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JAMES JOYCE'S *ULYSSES*: READING THE SELF IN THE BODY[1]

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ABSTRACT. ***James Joyce's "Ulysses": Reading the Self in the Body***. Throughout this paper, my primary contention is that, as a book, *Ulysses* is a body of potentialities meant to help readers consubstantiate with their selves, with a special dedication for the Irish audience of the 1900s in particular. I suggest, in other words, that from a post-humanist perspective, the novel's most metempsychotic feature remains its ability to guide readers out of their self-legitimising narratives and into the seat of their consciousness, the individual body. As the reader suspends their personal existence to engage with the body of the book, the latter helps deliver them into life-actual, all the while internalising a story unravelling its own textual cessation. This perspective on *Ulysses* involves re-tracing the human body within each narrative level, and the changes it undergoes through the novel's embeddedness.

Keywords*: Ulysses, the use of bodies, zone of non-consciousness, corporeal narratology, Agamben, Damasio, Punday.*

REZUMAT. ***"Ulise" de James Joyce: Regăsirea Sinelui în Trup.*** Pe parcursul lucrării de față, teza principală este că romanul *Ulise* reprezintă o totalitate de entelehii menite să ghideze cititorul spre consubstanţialitate cu sinele, vizând, în mod special, publicul irlandez de la început de secol al XX-lea. Lucrarea evidenţiază cel mai metempsihotic aspect ale cărţii, anume abilitatea sa de a-l ghida pe cititor dincolo de povestirile auto-justificatoare ale sinelui şi spre originea conştiinţei umane, anume trupul individual. Astfel, corpul lui *Ulise* are menirea de a izbăvi cititorul întru faptul concret de a fi, chiar în timp ce acesta îşi suspendă existenţa individuală pentru actul citirii. O astfel de perspectivă asupra romanului necesită re-găsirea corpului uman în universul acţiunii propriu-zise, apoi continuând cu modul în care acesta este transformat de încadrările care se suprapun şi/sau intercalează cu cel dintâi.

Cuvinte cheie: *Ulise, uzul corpurilor, zonă de non-conştiinţă, naratologie corporală, Agamben, Damasio, Punday.*

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Within the first paragraphs of *The Use of Bodies*, Giorgio Agamben accentuates how Greek thought assumed a distinction between *zoé*, "the simple fact of living common to all living beings (animals, men, or gods)," and *bios*, the "form or way of living proper to an individual or group" (Agamben 2017, 5). Since this binary is viewed by Agamben as a dominant, widely unchallenged supposition of Western philosophy, his latest book starts precisely from the way in which the Greek life of the polis reflects an uncanny understanding of "the use of the body." This expression is first used in Aristotle's *Politics* "at the point where it is a question of defining the nature of the slave" (Agamben 2017, 1029), an interrogation which remains insufficiently explained according to the contemporary philosopher, not in the least because human life remains indivisible to *a posteriori* criteria brought about by its human existence in the first place. Starting from *The Omnibus Homo Sacer*, this paper aims to address the issue of the inappropriable body in James Joyce's *Ulysses* from a narratological perspective. As we shall see, Agamben's anti-metaphysics, nuanced philosophy of language and of intimate use-of-oneself reflect, to a great extent, current neuroscientific findings related to subjectivity developed by Antonio Damasio. In order to facilitate a better adjustment to the world of literary criticism, Daniel Punday's work as a pioneer of corporeal narratology, reading text(s) through bodies and bodies within text(s) will be employed. From this parallax of perspectives, then, we may find that Joyce had an astonishing intuition regarding the way in which identity comes to be, more than a century before Agamben's contemporary criticism of ontology and Damasio's formulations of the embodied mind.

