CHAPTER TWO

AQUACITY: PLUMBING CONSCIOUSNESS IN JOYCE'S DUBLIN

For the time being we have to settle for knowing less about consciousness than novelists pretend to know.

—David Lodge, *Thinks . . .*

The sewer is the conscience of the city.

—Victor Hugo, *Les Misérables*

In the introductory paragraph to his chapter on *Ulysses* in *Modern Epic: The World System from Goethe to García Márquez,* Franco Moretti invokes Carol Reed's 1949 film *The Third Man* to set up his meditation on the legacy and importance of the literary technique known as stream of consciousness:[1]

> In a celebrated *film noir* from 1949, *The Third Man,* a middle-aged American writer finds himself unwillingly caught up in the mysteries of postwar Vienna. Amid vanishing witnesses, appointments on the

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> Prater Wheel, a semi-lynching, and shoot-outs in the sewers, something else happens to the protagonist: one evening, on returning to his hotel, he is thrust into a large black limousine and borne at top speed, through streets filled with sinister shadows, to a room full of people . . . patiently waiting for his lecture on the modern novel. At the conclusion of a painful performance, a young man with an anguished expression raises his hand and asks the first question: "Tell us, Mr. Martin, do you believe in the 'stream of consciousness'?" It is clearly the worst moment of the entire scene—Joseph Cotten is dumbstruck, the director of the British Cultural Centre is acutely embarrassed, a number of ladies with grotesque hats get up and walk out—and bears witness to the aura of legend surrounding the stream of consciousness, even outside avant-garde circles.[2]

In what follows, Moretti outlines a vision of the stream of consciousness in *Ulysses* as a product of life under commodity capitalism; as a distracted reaction to the constant stimulus of advertising in urban environments; and finally as a representation not so much of consciousness per se as of what Freud calls the "preconscious." This is to think of stream of consciousness and commodity capitalism as a very nearly seamless unity. I want to argue, through an alternative reading of *The Third Man* here and in an extended argument about Joyce in what follows, that there is more to the story, something that escapes—if only to a limited extent—the logic of capitalist modernity: public works.

Strictly speaking, Moretti is no doubt correct to call the young man's question about the stream of consciousness "the worst moment of the entire scene." But that is only because another and far worse moment actually goes unrepresented in the scene, since Martins's lecture poignantly takes place off camera.[3] Instead, the action cuts to Popescu as he plans to intercept Martins at the lecture. It is only through Martins' clear lack of preparation at the beginning of the lecture, and through the visible discomfort and boredom of the audience at its end, that we are made to understand that Holly Martins has prepared nothing to say about the novel; does not want to give a lecture on the novel (he has, after all, better things to do, like solve murders and fight conspiracies); has in fact no thoughts at all about the novel, despite being himself a novelist; and, as

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a consequence, has delivered what must have been one of the worst lectures ever delivered on the subject of the novel. In a way, it would have been instructive and possibly even amusing to witness the worst lecture on the modern novel ever delivered. Perhaps Martins' lecture is simply too embarrassing, or too boring, to portray. Or perhaps the whole point of not showing Martins' lecture is to elevate it through absence to an unassailable exemplariness; no one may say, by way of personal experience of other, more terrible lectures, "I have seen worse," because there is simply no point of comparison. One can only imagine the stalling, the filler words and fidgeting and sweating and, above all, the awkward silences of that lecture. Nothing, in other words, could be more different from the stream of consciousness than a failed public lecture stymied by self-conscious doubt and embarrassment. In fact, there may be no better example of the exact opposite of the stream of consciousness. And for Holly Martins, there may be no better proof that his stream of consciousness doesn't exist, given the show-stopping embarrassment that causes him to have nothing at all to say. That is why the young man's question—"Do you believe, Mr. Martins, in the stream of consciousness?"—is significant in the way it is posed, because for Martins, in his position of extreme embarrassment, the experience of the moment is the experience of his mind's utter blankness. His answer, if he could think of it, would have to be "no," or at least "not anymore."

The heart of darkness that is Martins' lecture begs to be filled with narrative content; and it is, in the climactic chase scene through the sewers of Vienna. Running for his life through the sewer system, Martins' alter ego, Harry Lime, confronts, at a pivotal point in the final chase, a massive intersection of tunnels and pipes and spillways. He stops, confused and terrified. Sound is coming from everywhere and nowhere, amplified echoes of German words so distorted with repetition and reverb as to be incomprehensible, language subtracted of meaning but filled with paranoid fury, language as pure threat. At one point it is almost possible to believe we understand the word *hallucinate*—or is that itself a hallucination? This linguistic overload corresponds, I think, to the film's determined silence elsewhere, precisely, that is, the silence surrounding Holly Martins' missing lecture on the modern novel. If from Martins' lecture we might reasonably have expected some excursus on the stream

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of consciousness, instead the film gives us the stream of consciousness radically externalized in the sewer, no longer a subjective experience of one's own thoughts but rather the disembodied voices of others impinging on—and blocking—the thoughts of Harry Lime as he tries to think through his escape. The situation for Lime and for Martins is the same: the impossibility of thought and the consequent impossibility of real action (in Martins' case, speech; in Lime's, movement). Both of them are reduced to dumb, scared, cornered animals by situations that seem utterly different but are by the film's logic drawn into analogy, if not identity.

Such emptying out of thought might at first seem merely a confirmation of Moretti's argument concerning the stream of consciousness, in the sense that he understands it as always being in a presentist relation to external stimuli, especially advertising. But *The Third Man,* unlike Moretti, takes us into the sewer, and it is there that new dimensions of the stream of consciousness are revealed. We remember that in the film Lime conceals his underground movement in the sewer by entering through an advertising kiosk set over a manhole. He thus seems to have "disappeared" until Martins and Major Calloway discover the deception, not by reading the advertisements, but by moving the advertising kiosk out of the way. Advertising is a feint that protects Lime, and the sewer, from detection: a false lead. In the same way, the stream of consciousness eludes explanation if we focus too narrowly on advertising and on commodity culture; we have to look in the sewer, which is to say we have to look more to public works, for its sources. To consider the sewer as the antecedent for the stream of consciousness is, once one thinks of it, almost commonsensical, since to do so is really only to literalize the stream of consciousness for a modern urban setting, where there are few streams other than those in the sewer and where the sewer flows everywhere, underground and unseen. It is to see the extent to which the urban infrastructure impinges on the structures of urban subjectivity. The final question put to Martins by a member of the audience concerns James Joyce: "Mr. James Joyce, now, where would you put him? . . . In what category?" The answer is delivered for Martins—who can't answer—by the film's logic: in the sewer, in the waterways of the city's public works. In the reading of Joyce that follows, I will be concerned to show why, and how, that answer is borne out in Joyce's fictions.

