show slanted exchanges between reverential approaches to English translation and their cruder, more self-conscious counterparts. For his own part in the episode, the figure of Joyce's youth, Stephen Dedalus – roiled by grief for his "beastly dead" mother – gives Mulligan's Hellenic ejaculations no immediate reply.[207] Instead he draws attention to the imperfections of mimetic representation, seizing on a so-called "symbol of Irish art" nearby – the stolen mirror "cleft by a crooked crack" that Buck draws to his face.[208] Its "cracked lookingglass" suggests not only Stephen's growing self-awareness but the inability of artifice to imitate reality in its fullness or complexity.[209] Art and precedent remain incommensurate to the moment. Yet Mulligan gives little heed to Stephen's

[205] Joyce, Buffalo VIII.A.4–29, in Joyce (1979) 331.
[206] Butcher and Lang (1879) 29.
[207] Joyce *Ulysses* (1986) 7 (1.198–99). On the rivalry of Joyce and Oliver St John Gogarty (1878–1957) – of Dedalus and Mulligan – as rivalry of competence in classical languages, Latin and Greek, see Schork (1991) 76–92, and Senn (1992) 215–17.
[208] Joyce *Ulysses* (1986) 6 (1.146, 135–36).
[209] Joyce *Ulysses* (1986) 6 (1.146).

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thought, and instead aggressively locks Dedalus' arm in his own. Leading him on, he insists plainly that "if you and I could only work together we might do something for the island. Hellenise it."[210] No explanation of what that Hellenizing would entail is given. Nonetheless, though, with little resistance, Stephen begins to passively reflect on a parallel incongruity, the poor 'translation' of a friend here presented to him in Mulligan's embrace and, bitterly, the loss of his 'original' companion – "the noblest and truest friend a man ever had" – Cranly.[211] Like the Greek, the warmth of that friendship, however imperfect, is usurped, poorly imitated by the presence of a vulgar surrogate: "Cranly's arm. His arm."[212] Mulligan deliberately usurps the Homeric text with crudely Hellenized English, but so too is Stephen's receptive capacity for 'authentic' human understanding stunted by parallel mistranslation: Mulligan himself becomes the novel's blunt weapon of debased appropriation, a mere 'usurper' of Stephen's friend "in the original."[213]

Broadly speaking, the irreverence with which Joyce treated commonplace notions of the 'authentic' or 'original' Homer did not end, of course, in "Telemachus." Expanding the novel, he was eager to examine further whether translation, or other forms of cultural correspondence, could in fact provide semantic equivalence across languages or a greater understanding of nationality. In "Cyclops" that kind of interrogation is enacted through the serial mistranslations of Leopold Bloom's presence, principally at the hands of its 'one-eyed' narrator and his drinking companions. With no recourse to the inner recesses of Bloom's imagination – the seat of his seemingly authentic self – Bloom becomes a metamorphic enigma, a shape-shifting site of translation enmeshed in the episode's competing idioms of correspondence. When Bloom first enters the episode, the Olympian narrator dramatically hails his

[210] Joyce *Ulysses* (1986) 6 (1.157–58).

[211] Joyce *Portrait* (1993) 276. Cranly was based largely on the person some consider Joyce's closest friend from his days at University College Dublin, namely John Francis Byrne (1880–1960). From 1908 to 1910 Byrne lived at 7 Eccles Street in Dublin, the fictional home of Leopold and Molly Bloom. It was at this address in August 1909 that Joyce arrived in "utter perturbation," believing that his companion, Nora Barnacle (1884–1951), had been unfaithful to him during the initial months of their romance five years earlier. "Never in my life have I seen a human being more shattered," Byrne reported. Byrne helped persuade Joyce that both he and Nora had been victims of a malicious plot by Joyce's old acquaintances, Oliver St John Gogarty and Vincent Cosgrave – who had lied to Joyce about Nora's alleged infidelity to settle a bet. On the profound anguish caused, see Joyce's letters to Nora Barnacle of August 1909, in Joyce *LLJ2* 231–33. On Byrne's life and friendship with Joyce, see his memoir, *Silent Years: An Autobiography with Memoirs of James Joyce and Our Ireland*. Byrne (1953) 156.