Despite numerous scientific and theoretical arguments to the contrary, the distinction of *zoé* and *bios*, along with the cultural corporality bias that came with it, continues to persist in many cultural and scientific practices of the 21st century. Just one of many caesuras of Aristotle's work, as Agamben calls them, the self as branched between intellect and sensorial perception, most obvious in the former's *De Anima*, will certainly haunt humanity for many years to come. Instead of surmising endless caesuras between fictional categories that may or may not exist, such as the one between agent and patient, Agamben urges us to understand *use* not as use of something else, but rather as "use of self," since "to enter into a relation of use with something, I must be affected by it, constitute myself as one who makes use of it" (Agamben, 1054). The experiences that capture the self-constituting being – more specifically, the practices that super-impose epistemological categories of the subject and object kind and force them to co-exist within the same, rather than be defined by something different – render such binaries "deactivated and inoperative, and, in their place, there follows use as a new figure of human praxis"

(Agamben, 1054). Walking, a kernel structural process to *Ulysses*, is but one example of a practice that forces contradictory or opposing binaries to co-exist. Just as the world we inhabit is in a perpetual becoming, so are the identities that traverse it. This simple, yet ubiquitous fact of walking as appropriation of oneself is the fundamental device that renders Agamben's thinking, and his understanding of the body, in particular, an appropriate hermeneutical lens for *Ulysses*. As my analysis of the text will show, there is a more substantial meaning to be discovered in the characters' walking than we are led to believe by the available readings thus far.

Furthermore, Agamben's reflections on habitual use will prove equally informative for revealing the hidden layers of the subjectivities within the novel, as habit is in terms of "subjectivity seeking to make itself master of being, the place in which, with a perfect circularity, having, which derives from being, appropriates the latter to itself" (Agamben, 1084). Habit seems to be the expression of the desire to impose certain patterns or conventions onto one's existence. Habit may be a technique for subjectivity to assert both its familiarisation with oneself, as well as ownership of the process of self-becoming. A critical nuance that the scholar introduces in his analysis of habit is that "sensation and habitual praxis, as use-of-oneself, articulate a zone of non-consciousness" (1086). The latter is particularly important as it seeks to eliminate the intermediate, delayed nature that characterises human existence. Instead of reflecting upon the self in order to determine one's relation to the act of becoming, Agamben is proposing that we embrace the zone of non-consciousness brought about by a certain habit or use-of-oneself.

Both language and the body are natural and almost inborn, yet remain at a certain distance from the subject who inhabits the second and employs the first. The experience of reading a novel like *Ulysses* is a *mise en abyme* of precisely this oscillation, as my close reading will show. Agamben indicates that the paradox of not being able to completely acquire, define or express that which is most intimate to us may actually be a consequence of metaphysics itself; this aporia may be resolved if we accept his zone of non-awareness and non-consciousness as intimacy with self-becoming to the point where we become able to dwell within it. In a similar manner to subjectivity within the body, being is also at home within the inappropriable landscape, the third and most remote of the three unruly intimacies. Landscape shares the same structural difference that language exhibits in relation to the body; it is something handed down to us, external and learned, that is also shared by a community. As James Joyce's novel *shows* and Walter Benjamin's philosophy later *tells*, in narratological terms, the city has effectively become the new landscape with the age of modernity. What is more, this metaphysical chain of thought (which

actually has a propensity towards becoming more bodily and incorporated as the text goes on, a self-cancelling metaphysics) is actually verified by recent findings in the field of neuroscience.

The somatic feedback theory was first developed in 1884 by William James, the psychologist who coined the term *stream of consciousness*. The theory that also happened to be an important inspiration for the Irish author is precisely the model that the neuroscientist Antonio Damasio seeks to expand and complete. The central claims that Damasio's initial publication validates are that emotions represent an intrinsic component in the making of our minds, while both "high-level and low-level brain regions [...] cooperate in the making of reason" (Damasio 1994, xii-xiii). The body proper provides an inherent background to our thinking, supplying the latter with a *content* that is "part and parcel of the normal mind" (Damasio 1994, 226). The scientist's contribution to the initial somatic feedback theory advanced by William James is concerned with the way in which a stimulus triggers thoughts and evaluations, which are then responsible for causing a physiological, bodily response. Then follows our perception of what is going on in the body, while "thoughts about specific contents roll by" (Damasio 1994, 145), which is what we commonly refer to as feeling. Lastly, an important addition the scholar made, proven several times since its publication, is the postulation of an "as-if loop" that can by-pass the normal bodily response to a stimulus, that of thought and evaluations, jumping straight from thinking to a kind of perception (Damasio 1994, 155).