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FROM SMITHY TO SEWER

Quel peut être le rôle des chercheurs la-dedans? Celui de travailler à une invention collective des structures collectives d'invention.
—Pierre Bourdieu, "Pour un savoir engagé"

This chapter argues that Joyce accorded special status to public works in his fictions. I give evidence from three of Joyce's texts: *Ulysses, A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man,* and "The Dead." I approach these texts in reverse chronological order because I see Joyce's thinking about public works taking on a kind of maturity in *Ulysses,* and the emergent role of public works in his earlier texts is best explicated by looking back from that vantage point. Many critics have pointed to Joyce's fascination with modern technology. My aim is to bring together criticism concerned with issues of technology in Joyce and criticism concerned to excavate a "postcolonial Joyce," in order to show that Joyce's interest in technology was ultimately in the service of, in the well-known final lines of *A Portrait,* "forg[ing] in the smithy of [his] soul the uncreated conscience of [his] race."[4] The Joyce who wrote *Ulysses* finally discarded the metaphor of the smithy—and thus the implicit metaphor of the sword—in favor of public works. "Forging" national consciousness gives way after *A Portrait* to "engineering" national consciousness. This metaphorical movement reveals Joyce as not only modernist but also modernizing, a feature that distinguishes his work from that of many of his modernist peers, as well as his peers within the context of Irish national literature. As an Irish writer, however, Joyce was keenly aware of the complicity between colonialism and modernization. His version of modernization, therefore, much like his version of modernism, is eccentric and strains to find a way to reconcile the technological progress of modernity with a vision of the common good. Public works, I argue, are Joyce's answer to the depredations of modernity, as well as his affirmation of modernity's utopian promise. Because Joyce sought a position that could be anticolonial and at the same time modernizing, I read *Ulysses* as a distinctive generic variant of the novel that I called, in chapter 1, the postcolonial comedy of development.

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In the introduction to their coedited volume *Semicolonial Joyce,* Marjorie Howes and Derek Attridge define the frontier not only for Joyce studies but for postcolonial theory in general by pointing to the impasses and repetitions that, in both fields, have amounted to a kind of stalemate. Perhaps the two most important problems they locate are, first, the limits of "resistance" as defined by postcolonial theory and, second, the culturalist bias of postcolonial theory itself, whose "home" tends to be the literature department as opposed, say, to the economics or political science departments. "[The] dangers [of] a certain fetishizing of 'resistance' [are that] recovery can become the reductive goal of every reading, a related and equally limiting dependence on an opposition between resistance and complicity, and a relative neglect of the massive material power and effects of imperial structures in favor of an overly textualist reading of their instabilities."[5] And as to the "culturalism of postcolonial studies," the field "tends to privilege culture (rather than, for example, economics or military force) as both an instrument of imperial domination and a vehicle of resistance to it," leading to "various forms of Irish exceptionalism."[6]

My intention here is to focus on the issue of public works in *Ulysses* as a way of responding to Howes and Attridge's critique of certain postcolonial reading practices. *Ulysses*' consistent recourse to the theme of public works reveals Joyce making a stronger argument for the Irish state as a political structure than is usually asserted in the field of Joyce criticism. Joyce, we might say, is less a nationalist than a statist, and he has some very specific things to say about the state through his consideration of the social infrastructure of the city of Dublin. *Ulysses* posits a utopian vision, wholly distinct from Bloom's or Stephen's, that is rooted in the "material power" not so much of "imperial structures" as of state structures and infrastructures; to coin a clumsy paradox, we might call this Joyce's pragmatic utopianism, which is related to what I understand Pierre Bourdieu invoking in my epigraph: "the collective invention of collective structures of invention."[7] The crux of Bourdieu's formulation is that the utopian culturalist turn ("collective invention")—in order to be effective in the political sphere—*must* be grounded in realized social and political structures that must, in turn, be *re*invented. His imperative is emphatically not to invent utopias outside currently existing political structures but to imagine those utopias from within; attempts at political thinking

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outside these structures are doomed to ineffectiveness and damned to the limbo of the avant-garde of a putative "culture." Although *Ulysses* has always historically been understood as a leading member of such an avant-garde, we can see some clear signs that Joyce's novel is indeed a serious thinking-over of this idea of what constitutes a "collective structure of invention." Joyce's answer, his understanding of a collective structure of invention, may hinge first and foremost on his championing of cosmopolitan literary modernism as an institution.[8] But I want to point to another possibility: namely that for Joyce the project of culture and the project of engineering cultures come together in *Ulysses* at a moment in the text that has recently been rethought as a narrative crux.

COLLECTIVE STRUCTURES OF INVENTION

> *The nineteenth century: singular fusion of individualistic and collectivist tendencies. Unlike virtually every previous age, it labels all actions "individualistic" (ego, nation, art) while subterraneanly, in despised everyday domains, it necessarily furnishes, as in a delirium, the elements for a collective formation. . . . With this raw material, we must occupy ourselves. . . . In the nineteenth century, construction plays the role of the subconscious.*
>
> —Sigfried Giedion, *Building in France*

Now, postcolonial theory's focus on "resistance" may obscure its vision when it comes to something so seemingly boring—as Fredric Jameson calls it—as public utilities or pragmatic utopianism. And this myopia may go a long way to explaining why these things remain largely unexamined even as they are being noticed, which is why I want to begin my discussion at the point where at least two other prominent studies of *Ulysses* leave off, with a much-quoted passage from the "Ithaca" chapter:

> What did Bloom do at the range?
>
> He removed the saucepan to the left hob, rose and carried the iron kettle to the sink in order to tap the current by turning the faucet to let it flow.

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Did it flow?

Yes. From Roundwood reservoir in county Wicklow of a cubic capacity of 2400 million gallons, percolating through a subterranean aqueduct of filter mains of single and double pipeage constructed at an initial plant cost of £5 per linear yard by way of the Dargle, Rathdown, Glen of the Downs and Callowhill to the 26 acre reservoir at Stillorgan, a distance of 22 statute miles, and thence, through a system of relieving tanks, by a gradient of 250 feet to the city boundary at Eustace bridge, upper Leeson street, though from prolonged summer drouth and daily supply of 121/2 million gallons the water had fallen below the sill of the overflow weir for which reason the borough surveyor and waterworks engineer, Mr Spencer Harty, C.E., on the instructions of the waterworks committee had prohibited the use of municipal water for purposes other than those of consumption (envisaging the possibility of recourse being had to the impotable water of the Grand and Royal canals as in 1893) particularly as the South Dublin Guardians, notwithstanding their ration of 15 gallons per day per pauper supplied through a 6 inch meter, had been convicted of a wasteage of 20,000 gallons per night by a reading of their meter on the affirmation of the law agent of the corporation, Mr Ignatius Rice, solicitor, thereby acting to the detriment of another section of the public, selfsupporting taxpayers, solvent, sound.[9]

Fredric Jameson ends his "*Ulysses* in History" with this passage, though in truncated form; his quote ends at the beginning of the fourth line of the "answer" to the question "Did it flow?" ("£5 per linear yard . . .").[10] And Joep Leerssen ends his book *Remembrance and Imagination* here too, including more of the quote than Jameson but still not all of it, ending at the seventh line, "Upper Leeson Street . . . ."[11] Neither Jameson nor Leerssen offers an actual reading of the passage; for both critics the quote acts as a rhetorical flourish meant as a utopian gesture. This is what I meant when I said that these critics notice without fully examining the utopian gesture contained in the passage itself. And it is in there—but it is neither wholly contained nor fully articulated in the portion of the passage they quote.