[212] Joyce *Ulysses* (1986) 6 (1.159).

[213] Joyce *Ulysses* (1986) 19, 4–5 (1.744, 79–80).

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approach, transforming Bloom's character with a form of nativizing appropriation: "Who comes through Michan's land, bedight in sable armour? O'Bloom, the son of Rory: it is he. Impervious to fear is Rory's son: he of the prudent soul."[214] No longer simply Leopold Bloom, cuckold and canvasser for *The Freeman's Journal*, he is O'Bloom, knight of faith armored in mock translation and possessed of a noble, yet faux Gaelic lineage. In this guise Bloom's national origin and heroic character are in little doubt, having been deliberately mischaracterized with idiomatic fragments drawn from Irish folklore. However, when faced with the blistering Anglophobia of the Citizen, Bloom becomes a "*Throwaway*" (like the horse who wins the Gold Cup), a "rank outsider" whose name and breeding are increasingly difficult to 'translate' into the chthonic Irish prized by the Citizen.[215] With no further Wardour Street clichés to render him native, Bloom soon appears with a "dunducketymudcoloured mug on him and his old plumeyes rolling about."[216] His tongue-tied vacillation when discussing nationality, race and ethnicity do little, moreover, to help him with the pub's patrons ("A nation is the same people living in the same place … Or also living in different places"), and they begin to wonder aloud "what the hell is he," whether

> a jew or a gentile or a holy Roman or a swaddler … says Ned. Or who is he? No offence, Crofton.
> – Who is Junius? says J. J.
> – We don't want him, says Crofter the Orangeman or presbyterian.
> – He's a perverted jew, says Martin, from a place in Hungary and it was he drew up all the plans according to the Hungarian system. We know that in the castle.
> – Isn't he a cousin of Bloom the dentist? says Jack Power.
> – Not at all, says Martin. Only namesakes. His name was Virag, the father's name that poisoned himself. He changed it by deedpoll, the father did.
> – That's the new Messiah for Ireland! says the citizen. Island of saints and sages![217]

As Myron Schwartzman has observed, Joyce deliberately chose to present Bloom in "Cyclops" with "every trace of interior monologue" removed.[218]

[214] Joyce *Ulysses* (1986) 245 (12.215–17).
[215] Joyce *Ulysses* (1986) 267 (12.1219).
[216] Joyce *Ulysses* (1986) 271 (12.1415–16).
[217] Joyce *Ulysses* (1986) 272 (12.1422–23, 1428), 276–77 (12.1631–43).
[218] Schwartzman (1974–1975) 65.

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Seen only from without, Bloom thereby becomes a troubling enigma, a character whose ideological significance and absolute 'ethnic value' cannot be measured by the purisms of debate at Barney Kiernan's. As such, he is subject to competing reconstructions of his character from the patrons at the pub, mistranslations that elevate and debase him – all, in effect, diminishing the cultural, religious and linguistic hybridity of Bloom's past and present life. The "vast fabric" of his identity is stretched by opposing idioms, and Bloom becomes, by turns, a canvas on which the desirable and undesirable can be written and rewritten.[219]

The "semantic sweep" of the Odyssean epithet, πολύτροπος (*Od.* 1.1;10.330), with its "notions of much-traveled, much-wandering, turning many ways, versatile, shifty, wily," gave Joyce "manifold leverage" to enlarge the aesthetic range of Homeric reception in *Ulysses* and to "not depend on particular echoes" alone.[220] πολύτροπος performs "multifariously" across the novel, he writes, pushing its diverse styles *multis modis* "to speak in many ways."[221] In "Cyclops," however, Joyce's polytropic depiction of Bloom specifically had roots in Odysseus' struggle with Polyphemus, an encounter that included, he once explained, some of Homer's most "delicious humor."[222] In the Greek copybooks he kept in Zurich, Joyce had copied out Odysseus' famous proclamation to the Cyclops, his adoption (or mistranslation) of the name, οὖτις.