Two decades before Agamben's *The Use of Bodies*, the empirical data from neurology patients, as well as healthy brains, led Damasio to conclude that feelings and, by extension, the body, suffer from being repudiated, from being the target of immense prejudice. It is not just Western ontology that had suffered from a corporality bias, but also scientific inquiries dealing with the nature of the self, and what may represent the origin(s) of consciousness. Although we are using our bodies, we are sometimes oblivious, maybe apprehensive, and even ashamed of being defined by them, which signals a marked estrangement and unease from what is supposed to be an intimate closeness with the non-awareness that use-of-oneself implies. Currently, there is no substantial evidence that may account for disembodied reason. We are no longer struggling between *zoé* and *bios*, *nomos* and *physis*. Within the configuration of proper living and of participatory democracy, the slave had no rights except for those conferred by their master. The former had been such an intrinsic part of classical Greek antiquity that Aristotle encountered great difficulty in defining a distinct human condition from the one he experienced (and, consequently, failed to do so, according to Agamben).

Moreover, menial labour was being commanded upon slaves to the extent that their tasks were no longer perceived as labour or even a kind of praxis. Given such remoteness from the zone of non-consciousness wherein one would experience both the corporeal routine of the everyday and the possibility to contemplate the transmigration of souls or the nature of being, it is no wonder that the great thinkers of antiquity perceived the two enterprises as pertaining to two constitutionally distinct spheres of existence. It is reasonable to assume that a self who is completely severed from what was generically understood as *zoé*, a subject that does not experience Damasio's felt connection with certain habitual aspects of life, in the likes of feeding and tending to livestock, would try to find an essentialist justification that can account for the blatant social inequity surrounding them.

More importantly, a distinction is made between "the mere presence of organised images flowing in a mental stream" (Damasio 2010, 19) which make up what we commonly refer to as a mind and the state of consciousness. Yet for a mind to generate consciousness, a "supplementary process must be added on," and that is subjectivity, or, from our end, literally "the feeling that pervades the images we experience subjectively." The functional difference is not to make images of the world within ourselves, but to render those images "ours, making them belong to their rightful owners, the singular, perfectly bounded organisms in which they emerge" (Damasio 2010, 19). The self is created in the wake of the stream of consciousness, which is triggered by various stimuli as a manifestation of the self as *dynamic object*. The latter is a material body, accompanied by a conglomerate of life history, behaviours and thought processes, so it follows that there is no essential subject before interaction with the world. The self as *knower* — namely, the other vantage point from which Damasio considers the process of identity — originates in the previous, dynamic object. This structure echoes with great authority Agamben's recent, philosophical formulation that subjects reside in their use-of-oneself, rather than in metaphysical, or mystical speculations. Further proof of this causal and continuous internal feedback loop is the fact that identity is actually the result of a step-wise, layered process:

> the knower came in steps: the protoself and its primordial feelings; the action-driven core self; and finally the autobiographical self, which incorporates social and spiritual dimensions. But these are dynamic processes, not rigid things, and on any day their level fluctuates (simple, complex, somewhere in between) and can be readily adjusted as the circumstances dictate. (Damasio 2010, 18)

The present moment, the ever elusive category that always escaped thorough definition in terms of the flow of time, is what actually defines human identity to a great extent, both in Damasio's and in Agamben's accounts. The former's research led him to conclude that consciousness, albeit initially undirected by one, specific process or brain site, comes about as a result of the interaction between our feelings and the narrative devices within our brains. The emerging subjectivity conducts the performance, despite the impossibility to locate it beforehand (Damasio 2010, 27-9). If something along the lines of a disorder or illness should alter either aspect of the performance, Damasio's research on patients indicates that the resulting self is also different.

In light of these findings, Agamben's zone of non-consciousness seems to be a literal, physiological inner absence of a definite locus that we must familiarise ourselves with, as much as it is the palpable transience of the now. To this extent, Damasio's action-driven core self is an embodied, philosophical expression of the intimacy that we may find in the use-of-oneself that precedes biographical knowledge. In a sense, similarly to the manner in which we can never refer to the present moment with accuracy, since it is always in the past by the time we confine it to speech, it is also equally impossible to confine a subjectivity, as it is inexorably complemented by another inappropriable by the time language has the chance to narrow it down to certain words. From this perspective, the "discourse" on the body in *Ulysses* is nothing more than an inappropriable arrested in the allocation of an untransferrable.