For Jameson, the "yes" that answers the question "Did it flow?" represents an alternative to "the vitalist ideology of Molly's better known final affirmation."[12] This is because Jameson's focus on the social division of

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labor, and hence on alienation, is "invoked" by the passage and "by the most subterranean routes traced back . . . less to its origins in Nature, than to the transformation of Nature by human and collective praxis deconcealed."[13] His point is well taken: the passage takes the reader through a social infrastructure, the Dublin waterworks, that would ordinarily be considered "non-narrative" or "[un]recuperable for literature" in any more standardized or traditional aesthetic practice.[14] This is what he earlier refers to as "boredom"—in fact for him "Ithaca" is one of the "most boring chapters of *Ulysses*." But there is in this boredom "a productive use . . . which tells us something interesting about ourselves as well as about the world we live in today."[15]

Leerssen's point about this passage is related to Jameson's. What Jameson calls boredom Leerssen calls "normalcy." For him, the passage represents "an immense effort at normalizing and calibrating the position of Dublin in space and time, at showing how much part of the world it is, how it is synchronized with, and in proximity to, the rest of the world."[16] The point goes directly to Howes and Attridge's warning about the dangers of Irish exceptionalism. Leerssen is concerned to show that Joyce is critiquing such Irish exceptionalism through a focus, in "Ithaca," on the mundanity and minutiae of everyday life. "The great ingenuity of Joyce is that he dared to describe an Irish setting in terms of its *normalcy*—for that was precisely the quality which all earlier authors, whatever their persuasions and sympathies, had denied Ireland."[17]

As a counterexample to the celebratory way that Jameson and Leerssen take up the waterworks passage—and as an indication of its curious gravitational pull for many readers and critics of *Ulysses*—Leo Bersani sees only the despair of alienated modernity.

> It is the relentlessly tedious "Ithaca," with its nearly unreadable "scientific" expositions on such things as the many uses and virtues of water, and the recent restrictions on water consumption (when Bloom turns on the faucet), which, precisely because of the impersonality of its technique, becomes a kind of Pascalian meditation on the lack of connectedness not only between human beings but also between the human and the cosmos. . . . The anxiety which *Ulysses* massively, encyclopedically struggles to transcend—however we choose to understand its origins—is that of disconnectedness.[18]

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To call "Ithaca" "relentlessly tedious" is not wrong—in fact, it is more or less in line with Jameson's and Leerssen's assessments. But it does nothing to account for the way that critics and readers have delighted in it without ever really opposing the idea that it is meant to approximate boredom or tedium; it does nothing to account for the reasons why one can agree that "Ithaca" has something to do with boredom without ever being bored by reading it. Bersani seems to be implying also that the waterworks passage fails to "transcend . . . disconnectedness" but does not say so outright. That it struggles—"massively," "encyclopedically"—to transcend disconnectedness is absolutely correct; that it fails or succeeds is exactly what is up for grabs. Jameson and Leerssen imply success, and in what follows, I will argue for it.

There is certainly something to Jameson's and Leerssen's points—in fact there must be a relation, given the echo between such similar terms as *boredom* and *normalcy.* But I will be concerned to show that the passage exceeds them. In the proliferation of details that is "Ithaca," there must be a reason why Jameson and Leerssen single out this passage; why it stands as a kind of crux for both critics; and why they do not consider it merely as an isolated example of what Rebecca Walkowitz calls the "trivial" in Joyce, "a tactic of heresy and insubordination" that privileges nothing and instead offers only an endless proliferation of fact after random fact.[19] We are left to ask why, in other words, this passage stands out among all passages as a singularly important instance of the boring or the normal or the trivial.

What Jameson describes as boredom I will describe as sublimity. And what Leerssen describes as normalcy I will describe as a *call* for normalcy, an important difference. All this will emerge from what both Jameson and Leerssen neglect to do with the passage and with the possibilities they eliminate from it when they selectively quote it. Put baldly, the passage needs close reading. This may seem a bit paradoxical, considering that "close reading" as a practice is so closely aligned with a certain "culturalism," or again with "overly textualist reading[s]" that seek "resistance" wherever it can be located. A close reading of this passage, however, offers crucial insights that pick up right from where Jameson and Leerssen so tantalizingly leave off.

First we notice the irony attending the one-word answer, "yes," to the question "Did it flow?" The period after "yes" indicates the contrary on

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the level of language; the tap may flow but the language used to convey that fact decidedly does not. Language comes to a stop after "yes" and then, unbidden, attempts a formal mimesis of the flow of the water with a very long and very ugly sentence describing the Dublin waterworks. Plagued by passive voicing, tortured syntax, and proliferating punctuation, the sentence appears to mock bureaucratic discourse, and from the point of view of poetic language it doesn't really flow at all; for Ariela Freedman, "It clearly does not flow but is deliberately clunky and digressive."[20] For all its ugliness, however, one thing it doesn't do is stop for nineteen lines. In other words, it does flow, not poetically but mimetically. The trick is that the sentence does not imitate the effortless natural flow of water; rather, it imitates the laborious flow of the waterworks: the whole complex of technology and labor for diverting water from its natural—"flowing"—course for utilitarian ends. In this sense the "flow" of the waterworks might usefully be contrasted with the "flow" of Molly's thoughts in "Penelope." There "flow" is mimetically attached both to the stream of consciousness and to Molly's menstrual cycle by means of the omission of punctuation and a (carefully crafted) parataxis. If Molly's soliloquy is a mimetic representation of the individual's stream of consciousness, the waterworks in "Ithaca" are a mimetic representation of the Dublin waterworks and a metonymic representation of the public works.

The "flow" of that long sentence completely overwhelms, even just in terms of textual space, the initial willful naïveté of the question, whose most immediate answer—"Yes."—is rendered inadequate by the detailed explanation that follows. The domestic scene of Bloom's house is dwarfed and trivialized by the sheer scale and scope of the "flow." The explanation after the answer seems to suggest its elaboration as a kind of necessary, but ordinarily suppressed, response both to the initial question *and* to the monosyllabic answer. It is not enough to answer the question "Did it flow?" with a negative or an affirmative. In fact, even an affirmative "yes" is here shown to be a negative in the sense that it truncates, or disavows, or closes off the "flow" by what it attempts to ignore: the vast public, political, and social machinery that enables it. And that repressed returns, fittingly, as an unstoppable flood stylistically rendered by the nineteen-line run-on sentence. The domestic tap *fails* to repress the "flow" in the bigger, metaphorical sense, and what I referred to in chapter 1 as the "unthought known" forces itself insistently on the reader's consciousness.

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The explanation of Bloom's action is precise and importantly so: after sending him to the sink "to tap the current by turning the faucet to let it flow," Joyce reminds us that the faucet is never "off" but rather always "on," a continuous current that runs regardless of whether Bloom taps into it or not. If the faucet from a domestic point of view appears to possess the power to turn the water on and off, that is only the merest illusion, human hubris.