> Οὖτις ἐμοί γ᾽ ὄνομα. Οὖτιν δέ με κικλήσκουσιν
> μήτηρ ἠδέ πατὴρ ἠδ᾽ ἄλλοι πάντες ἑταῖροι.
> (*Od.* 9.366–67)[223]

> Noman is my name, and Noman they call me, my father and my mother, and all my fellows.[224]

The minor mistakes Joyce made in transcribing the Greek (specifically in the accentuation of οὖτις and οὖτιν) show little of his fondness for classical wordplay. Yet elsewhere in the copybooks – emulating the spirit of Odyssean fabrication and forgery – he toyed with the phonetic qualities of οὖτις itself, suggestively linking the pseudonym to Ὀδυσσεύς with the false etymology of οὐδείς.[225] However, unlike in *A Portrait of the Artist As*

[219] Joyce *CWJJ* (1989) 165.
[220] Senn (1987) 34. See also Senn (1984) 121–37.
[221] Senn (1987) 34.
[222] Borach (1954) 326.
[223] Joyce, Buffalo VIII.A.4–29, in Joyce (1979) 331.
[224] Butcher and Lang (1879) 145.
[225] Separating the name Odysseus, into two parts, Joyce set it among "*outis* and *oudeis* (nobody, no one); directly opposite this pair of synonyms he added, also in Greek, the name Zeus.

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a Young Man ("Stephanos Dedalos! Bous Stephanoumenos! Bous Stephaneforos!"), none of that homophonous paronomasia made its way into the final draft of "Cyclops."[226] Nonetheless the allure of Odysseus' false name is still felt powerfully across the episode, specifically in the unstable, untranslatable essence Joyce injected into Bloom himself. As Joyce's longtime friend John Francis Byrne (1880–1960) observed, "the totality of Mr. Bloom" is

> a concoction dished up by a skillful chef. After partaking of this concoction some more or less initiated tasters have declared their recognition of one or other of the ingredients, and have given names to them. But happily, no one has named either the constituents of the concoction or its essence, and it is most unlikely that anyone ever will. This is as James Joyce wanted it to be, although he himself sailed more than once pretty close to the wind.[227]

In setting Leopold Bloom up as a Homeric οὖτις, Joyce presented him as a 'nobody' entangled in the nets of "nationality, language, religion" that Stephen Dedalus once sought to evade.[228] His surname having been changed from Virag, Bloom becomes both "entity and nonentity" in the episode, mediated through mistranslations that permit him to be "Assumed by any" but "known to none. Everyman or Noman."[229] He is a sometime Protestant, a once and still Hungarian, a then and now Jew, an unwelcome stranger in Ireland, and yet also at times a hero of Irish legend. It is precisely the multivalent "concoction" of these many complex aspects that drive the episode's conflict: none of the 'one-eyed' narrative forms can find a suitable epithet, a proper form with which to ensnare, to translate the full scope of Bloom's 'authentic self.' At the end, what the reader learns is that Bloom remains, above all, an enigma of culturally hybrid aspect. The object of heightened xenophobic obsession, he is conscripted across both the 'high' and the 'low' styles of Homeric reception employed within the pub. First, as the native "O'Bloom," he appears as a domestic invention, the product of aggressive nationalist attempts to ennoble the present with Wardour Street dress.[230] Yet unease

Immediately preceding this entry Joyce provided a translation/interpretation of his exercise in etymology: NO/GOD, Odys/seus." See Joyce (1979) 332, as well as Schork (1998) 87.

[226] Joyce *Portrait* (1993) 194. For discussion of this passage in *Portrait*, see the Introduction, pp. 34–36.

[227] Byrne (1953) 160.

[228] Joyce *Portrait* (1993) 230.