Chronologically, somewhere between Damasio's first publication and Agamben's last instalment of the *Homo Sacer* compilation, there came Daniel Punday's *Narrative Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Narratology*. The latter's aim is to approach narratology, a discipline dedicated to unveiling practices of narrative representation, as well as the principles and patterns that may be involved in the latter, an area marked by "a long tradition that imagines reading as a disembodied, intellectual, and frequently spiritual experience" (vii), by attempting to trace the role of the body in the logic of this particular field of study. We should focus our attention on both the theories and the text(s) that try to circumvent or explain unrepresentable elements belonging to the body. It has become crucial that we identify those components of criticism, not just fiction, that not only attempt to do away with inappropriable corporality, but which also endeavour to portray the contents of bodily feelings, whether they belong to Damasio's inner, *old world* or the *new one*, into something else. Although Mieke Bal's 2009 edition of *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative* features a short section on the physicality of characters, Monika Fludernik's *An Introduction to Narratology* does not discuss the body even briefly, despite including an argument on

feelings, thoughts and the unconscious. The more recent, *Living Handbook of Narratology* (LHN) includes an even more disappointing portrayal of corporeality, claiming that, by means of storytelling, "life transcends the animalistic and unruly body so that narration gains the power to organise 'human temporality'" (Bamberg 2013, 13). Clearly, something as scrutinised and carefully considered as the human body, both from a medical and philosophical perspective, still largely proves to be a fundamental zone of non-consciousness for investigations into narrative representation.

Determining how a novel's bodies are described according to their degree of embodiment, how they are sorted, but also their interaction with one another and the environment may yield invaluable information about the underlining corporeal narratology, as well as the cultural and aesthetic philosophies it promotes. Furthermore, whether a narrative posits overarching or unruly bodies is also of particular interest, since these two categories serve as semantic gravitational centres that exert their meaning and influence throughout the story. When an overarching narrative body creates a coherent image of corporeality in a text, the unruly one immediately comes to deconstruct or prevent its totalising direction. Punday refers to the gaps and blanks between the two forces as the personification of Ricoeur's *distension* (85-86). Quoting Peter Brooks, the author concludes that "paradoxically, bodily desire describes both the plot and what resists that plot" (Punday 2003, 90). In Agamben's terms, the drive towards unruliness may be subsumed to a narrative representation of the desire for non-conscious intimacy, whereas Damasio might see the two as the encounter between the core and the autobiographical self that ultimately allows us to also identify the elementary components of the proto identity. However, with Ricoeur's theory of emplotment and time (Malan 2017, 27-30), the conflict between the two kinds of corporeal narrative representations takes place both outside and within the subject. The site of this struggle indicates an authentic manner of acquiring knowledge about personal subjectivity, according to contemporary philosophy, as well as neuroscience. In what follows, I will employ Damasio's, Agamben's, and Punday's theoretical models in order to discern the subjective pathways employed by Joyce's work in order to forge/force the consciousness of his people.

It is no accident that the first two words of *Ulysses*, "Stately, plump" (1), are adjectives meant to describe a body. Throughout the epic, the three protagonists' builds will be framed against the landscape and non-bodies, against their thoughts, animals, as well as other persons, and each other. Stephen's and Leopold's frames are curiously disembodied throughout the novel, as opposed to Molly. This is not to say that they are not defined as corporeal characters

belonging to a possible universe, but that we have an overall scarcity of determiners to rely upon in order to construct an accurate, visual embodiment of the two men. As Stephen is climbing the stairs of the Martello tower, where he cohabits with Buck Mulligan and Haines, the reader is curiously placed outside the characters' heads, in what looks to be an extradiegetic third person narrator. Initially, there is no account of the inner thoughts of either aside from the solitary mention of "Chrysostomos" (3), which, as the novel proceeds, the reader retroactively finds out belonged to Stephen's interior monologue. This single-word intrusion is a signal that more than one possible world may be at stake when reading, and may actually constitute a metalepsis, in the sense that the narrative levels at stake are not circumscribed by uniform, tangible boundaries. Even by comparison to the next two chapters, "Nestor" and "Proteus," not to mention the remainder of the book, the act of reading is attentively calibrated and monitored by the author.