For at least three reasons this "flow" should be taken metaphorically as a stand-in for the social whole. First, the waterworks can be understood to reference civilization generally and the "urban revolution" specifically.[21] The first civic societies formed in the Near East more than six thousand years ago, specifically in desert zones, around the necessity of irrigation, a vast technological undertaking that required despotic centralization, capital, and an intricate division of labor.[22] Second, as Ariela Freedman contends, Joyce's waterworks have a "stylistic model and exalted precedent" in Sextus Julius Frontinus's *De aquae urbis Romae* (written during his tenure as Roman water commissioner between 95 and 100 AD), a work that "claims the Aqueducts of Rome as the most advanced products of an advanced civilization, and distinguishes between their monumental utility and other, lesser, purely aesthetic achievements."[23] It may be that Joyce had Frontinus's book in mind when writing the waterworks passage of "Ithaca" and that MacHugh's water closet joke in "Aeolus"—which we saw in chapter 1—is a sarcastic and stereotypically Irish response to Frontinus's assertion of the superiority of utility over the aesthetic. Third—and this is the part that both Jameson and Leerssen leave out—we have a reference to "taxpayers," whose presence in the passage is precisely, as I'll argue, what needs most explaining.

The Vartry Waterworks Scheme, the system that Joyce traces in this passage, was the outcome of the Dublin Corporation Waterworks Act of 1861. It sought to answer Dublin's chronic water supply problems dating back to the late eighteenth century. There was not enough water from the Poddle River, the traditional source, to service even Dublin's slowly growing population, and the old mains system was heading toward total collapse. Remarkably, the Vartry Scheme was the most ambitious and most expensive of the various proposals submitted to the corporation at the time, and it came as a surprise when the royal commissioner chose it

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over other, cheaper ones. Various commercial interests, notably the canal companies, opposed the scheme, and the argument had to be taken to the House of Lords for decision.[24] When it was finished in 1868, it was "welcomed by all commentators."[25] One of them gushed, "No city in the kingdom is better supplied with this chiefest necessity of life. . . . Few cities have obtained so fine a supply [of water], delivered at high pressure, on such moderate terms."[26] The Vartry Waterworks became a utopian ideal and a high-profile success for the freshly minted discourses—and institutions—of public health and town planning, discourses whose power and legitimacy were rapidly growing at the turn of the century.[27] But the utopian and indeed radically democratic aims of the Vartry Scheme's architects—to eliminate differential class access to a source of clean, running water—were not to be realized. Those aims were thwarted by a rapid exodus of well-to-do Protestants from the inner city to suburban townships like Rathmines and Pembroke, leaving the municipal territory of Dublin city—circumscribed geographically by the two canals and the Circular Road—with a poor tax base. "The poor were abandoned to the city's beneficence," writes Jacinta Prunty, "and the city [was] denied the contribution, both financially and morally, which it could be expected the wealthiest would make."[28] In the poorest districts of Dublin proper, "the infrastructure to distribute the water . . . was very limited, so that ten years after [the scheme's] arrival . . . many residents were reliant for drinking water on water 'taken from the cistern intended to supply the water closet' resulting in typhoid."[29] An article in a contemporary journal advocated—in a dryly aloof tone of which the tail end of Joyce's passage is no doubt an indirect parody—for fountains of potable water to be placed in these affected districts, stating that "if some contrivance could be adopted whereby they would not, by waste of water, render the adjacent pavement sloppy, so much the better."[30]

These historical considerations reveal that, to whatever extent the passage can be understood as a "final affirmation" in Jameson's phrase, we need also to account for its evocation of the class politics and the ethnic segregation embedded in the city's infrastructural geography.[31] The contempt for the poor so palpable in the journal article quoted above is parodied in Joyce's passage through the free indirect discourse of Ignatius Rice, solicitor—and very likely a self-identified "taxpayer, solvent,

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sound"—who appears to represent the interests (whether as a matter of fact or as a matter of his own rationalization) of a whole like-minded and respectable body of "taxpayers, solvent, sound." Joyce's rendering, or even conjuring, of this one aspect of a broader social whole—the waterworks—finishes with a ventriloquized social commentary in the ironic mode. Ending with "selfsupporting taxpayers," the "flow" actually becomes a kind of free indirect discourse in which this personified entity, "selfsupporting taxpayers," reveals its ideological position, wherein charitable institutions like the South Dublin Guardians are understood as parasites who are cheating said taxpayers, who are themselves "solvent" and "sound." Again, even just the description of the taxpayers as "selfsupporting" seems to go immediately against the grain of the passage, whose emphasis is on the vast public works that make running water possible in the first place. Someone somewhere is calculating how much water is needed and how to deal with unpredictable environmental conditions like drought; someone somewhere bought the piping, someone else laid the piping, and so forth. Collective thought, collective engineering, collective or public good, reduced in the end to a complaint about paupers using too much water: the bourgeoisie's delusory fantasy of self-reliance is thus rendered utterly absurd. The collective voice of the taxpayers, then, is the voice that would attempt to ignore all that came just before it: all the specialized labor and urban planning, the social infrastructure, the social scope and the social geography of the waterworks. If the tap fails to stem or control the flow, the taxpayers' sense of independence, of being "selfsupporting," closes the passage and puts an end to that overwhelming flood of information, that momentary awareness of all that goes into supporting and sustaining the unsung miracle of running water. But of course, that disavowal is not convincing here because the passage has already revealed far too much of the complexity of the system of running water. The taxpayers appear to be fooling only themselves.

This movement, from the seeming mundanity of the initial question "Did it flow?" to the sublimity of the long answer, and back again to the mundanity of the taxpayers' complaint, resembles very closely what Bruce Robbins has referred to as the "sweatshop sublime."[32] Robbins borrows from Kant's formulation of the sublime—defined as "a feeling of the inadequacy of [the] imagination for presenting the ideas of a whole,

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wherein the imagination reaches its maximum, and, in striving to surpass it, sinks back into itself, by which, however, a kind of emotional satisfaction is produced"—and converts it into a political category for understanding the global division of labor.[33] But if we change Robbins's concept slightly, renaming it the social sublime as opposed to the sweatshop sublime, then we have a workable heuristic for understanding this passage from "Ithaca": we can see that the taxpayers' complaint about paupers, and their overdetermined and entirely false sense of their own independence, turn on the same principle of a "sinking back" into themselves "by which a certain emotional satisfaction is produced." That emotional satisfaction is shown up, however, by the structure of the passage, which makes it clear just how false, in a way, that emotional satisfaction is. The taxpayers not only do not contemplate the sublimity of the public waterworks and their debt to it but instead invoke a different kind of indebtedness—the ingratitude of mendicancy—in order to forget or ignore the social sublime that might otherwise hold them in thrall, in frozen awed contemplation, and that would reveal to them their indebtedness, their place within a vast social whole, and their utter dependence upon this system of taxation and urban planning that provides their running water and, by extension, the innumerable other social services and institutions metaphorized in the waterworks.