[229] Joyce *Ulysses* (1986) 598 (17.2006–08).

[230] Joyce *Ulysses* (1986) 245 (12.216).

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persists at the coming of a "bloody jewman" into "holy Michan," a place where Bloom's queer habits and intellectual curiosity seemingly have no home.[231] Thus exposed to the Irish-inflected, anti-Semitic obscenities of the Citizen, Bloom no longer remains a rightful "son of Rory" – the son of Ruaidrí Ua Conchobair, High King of Gaelic Ireland (1116–1198) – but becomes rather a dispossessed intruder whose national loyalties and religious persuasion are far too suspect to be trusted.[232] Like Odysseus hiding "bound beneath the breasts of his thick-fleeced flocks," he is deemed a "wolf in sheep's clothing … That's what he is. Virag from Hungary! Ahasuerus I call him. Cursed by God."[233]

Fritz Senn has noted how thoroughly *Ulysses* confronts the "question of experiencing great literature merely through the medium of restrictive translations."[234] Perhaps nowhere is such restrictiveness – the partial nature of all translation – at once more apparent, and more useful to Joyce, than in the 'one-eyed' narrative idioms of "Cyclops."[235] By the end of the episode, Leopold Bloom has been so refracted by the irreverent artifice of mistranslation – an aesthetic that both demonizes and glorifies all his apparent affiliations – that his 'authentic' self slips away from Barney Kiernan's, much like the corresponding events from the *Odyssey* itself. For Joyce – as for *Ulysses* at large – translation entailed error, a wandering from and an elusive misalignment with only partially exposed sources that could not be known in full. No style, no approach to the source could grasp, or faithfully receive, the character of what Borges called "las imaginaciones de Homero, a los irrecuperables hombres y días que él se representó" – "Homer's imaginations and the irrecoverable men and days he portrayed."[236] The contextual details – the eccentricities of place, language, idiom and particular culture – that differentiated the originary moment of the source text with that of the target language were too vast, "an immeasurable labyrinth" too impossible to bridge.[237] Yet, for all of the apparent restrictions translation might impose, Joyce reveled in this labyrinth, treating the notion of the original not as an object whose

[231] Joyce *Ulysses* (1986) 280, 241 (12.1811, 12.68).
[232] Joyce *Ulysses* (1986) 245 (12.216).
[233] Butcher and Lang (1879) 148; Joyce *Ulysses* (1986) 277 (12.1666–67).
[234] Senn (1992) 216.
[235] "Translations are a partial and precious documentation of the changes the text suffers." See "The Homeric Versions," in Borges (2001) 69. On Borges and Joyce, see Waisman (2005) and Novillo-Corvalán (2011). See also Laura Jansen's discussion of "classics as a rumour" in Jansen (2018) 3–5 as well as 52–75.
[236] Borges (1932); Borges (2001) 74.
[237] See "The Homeric Versions," in Borges (2001) 69.

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order had to be retrieved but as a kaleidoscopic center radiating creative errancy and mistranslation.[238] If Joyce possessed a 'mythical method,' it was no doubt linked to the profound interest Yeats and others had expressed in developing a Homeric pattern for Irish literature – but Joyce satirized that obsession, reconfiguring it again and again throughout the dense stylistic variety of *Ulysses*. His 'errant' styles did not so much as structure, or bring contemporary anarchy to order, as ironize the "chain of receptions" by which the "continued readability" of an Irish Homer had been forged.[239] *Ulysses* was, he confessed, the "work of a sceptic" – for whatever claims had been made about the coming of a Homeric age in Ireland, the Revival had brought no credible epic, no 'northern Homer' to the nation.[240] "[T]oday other bards," Joyce observed, "animated by other ideals, have the cry."[241]

[238] "James Joyce's passion for literature and languages was also a passion for translation." Cronin (1996) 161.
[239] Martindale (1993) 7.
[240] Budgen (1972) 156.
[241] Joyce *CWJJ* (1989) 174.

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