Joyce was well aware of the difficulties that his readers of the time would encounter in trying to make sense of the narrative. In this respect, the Gilbert and Linati schemata can serve as partial, temporary aids for his audience/readers to engage with the text. Nonetheless, the novel markedly aspires to make the reader a part of its action, which is why these first pages deliver a gradual shift from an extradiegetic perspective to the first level narrative, the stage wherein the narrative act takes place (Pier 2016, 2). If transgressing the boundaries of narrative levels (and, thus, voices) is still identifiable now, it will become less and less clear as the story proceeds. Doubtlessly, the elements of this transition, if not the very idea of incorporating such a process, underline a concern for the ability of the reader's body to interiorise the text, in a similar manner to the way in which characters like Molly, Leopold, or Stephen interiorise the world they belong to, rather than just glance over it. The danger of surface glancing is best expressed in a phrase that is yet to come: the "ineluctable modality of the visible" (31). What we witness here is Joyce not only being aware, but actually using elements from within his narrative to influence each singular act of reading, a *mise en cadre* using the very frame of the novel to address the world beyond it and, more specifically, the reader's corporeality (Pier 2016, 12).

Mulligan starts talking to Stephen: this [fact], alongside the tactile sensation of someone putting a hand into his pocket, progressively makes the latter come to his senses and consciousness. The narrative effectively employs sight, hearing, and touch to bring the self to life, while curiously leaving out the olfactive. The objective, third-person account and dialogue dominate the text up to this point. As his companion continues to shave in silence, Stephen regains his awareness by means of a basic, powerful human emotion – grief.

His sentience will gradually overturn the heterodiegetic narrator. In these initial pages, the reader is first confronted with what Damasio calls primordial feelings, the "most elementary part of the primordial self" (Damasio 2010, 26). His walking up the stairs to reach the parapet is an apt metaphor of the way in which one's body, the self as dynamic object, is incrementally awakened to one's mind, the self as knower. Upon the primordial self, the narrative adds the core, action-driven consciousness, which is more concerned with the here and now. This is why the first several pages are dominated by intradiegetic narrative, wherein the emphasis falls on exactly what is taking place, Buck's and Stephen's gestures, the former's shaving, and the dialogue between the two.

As Buck continues his shaving, the layer of the "autobiographical subject" as defined by Damasio is added to the narrative through the personal, lived past and projected future. This is marked by the intercalation of "Pain, that was not yet the pain of love, fretted his heart" (5). Their dialogue triggers a primordial emotion in Stephen, which both brings and is brought to mind by a strong feeling of grief. Re-enactment of his mother's death further develops his angst, which activates literal pain in his body by means of Damasio's "as-if" loop. This is also the first and one of the few instances in the chapter wherein we encounter smell. The olfactive was left out on purpose until this point. So far, we have had an account of subjectivity and consciousness firmly grounded in the present. Stephen walked himself up to the top of the tower and conversed with his cohabiting friend. Now, Stephen becomes present to the reader beyond the first level of the narrative. Using smell, the narrative introduces us to subjectivity proper through flashback. Technically speaking, smell is the only human sense that arrives at the cerebral cortex by means of a different route, a pathway that does not involve mediation by the thalamus (Damasio 2010, 189), which may account for its particular strength in terms of associative memory.

In a sense, the autobiographical persona from *A Portrait* is continued here, and is now starting to define the narrative, to take control of it. But Joyce is not without a sense of irony, as the very perception which ties one of his protagonists' mind back to a defining moment in their lives is the one they seem to lack the most. We find out that Stephen Dedalus makes a point of not washing, unlike Haines or Buck. According to their breakfast conversation, the time has arrived for Stephen's monthly ablution ritual to be performed. However, in "Ithaca," we find out that he had not attended to his personal hygiene in over a year. Under no conditions would this go unnoticed by one's interlocutors – from bacteria and fungus to a poignant odour, and visible infections,[3] almost twelve months of not bathing will render a person difficult

[3] For medically accurate information on the visible skin infections and fungi associated with not bathing: https://www.aafp.org/afp/2014/0401/p569.html.

to interact, let alone live with. This is, consequently, revealing in terms of the fact that we do not have access to the other characters' thoughts and sensation as we do to Stephen's. The curious absence of smells in these three chapters is a warranty for the foulness exuded by the protagonist, to which he is oblivious. According to the national archives (2), the hygiene among the labouring classes in the Dublin of the time was close to non-existent, which likens the hero to his peers more than is initially let on.