There is an excess in the phrase "selfsupporting taxpayers, solvent, sound" that begs attention. On the one hand the repetition of roughly synonymous adjectives—self-supporting, solvent, sound—sounds like the almost ritualistic self-assurance of the taxpayers themselves, simply repeating words that might make them feel independent, healthy, without debt. But in *solvent* we also ought to hear "water" again, the near-universal chemical solvent, so that we are left with the paradox of the waterworks dissolving into the taxpayers and the taxpayers dissolving into the waterworks. While the waterworks and the taxpayers are rendered as distinct entities in the passage, the language works to make them far less distinguishable than their spatial separation—one opening the passage, the other closing it—might otherwise suggest. And in *sound* we ought to hear reference to a body of water, whether a "relatively narrow channel or stretch of water," which would refer to the water's travels from Wicklow to Eccles Street, or "a spring or pool of water," which would refer to the Roundwood reservoir in Wicklow.[34]

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The passage at first appears to "move" fairly logically through what Martin Heidegger marks as philosophy's "four causes" as applied to technology: beginning at the *causa finalis,* the end for which the works are created (Bloom's ability to draw water for making cocoa); moving through the *causa materialis,* the water itself, and the *causa formalis,* the shape and materials of the waterworks; and arriving finally at the *causa efficiens,* the taxpayers who pay for them.[35] But the solvency of the taxpayers leads us right back to water, so that the *causa efficiens* and the *causa materialis* become practically indistinguishable. Heidegger informs us, in fact, that all four causes belong "at once to each other," a fact that Joyce's double entendres also serve to reinforce. "The doctrine of the four causes," Heidegger goes on, "goes back to Aristotle. But everything that later ages seek in Greek thought under the conception and rubric 'causality,' in the realm of Greek thought and for Greek thought per se has simply nothing at all to do with bringing about and effecting. What we call cause *[Ursache]* and the Romans call *causa* is called *aition* by the Greeks, that to which something else is indebted *[das, was ein anderes verschuldet].* The four causes are the ways, all belonging at once to each other, of being responsible for something else."[36]

The passage in "Ithaca" answers questions unasked, questions about causation that not only make the initial answer seem woefully inadequate but force further questions about the causation of causation, leaving us with a Heideggerian injunction to think causation not as "bringing about" or "effecting" but as "being responsible for something else." If it is clear, then, that the passage distances itself from the point of view of the taxpayers with which it ends, then what might the passage, or the "flow" that seems to be speaking from this passage, be trying to say? What is this invocation of "selfsupporting taxpayers, solvent, sound" if not a call to responsibility—in the form of parodic free indirect discourse—for what we, following Robbins, are calling the social sublime? A call couched in the form of its own disavowal? A public conjured through its own self-abnegation? And not just any public either, but a specific "section of the public," taxpayers. This question of payment and of taxes, then, is crucially important because it brings us to the question of public debt, of the public's debt to the social whole, and of such a public's *difference* from the social whole.[37] A paradoxical axiom is revealed in the irony

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of the taxpayers' complaint: not only does the "public" as such constitute the social whole, but it has a responsibility to the social whole that is something *other* than a responsibility to itself. (Paupers don't pay taxes, for example, but they too are a "section of the public.") The responsibility of *this* public to *the* public is not self-identical, cannot be reduced to self-interest. Nor can the "public" be reduced to "taxpayers"; the latter are, as Joyce says, just "a section of the public."

This section of the public has its own group-think, its own common sense, its own habits of thought, a collective ideology that transcends or overrides any individual's opinion on the matter of charity or charitable institutions. "Don't get us started on where our taxes are going, we pay for *that?*"—such is the chitchat or gossip generated from within the role of "taxpayer," commonplaces whose enunciations vary individually but whose *enoncé* is always the same: this disavowal of indebtedness that seems to be a constitutive element of *being* a taxpayer. In some sense, those last two adjectives of the passage, *solvent* and *sound,* are the markers of that group-think; and we can imagine, too, that Bloom himself is implicated, since much of "Ithaca" exposes the reader, from an ironic distance, to Bloom's languid humanist fantasy life, what Jameson refers to wryly as his *bovarysme.* But what Joyce's passage insists on, by showing us how running water works and how taxpayers think, is that paying taxes is not the fulfillment of responsibility to the social whole but rather just the beginning of that responsibility. Payment, then, or at least the payment of taxes reveals itself not as *settling* a debt but as *instituting* one. This relation, this problem, is the central import of the passage, the social and political issue that shapes it.

Curious that, given his insistence on the alienation inherent in the modern capitalist division of labor, Jameson doesn't note the taxpayers in this passage; for they are modernity's answer to that alienation. Taxpayers may not understand the division of labor; they may not be able to comprehend the huge complexities of urban planning and development, of commerce and public works; but they pay their taxes and so they contribute, they pay their debt to the leviathan that supports them, that allows them to continue doing their small thing in some small corner of the division of labor, and they don't have to worry about how it works as long as they stay paid up. And apparently they are also entitled,

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or perhaps even coerced, into *feeling* little else but contempt for that division of labor, because they are still alienated from it in all senses but the financial. This brings us to the central question here: If Joyce is pointing to the limited and alienated consciousness of the taxpayer, then how can we see his evocation of the payment of taxes as in any sense utopian, or hopeful, or interesting beyond the level of parody?

The first reason that the mention of taxpayers in "Ithaca" is interesting is that it would be hard, in the temporal and geographical interstices of *Ulysses* and especially in the *writing* of *Ulysses,* to find anything resembling an actually existing constituency of taxpayers, whether in the petty-bourgeois, statist, or even national sense of the term. Taxpayers, as they are lampooned and stereotyped here in the passage, don't exist in the Dublin of 1904, and their existence in 1922 would be far more complicated than Joyce's parody suggests. One would imagine that taxes—which must have made the transformation from something like imperial tribute in 1904 to a source of deeply felt and lived national pride in 1922—would be, at the very least, a fraught category of experience and identity, one that would not, in this Irish historical context, lend itself to easy characterization, let alone satire. The "taxpayers" of "Ithaca" would actually have to be "taxpayers" in a standard, established (European) state, not the new taxpayers born of anticolonial struggle and postcolonial state formation. With "taxpayers," then, a whole range of scalar ambiguity is invoked without any gesture toward specificity or resolution: Are these British taxpayers, Irish taxpayers, Dublin taxpayers?

The second reason is also historical. The question of social infrastructure would, after the British bombardments of 1916 in Dublin, not be a boring one to Dubliners. As Enda Duffy has amply demonstrated, "In the very years that Dublin was being represented with an intense attention to detail in *Ulysses,* swathes of the real city center itself were being destroyed. . . . Rising in fiction, being destroyed in fact: this grim difference between the cityscapes described in *Ulysses* and the reality that had been wrought in the very years the book was being written bears witness to how history chases Joyce down in what might appear as the underpoliticized Dublin of the novel."[38]

Given these circumstances, the question "Did it flow?" that initiates the passage takes on a whole different significance. In a city subjected to

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partial military destruction, the question of whether the running water "works" or not is a practical question whose answer would not be a foregone conclusion. In the Dublin of 1904 the question *is* perhaps meaningless. In the Dublin of 1916 it is real and pragmatic. And in the Dublin of 1922, the question points most immediately to the political imaginary of the new Irish Free State, to the question of how to run and maintain a city, now a national capital—and from there back, finally, to this issue of taxes and taxpayers. To invoke Bourdieu a second time, in this historical interval "the collective invention of collective structures of invention" becomes a crucial issue for Ireland and, as I'm arguing, for *Ulysses* as well. And as our reading of "Ithaca" shows, Joyce deliberately addresses the issue not only on the level of aesthetics but all the way down to the level of taxation.