Nonetheless, Stephen refuses to tend to his corporeality for entirely different reasons other than not having access to the minimum requirements. He stubbornly refuses water partly because he is (1) suffering from depression, which modern medicine tells us may be associated with such behaviours, (2) afraid of water, and (3) completely obtuse to his own condition. Indeed, when Mulligan prompts him to recognise his own bodily state by looking in the mirror, he does not interiorise what he looks like, but rather chooses to reflect on how others may perceive him. "–Look at yourself, he said, you dreadful bard! Stephen bent forward and peered at the mirror held out to him, cleft by a crooked crack" (6). He just remarks that his hair is uncombed.

Misuse of oneself can be contagious for those whose gaze is constantly turned inwards. "Telemachus" is riddled with such hints of Stephen's inability to come to terms with his own zone of non-consciousness. The latter, along with his body as dynamic object, frequently intercalate with his thoughts, in the like manner of a subdued narrative trying to emerge from within the character himself. At this point, this is most evident during the milk lady's conversation, when he thinks to himself that "all there is of her is but her woman's unclean loins" (12). The filth on his mind is not hers, however, but, as Martha Nussbaum argues, his own disgust at himself being projected upon another, particularly a person whose existence was defined in relation to the opposite sex, a woman (Nussbaum 2013, 114). Furthermore, his assumption reveals an ascetic inner Catholicism seeking to reproach physical lust, while also reinforcing the dogma that a woman's loins are unclean since the lapse, mostly because they "not in God's likeness, the serpent's prey" (12). As an epithet, milk lady can stand both for Mother Ireland, as well as for an adulterous woman. Envisioning his country as a prostitute is a theme that seems to linger in Stephen's mind, and will surface several times in his consciousness throughout the day, most noticeably in the "Parable of the Plums" episode. Unknowingly, Stephen is reinforcing a cycle of imposed, unjust social hierarchies, as he assumes that his intellect and education separates him, in one form or another, from the milkwoman, whom he obviously dislikes for not paying her respects to him, as she does to the "medicineman." From this perspective, beyond the political dimension,

Haines makes a good point when he tells the young man that he is his own master (17), as they walk towards the bathing place. Stephen is so concerned with exterior embodiments of occupation – the tower, the Englishman living with them, language, the one he speaks and the one he doesn't – that he overlooks the rims of his own "mind-forged manacles," his own body, as it lives and walks.

"Proteus" exacerbates everything we have witnessed regarding Stephen and his interactions with the outside world, as his inner life "balloons to occupy nearly all of the text" (Hunt 2017, 1), which gives rise to the first episode of the novel written entirely in the stream-of-consciousness. In a way, "shut your eyes and see" (31) is Stephen's version of a philosophical experiment to understand the way in which his senses impact his thoughts. As we proceed through it, he moves on the strand, and it becomes obvious that the biggest obstacle to internalising the text, as it is to both our and his internalising of reality, is the unavoidable linearity of having to represent (or re-present what already transpired, to ourselves, by means of an inner narrative) experiences occurring simultaneously, alluded to by "*Nacheinander*" and "*Nebeneinander*," respectively. The underlying corporeal assumption that the narrative is working with in "Proteus" is that the young artist is constantly prevented from achieving self-actualisation. His mind is distended across time and the present to the extent that he may be fated to live out the remainder of his days in a state of perpetual tension, in the sense used by Ricoeur, trapped in the contrasts between present as expectation, as direct perception, and as memory (Malan 2017, 27-30). Stephen forgets to visit his aunt Sara and when he realises that his thoughts distracted him from a present interest, his reaction is not one of compensation to the prevailing disembodiment of his thought, but rather one of surrender: "Am I not going there? Seems not" (34). What the reader witnesses here is the way in which acquired knowledge is a far more dominant trigger for Stephen's mind than external reality. Instead of seeking to build a familiar relationship with the unappropriable (whether it is nature, others, himself, or language), the protagonist futilely tries to internalise it, an attempt which is doomed to fail by the very terms which he establishes for his quest for knowledge. His perplexity at not being able to attain it is not only understandable, but natural, given the paradox he reaches. Knowing is subject to the body's boundaries and interpretation. No wonder he recalls such a contradictory statement like "Sit down and take a walk" (32).

Starting with "Calypso," however, *Ulysses* begins to lift the veil on bodily disgust. The novel performs this unravelling not with the intention to shock or for a higher, disembodied artistic meaning, but in order to aid its readers to become critical of themselves, just as they are of the characters in a

story they read. In *Ulysses and Us*, Declan Kiberd paraphrases Joyce in saying that a man's way of walking and eating "could reveal more about him than how he goes to war" (Kiberd 2009, 77). Moreover, Bloom is never really introduced in a proper way, as the author opts for a "jump-cut" technique of narrative on the background of an assumed intimacy between the reader and character (Kiberd 2009, 78) — a closeness which is necessary in order to pierce the numerous self-legitimising veils of personal identity. We are invited to look directly at what bothers us the most and welcome it within our thoughts and daily routines, our use-of-oneself. Stephen's walking on Sandymound Strand is set precisely before Bloom's perambulations in the next two chapters as a way to illustrate how easy it is to isolate oneself and miss out on the world, even life itself, if one is not careful enough to be mindful.

Compared to the breakfast episode in the first chapter, Leopold's careful meal planning, attention to detail, and subtle awareness of the entire process of preparing and eating food constructs a banquet-like performance. His mindfulness of the here and the now, his comfort in the proximity of bodily use-of-oneself, and the overall equilibrium between the three neurological selves is a welcome change from "Proteus." Unlike Stephen, Bloom is not mortified by the Augustinian *distentio animi*, which is not to say that he does not get distracted, but rather that he does not allow himself to be completely absorbed either by the present-future or the present-past. When the dark cloud overcomes the city, his thoughts are driven away from the vision of the planter's company and various places around the Mediterranean: "a barren land, bare waste. Vulcanic lake, the dead sea: no fish, weedless, sunk deep in the earth. (…) Dead: an old woman's: the grey sunken cunt of the world. Desolation" (50). Yet he decides to confront and weather this inner mist, rather than allow himself to be overwhelmed by it like Stephen: "Well, I am here now. Morning mouth bad images. Got up wrong side of the bed. Must begin again those Sandow's exercises. On the hands down" (50). He gently reminds himself that such thoughts must also be connected to his body state through bad smells, sleeping badly, and an overall lack of physical activity.

All of these physiological insights were advertised in his day by the pioneering German bodybuilder Eugen Sandow, and are now confirmed by medical science. Sandow also spoke of the importance of a balanced nutritional in-take for cognition, an acknowledgement which is to be found in the mature protagonist, but not in the young one. Bloom makes his "travelling purposeful," being "outer- rather than inner-directed, and open to constantly changing stimuli from the passing street scene" (Kiberd 2009, 82), which makes him refreshingly aware of his self-becoming. Despite his knowledge of Molly's affair with Boylan (which, to be fair, was not consummated until later

in the afternoon), he chooses to act tactfully and with respect to her privacy, demonstrating an almost unparalleled reciprocity and concern for his partner. This is not at all how an average middle-class man of the age might have behaved in the face of knowledge of his spouse's infidelity.

Unlike many characters we later meet in the novel, Leopold is among the few who successfully lift the veil on the shameful, often repulsive corporality which defines the human condition, understands it, and seeks to embrace it in the most reasonable and frank way possible. After all, he is aware that Molly may easily find another partner, so he must individuate himself from his peers. His choice of respecting her privacy achieves precisely this outcome. Similarly, Leopold is not in the least appalled by his bodily functions, defecation included: "He read on, seated calm above his own rising smell" (56), contrary to what the reader of the time would have been experiencing while reading this. Taken together, Bloom's actions, personality, and walking demonstrate just how acquainted he is with corporeal existence, as well as with the dynamics of social interaction and the relationships one builds.