When Leerssen says that "the great ingenuity of Joyce is that he dared to describe an Irish setting in terms of its *normalcy,*" he also misses the point.[39] Unless we take *normalcy* to mean the ways in which Ireland was subjected to the vicissitudes, disjunctures, and discontinuities of history, of capitalist modernization, imperial domination, and the struggle for independence—which would, actually, be something like "normal" historical experience for many peoples and many nations—then the term is misleading. Leerssen may intend to point to the fact that Joyce was willing to insist on the importance of such a normal or boring category of experience—taxes—as a site, however mundane, of utopian possibility and collective invention. Certainly *normalcy* cannot mean anything like continuity and peace. But in any case, if the word is to have any significance to the passage, it can only be in the sense that, perhaps, we can see the invocation of "taxpayers" as a kind of call to normalcy, or a call for a return to normalcy, from military insurrection "back" to everyday civic life, with "return" understood with all the complexity demanded by the idea behind the word, all the complexity necessary when talking about a postcolonial state: return, that is to say, as a form of revolution.

If taxation emerges from the passage as a "structure of collective invention" whose mundanity is transformed by history into utopian possibility, it is a weak utopia at best, as that voice of petty-bourgeois disavowal that closes the passage suggests. Nevertheless, we must insist on that weak messianic power because, as I'll show, Joyce insists on it; *Ulysses*

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insists on it.[40] The emphasis on taxation in the waterworks passage is generalized and diffused into multiple meditations, dispersed throughout *Ulysses,* on debt and mutual indebtedness. Debt becomes, from the first chapter of the novel, an alternative mode of imagined community that trumps ethnic identity, religion, Celtic Revivalism, and romantic nationalism. The milkwoman in the first chapter of *Ulysses,* "Telemachus," seems at first a parody of the *Sean-Bhean Bhocht,* that overdetermined sign and symbol of authentic Irish identity, since it is immediately revealed that she neither speaks nor even recognizes the Irish language.[41] "Is it French you are talking, sir?" she asks when Haines, the English amateur anthropologist, says a few Irish words to her (1.425). And when she learns that he speaks Irish, she makes the same mistake he does with her, assuming he is from the west of Ireland. Haines thinks that because she is Irish the milkwoman speaks Irish; the milkwoman thinks that because he speaks Irish Haines is Irish—the tautological identity politics that equate geography and culture are thrown into question by the misunderstanding that results. There is nowhere to go with this—it is a dead-end conversation. So they raise the issue of the bill, as if to have done with each other. But instead of a final reckoning, Buck and Stephen come up short of cash.

> Buck Mulligan brought up a florin, twisted it round in his fingers and cried:
> A miracle!
> He passed it along the table towards the old woman, saying:
> *Ask nothing more of me, sweet.*
> *All I can give you I give.*
> Stephen laid the coin in her uneager hand.
> We'll owe twopence, he said.
> Time enough, sir, she said, taking the coin. Time enough. Good morning, sir. (1.451–60)

The milkwoman's repetitive, ritualistic formula—"Time enough, sir. . . . Time enough"—resuscitates nationality through a far more mundane understanding of what it means to live with others. It conjures a volunteerist bond through time. It assures or even creates a future time by deferring any final reckoning of the bill indefinitely. Cultural identity is

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marginalized as a nationalist "cause" in favor of obligation, a "being responsible for." Haines's Irish speech is not quoted in the passage, as if the content of the language were unimportant to the solidarity forged between the Irish characters. Bound together through time by debt, Buck and Stephen and the milkwoman (Haines does not pay the milkwoman and does not touch the coin as Stephen does) *do* share something like Irishness, alternatively conceived not as a cultural inheritance but as mutual indebtedness. Oddly, perhaps even in a troubling way, the milkwoman *does* represent Ireland after all—it's just that one myth of nationhood is here replaced with another. If this first invocation of what we might call the nationalist debt is premodern insofar as Buck and Stephen and the milkwoman all interact face to face, then the novel's last invocation of the national community—the waterworks passage in "Ithaca"—is thoroughly modern insofar as the paupers and the taxpayers interact only via the mediation of the waterworks and the taxes that fund them: an imagined community in Benedict Anderson's sense of the term, with the qualification that the waterworks also links them, infrastructurally and concretely, in a relationship of material connection and interdependence.

The great counterexample that brings the point home is Mr. Deasy's boast to Stephen in "Nestor": "Do you know what is the proudest word *[sic]* you will ever hear from an Englishman's mouth? . . . *I paid my way. . . . I never borrowed a shilling in my life.* Can you feel that? *I owe nothing.* Can you?" (2.244–54). Nothing could better highlight the difference in conception of personal and national sovereignty between the two men. Deasy's "one word" turns out to be at least four (if we are counting conservatively), a telling mistake that drives home the absurd overestimation of his—and his ideal Englishman's—self-sufficiency. Deasy wants to pin his identity to "one word"—presumably a talisman that would eliminate the need for other words—such that by his own standards his statement appears positively logorrheic. Stephen, of all people, cannot "feel that"; his thoughts turn straightaway to his own debts. "Mulligan, nine pounds, three pairs of socks, one pair brogues, ties. Curran, ten guineas. McCann, one guinea. Fred Ryan, two shillings. . . . The lump I have is useless" (2.255–59). Stephen defines himself through his debts. Later, in "Scylla and Charybdis," Stephen's telegram to Mulligan makes a similar point: "*The sentimentalist is he who would enjoy without incurring the*

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immense debtorship for a thing done. Signed: Dedalus" (9.550–51). Applied to the waterworks passage of "Ithaca," this declaration makes the case against the one-word answer to the question "Did it flow?" as mere sentiment; it makes the case against Deasy's mysterious and unutterable "proudest word" as a fantasy; and finally, it makes the case against the taxpayers' belief in their own self-sufficiency as a delusion. *Ulysses* itself is a kind of testimony against Deasy's thinking, a novel whose principle of inclusiveness always seems to verge on the universal, and thus seems without principle. In terms of debt processed through Joycean wordplay, we could say, without much exaggeration, that *Ulysses* is—in a way entirely opposed to Deasy's emphasis on solvency and independence—all interest and no principle.

Even the most fundamental principle of *Ulysses*—the Homeric parallel—is a principle based on borrowing. And Joyce's "borrowing" from Homer is often cavalierly undisciplined. So it might seem at first unpromising to try to find a Homeric parallel for the waterworks passage. On a thematic level, Freedman points out that on his return to Ithaca, Homer's Odysseus "pauses at the city's fountain and enters into a brief description of its appearance and origin," a narrative detour imitated in Joyce's "Ithaca."[42] There is a formal parallel too, in the notion of Homeric digression that Eric Auerbach explores in the opening chapter of *Mimesis.* There Auerbach describes an episode in the *Odyssey* in which Odysseus's nurse Euryclea recognizes him, though he has not yet revealed his identity, from a scar on his thigh as she is washing his feet. At the moment of her recognition, seventy verses interrupt the present action to describe the origin of the scar, an interruption of the narrative that resembles the wildly digressive rhythm of Joyce's "Ithaca." Homer's "basic impulse," according to Auerbach's analysis of the scene, is "to represent phenomena in a fully externalized form, visible and palpable in all their parts, and completely fixed in their spatial and temporal relations."[43] And a little further: "The Homeric style knows only a foreground, only a uniformly illuminated, uniformly objective present." There is no "subjectivistic-perspectivistic procedure."[44] The story of the scar remains syntactically unsubordinated to the main storyline, in effect independent of it and without any linguistic indication that it is less important than the main storyline of Odysseus's return to Ithaca. This kind of insubordination,

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as it were, is evident in Joyce's passage about the Dublin waterworks. The travels of the water take up more textual space than the narrative of Bloom's actions. "Did it flow?" is a yes-or-no question. What follows after the answer "yes" defies the discipline of the structure: the question wants results, while the answer gives, instead, explanation and description, creating an effect something like a child asking "Why?" after every adult answer. There is no indication that the path of the water is anywhere in Bloom's conscious thought, just as Odysseus himself never remembers the story of how he got his scar; these are not subjective digressions but literally objective ones in which "a newly appearing object or implement, though it be in the thick of battle, is described as to its nature and origin."[45] We might call this the insubordination of things in texts, things that take up textual space, that have their own stories to tell, and that (or who) won't shut up and let us get on with the story. Of course, Bloom is not in "the thick of battle" but rather is busying himself making cocoa for his guest; but he is, like Odysseus, lately returned home, so that the slaughter of the suitors that marks the homecoming of Odysseus to Ithaca is precisely the parallel structure. To whatever extent Joyce modeled "Ithaca" on the catechism in form, in content it is—or at least, the waterworks passage is—modeled on Homeric digression.

Yet again, however, we are forced to ask why we should privilege the waterworks passage over innumerable other digressive passages in "Ithaca," other than simply because Jameson and Leerssen privilege it. The digression of the scar in Homer is a digression concerned with the lineage of the mark or proof of identity (the scar proves it is Odysseus), of individuality (there can only be one with such a scar), and of sovereignty (the mark of the king). Joyce's digression on water could be considered similar in almost every respect, once the terms of sovereignty are shifted from classical monarchy to the modern state form. One of the effects of the waterworks digression is to remind us that many people have the *same* experience at the tap throughout the course of a day and even simultaneously. It reminds us of the authority of the state, of the institutions that guarantee that the water flows so reliably into 7 Eccles Street that under normal narrative circumstances no one would bother to ask, "Did it flow?" Under such normal narrative circumstances we might never be treated to the explanation of how, from where, by whose authority, with what

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financial resources, and to what satisfactions and dissatisfactions it flowed. The waterworks are the consequence of a corporate authority, a collective one, which is to say, paradoxically, an incorporeal one, one that cannot by definition have a speaking voice as a character in a novel, at least, again, under normal narrative circumstances. The body of the king or sovereign dissolved into the broad division of labor that characterizes modern authority; the individual turned into many; sovereignty divided into multiples and placed, finally, nowhere in particular but everywhere, in every home—all this sounds very much like what Auerbach is saying at the end of the last chapter of *Mimesis,* "The Brown Stocking," in reference to Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*:

> It is precisely the random moment which is comparatively independent of the controversial and unstable orders over which men fight and despair; it passes unaffected by them, as daily life. The more it is exploited, the more the elementary things which our lives have in common come to light. The more numerous, varied, and simple the people are who appear as subjects of such random moments, the more effectively must what they have in common shine forth. In this unprejudiced and exploratory type of representation we cannot but see to what an extent—below the surface conflicts—the differences between men's ways of life and forms of thought have already lessened. The strata of societies and their different ways of life have become inextricably mingled. There are no longer even exotic peoples. . . . It is still a long way to a common life of mankind on earth, but the goal begins to be visible. And it is most concretely visible now in the unprejudiced, precise, interior and exterior representation of the random moment in the lives of different people. So the complicated process of dissolution which led to fragmentation of the exterior action, to reflection of consciousness, and to stratification of time seems to be tending toward a very simple solution.[46]

Joyce's waterworks put forward the public utility as a crucial social fact for modernist literature, as an often overlooked "elementary thing . . . which our lives have in common," one of the modalities through which "the differences between men's ways of life and forms of thought have

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already lessened." If Auerbach is, rather surprisingly, seemingly positive about "a common life of mankind on earth," surely his optimism cannot be about the process of commodification; surely not about standardization under the Fordist mode of production; surely not about the extensions and retreats of various despotisms across the globe. But perhaps it could be about the public utilities that bind us together into groups that rely on the same networks of water pipes, gas lines, power grids, and—though this is beyond the scope of the present work—communication networks.

PLUMBING CONSCIOUSNESS

Such are *Ulysses*'s hopes for the utopian promise of technology. If the waterworks can hijack the narrative flow of Joyce's fiction with its own, and if the collective voice of that fourfold causal force can be "heard," in some sense, in the passage—if, that is to say, the taxpayers' dissolution in the waterworks and the waterworks' resolution in the taxpayers can be said to produce a kind of subjectivity not merely of the imagined community but of the communion between an imagined community and its built environment—then we can say with some conviction that the waterworks "speak" in "Ithaca." To put it another way: Joyce gives epistemological teeth to the critical commonplace that the city is also a character in the novel. *Ulysses* literalizes that cliché, makes it mean something by concretizing it in public works. The idea is at work, for example, in this passage from "Aeolus," in which Bloom imagines the noise of the printing press as a kind of speech: "Sllt. The nethermost deck of the first machine jogged forwards its flyboard with sllt the first batch of quirefolded papers. Sllt. Almost human the way it sllt to call attention. Doing its level best to speak. That door too sllt creaking, asking to be shut. Everything speaks in its own way. Sllt" (7.174–77).

Declan Kiberd, in his *Irish Classics,* has isolated this passage to demonstrate Joyce's "utopian view of technology."[47] Joyce, Kiberd argues, "was writing at a time when the sociologists of the Frankfurt School had not yet depressed themselves about the way in which technology could be used to flatten individuality and manufacture consensus, and so his treatment

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of mass media is more celebratory than critical. . . . The suggestion is that every single object has its own history and consciousness, albeit mute, and that it will yield a meaning if accorded the sort of loving attention that Bloom gives to things."[48]

I have suggested that the waterworks themselves might be considered the narrating consciousness of "Ithaca," and this suggestion bears itself out in "Wandering Rocks" with even more force. "Wandering Rocks," more than any other episode of *Ulysses,* stages simultaneity; the chapter's nineteen sections narrate several distinct moments as told from different focalized characters. Its perspective is presumably that of the omniscient narrator, though this narrator has a sense of irony in tone and style that defies traditional omniscient narration. "The mind of the city" in "Wandering Rocks," as Clive Hart puts it, "is both mechanical and maliciously ironic."[49] As characters intersect each other, many of their movements are repeated, interrupted, and re-presented without any of the syntactic cues that would normally allow the reader to switch from one perspective to another. The viceregal cavalcade that gets full treatment in the final section begins its procession at Phoenix Park and, in its path through the city, greets and is greeted by the characters treated earlier in the chapter: "Mr. Thomas Kernan . . . greet[s] [the viceroy] vainly from afar" (10.1183–84); the cavalcade goes "unsaluted by Mr. Dudley White, B.L., M.A." (10.1185–86); "Mr. Simon Dedalus . . . st[ands] still in midstreet and br[ings] his hat low" (10.1199–1200). Amid this list of characters, the Poddle River appears where it merges with the Liffey and offers its salute as well. "From its sluice in Wood quay wall under Tom Devan's office Poddle River hung out in fealty a tongue of liquid sewage" (10.1196–97). That "tongue," I want to suggest, is—barring the improbability of talking sewage—a plausible narrating voice for "Wandering Rocks" as a whole.