The intersection between Stephen and the funeral carriage Leopold shares with Martin Cunningham, Simon Dedalus, and Jack Power in "Hades" offers even more meaning to the young man's wandering, this time from the outside. Passing by Sandymount Strand, Leopold catches a glimpse of Stephen going to the newspaper headquarters, where they will also briefly intersect. At a closer glance, this intersection reveals much more about the characters than is initially let on, similarly to the technique in "Wandering Rocks." First, there is the symbolic distance between the young man and his community. Instead of mourning the loss of a family friend, he is idling around on the tide flats, meditating on change and, rather fittingly for the entire scene as we read it in "Hades," on death. Secondly, there is the distance between Stephen and his father, which the reader might have intuited from the young man's behaviour and thoughts in the "Telemachiad," but which is now made explicit through Simon's rant on Buck Mulligan. Not surprisingly, a rebellious son would be tempted to be around someone their father strongly disagreed with. Naturally, Dedalus senior is infuriated with the company that his son choses. However, instead of trying to be critical of his own shortcomings, Simon blames Buck for his son's wandering, claiming that through disciplinary attention he will correct this behaviour, a conduct which is all the more exasperating as he perceives it to cast shame on himself in front of his companions: "I'll tickle his catastrophe, believe you me" (73). Lastly, the expanse between Stephen and the carriage may also send our thoughts to the interior precipice that divides the young man's thoughts and his own self. Albeit wandering and searching, Stephen's stream of consciousness is so far removed from his being that a mature counsel, Leopold, is needed to bring him back to the here and the now.

Many academics still esteem Bloom as the decisive embodiment of alterity, but what would a gathering of mostly middle-aged, white, middle class men know about what it means to be human, yet not recognised as such by your peers? Molly is just as transgressive towards issues of religion, nationality, native tongue, and behaviour as her spouse. However, unlike the men in the novel, she is not allowed to be her own master, as Haines earlier mentioned to Stephen. This alleged battle of sexes was lost the moment Leopold could walk out the door without a latchkey, as she was left in the jingling bed for the remainder of the day. Her corporeal confinement certainly contributes to what Nabokov calls a "sustained stream of consciousness running through Molly's lurid, vulgar, and hectic mind, the mind of a rather hysterical woman, with commonplace ideas, more or less morbidly sensual" (Nabokov 1982, 362). One can but wonder what Nabokov's thoughts would have looked like after having endured the confined existence of Dublin women at the beginning of the 1900s.

Claiming that Bloom is the prototypical Other, then, means supporting the very tradition that confines Molly to her bed in this riveting tale of wandering. Who knows what a narrative rapture would have befallen us if Molly was able to take control of her self-becoming. What many readers seem to forget throughout all of the innuendoes that Bloom has to endure from insensitive Dubliners is that she is the subject of their affirmations and babbling gossip. By contrast, once more, he is the object that is indirectly pressured by the social norm to react in a socially accepted manner to the former's behaviour. Luckily, his individuation is strong enough to withstand such petty attacks, and he does not give in to their allusions. More importantly, he benefits from the right to traverse space as he wishes, which makes it possible for him to employ his corporality to shape his self-actualisation in any manner he sees fit, a feature that he ardently desires to also pass on to Stephen.

Many pages of the novel remain to be scrutinised for their significance in terms of lifting the veil on the bare individual, yet the arguments that have been put forward are enough to mandate a re-reading of the work from the perspective of a corporeal narratology sensitive to Agamben's use-of-oneself, as well as to recent findings from the field of neuroscience. From the "Telemachiad" to "Wandering Rocks," "Eumaeus," and "Penelope," Joyce's flânerie is meant to illustrate Benjamin's optical unconscious, and this is the case particularly in the last chapter, where the mind of the female protagonist is excruciatingly made to wander without her body. Albeit Benjamin reserves the latter feature for the art of photography, the way that *showing* and *telling* work throughout *Ulysses* makes it possible for the reader to experience a similar effect with regard to character bodies. The greater part of narratology

continues to struggle with accepting the body in interpretive or theory-making practices. This is at once understandable and unforgivable, since the problem of unruly corporality, the very reason why art exists in the first place, in the sense that it is made by bodies, and for bodies, ought to be more consistently addressed across the disciplines of the humanities. Despite its immense body of meta-textual analyses, *Ulysses* continues to be ardently relevant in 2018, when, as Salman Rushdie recently stated, the intersubjective world of alternative facts is on the brink of appropriating all of mankind's discourses, not to mention the ones issued by institutions or individuals holding great power (9). One way to resist against this urge is to remind ourselves that every reality comes from within a body, a zone of (more or less intimate) non-consciousness, and a subjectivity whose primary objective is to find and describe itself for its own sake, as well as for others'.

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