The ironic tone of the chapter might easily be summed up in the description of the Poddle's tongue of liquid sewage: the river gives a raspberry to the cavalcade, announcing its subversive "fealty," and, not content to stop at mocking authority, mocks throughout nearly every character it encounters. As Hart again points out, the Poddle empties into the Liffey at Wellington Quay, not Wood Quay, as this line from "Wandering Rocks" would have it (Wellington Quay is about a half-kilometer downriver of

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Wood Quay; both run along the south bank of the Liffey, with Essex Quay separating them). Hart interprets the geographical imprecision of the line as one of Joyce's few factual feints in *Ulysses.* The viceregal cavalcade around which "Wandering Rocks" is organized, for example, actually took place on May 31, 1904, not June 16. While this is easily explicable as the author's need to "change some of the facts to accommodate his fiction," other factual changes, like moving the Poddle's mouth from Wellington to Wood Quay, have less to do with plot and more to do with symbolism.[50] Because the Dublin Corporation Cleansing Department Offices were located at 15–16 Wood Quay, Hart suggests, it makes sense to have the sewage emerge from just underneath the building; it produces "a more powerful image of unified sewage."[51]

More than an image of "unified sewage," however, the relocation of the Poddle's sluice gate to Wood Quay is one more way of rendering Dublin, in Michael Seidel's words, "as a city of traps, a city of irresolution, *cul de sacs,* accidents, missed connections and missed streetcars, misread signs, wrong turns, indignities, and sheer labyrinthine terror, a Minoan as much as a Greek adventure."[52] And it is true that the characters in "Wandering Rocks" seem as confused by Dublin's geography as the reader may be, as if Dublin suffered in both fiction and fact from a certain unreality. The Poddle, we remember, was the source of much of Dublin's drinking water before the Dublin Corporation Waterworks Act of 1861. That a source of potable water should be, by 1904, reduced to "a tongue of liquid sewage" adds another indignity to Seidel's list and makes a complete mockery of the name of the institution dedicated to its maintenance, The Dublin Corporation Cleansing Department. Joyce's fictional relocation of the Poddle's mouth creates not only an image of unified sewage but, as it evokes the Poddle's civic role through a long history, a tragicomic image of urban ecological degradation through time.

Under the sign of unified sewage emerges also a powerful image of the urban totality. Wood Quay was the site of the very first Viking settlement in Dublin in 841 AD, just east of the point where the Poddle met the Liffey. Those early Norse settlers docked their ships in a body of stagnant water at the rivers' intersection that they called "Black Pool," a phrase taken from the Irish "Dubh Linn," which was borrowed from the Irish Christian monastery they conquered when they settled there. For Joyce

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to relocate the "tongue of liquid sewage" to this historical site of *nomos* is to give that tongue something rather specific, if maybe a little disappointing, to say: "Dubh Linn," or "Dublin."[53] Joyce is just as interested in relocating the rivers' confluence in time as he is in relocating it in space, marking the beginning of the history of a place called Dublin in a real but long gone "black pool" that has since metempsychosed into a black pool of liquid sewage.[54] The tongue speaks the etymology of the Hiberno-English word Dublin; it speaks the ontology of the vital entity known as Dublin; likewise, it speaks a whole history of conquest (from the Celts to the Vikings to the Normans) and relativizes what appears, in such a long historical perspective, as the pompousness, the ignorance, and above all the fleetingness of the authority represented in the viceregal cavalcade. Dublin speaks itself and its defiance from the river's mouth, mocking the cavalcade with sly civility.[55] Liquid sewage grants being to the city of Dublin, naming an organism but also giving it a voice.[56]

The Poddle was and is a small river, so small that it was bricked over in 1800, so small that it could almost be called a stream. The Poddle's tongue asks us to make a big conceptual-metaphorical leap by way of simple word association from river to tongue to stream to "stream of consciousness" to "sewer of consciousness." If the stream of consciousness was overburdened by an almost involuntary association with a kind of natural idyll—a stream in some pristine Alpine setting surrounded by firs, or some such—then Joyce in a fashion typical of his scatological thinking replaces that association with a stream of liquefied human excrement, which is really only to say that he literally humanizes it.[57] The networks of rivers, sewers, and canals that make up Dublin's circulatory system, when taken as a whole, present a plausible "point of view" from which the narrating voice of the chapter gains its multiple and simultaneous perspectives, and they explain why "Wandering Rocks" can jump from one section to another without syntactic connection. The infrastructure of the city "lives" each geographical point simultaneously, it *is* everywhere at once; it doesn't need syntactic connection because it has infrastructural connection.

If the stream of consciousness is confusingly merged here with omniscient narration, that is only because the sewer's point of view is not

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humanly possible and thus appears improbably synoptic; it is, however, bounded by its human-built limits, its engineered corporality. The narrating voice of "Wandering Rocks" is not omniscient at all—it simply remains within the limited geographical scope of the networks of rivers and sewers that define the municipal boundaries of the city of Dublin. The impression of omniscience is not superhuman but rather nonhuman; it is, moreover, not even omniscience so much as the "stream of consciousness" of the sewer, its "thought," so to speak. To borrow a suggestive term from D. A. Miller's *The Novel and the Police,* "Wandering Rocks" may be said to operate on a principle of panoptical narration.[58] Of course, unlike Jeremy Bentham's panopticon, the sewer is not a machine for seeing, but it is descended from the utilitarian ideal of governmentality, and as an ubiquitous urban infrastructure it inadvertently offers a "point of view" that is no longer rooted in human subjectivity. As Ann Banfield points out, "Point of view in language in the sense of a spatial position is not a grammatical notion, but a pragmatic one. In language, it has been axiomatically taken as located in a speaker." But in Joyce's literary experiment in "Wandering Rocks" (and elsewhere in *Ulysses*), "Point of view becomes a concept which can be independent of the speaker's role in communication."[59] The narrator of the chapter is "not objective, centreless," but rather "subjective but subjectless . . . representing the perspective of no one."[60] In this experiment it is possible to see a kinship between Joyce's modernism and Walter Benjamin's phantasmagorias of modernity, dreamworlds in which, to borrow from Jürgen Habermas, "even things encounter us in the structures of frail intersubjectivity"[61] and where, for Martin Jay, "objects [are] metamorphosed into subjectivities."[62]

"The sewer," wrote Victor Hugo in *Les Misérables* in 1862, "is the conscience of the city," a sentence I borrowed as an epigraph for this chapter.[63] The line comes from a chapter in the novel called "The Intestine of Leviathan," which momentarily suspends the plot structure of the novel, pausing instead to make a lengthy digression into the history of the Parisian sewer system. Digressions like these were a feature of the nineteenth-century epic novel—one thinks, for example, of certain sections of Melville's *Moby Dick* as well. But here, in *Ulysses,* the sewer as conscience of the city is not merely asserted but performed through narrative technique.

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It is one of the signal differences between the nineteenth-century realist novel and Joyce's twentieth-century avant-garde modernism that the former should declare the sewer as the conscience of the city—in French *conscience* serves ambiguously for both the English words *conscience* and *consciousness*—while the latter should enact the sewer as the consciousness of the city by ventriloquizing it, personifying it, and endowing it with fictional being.

The represented thought of the sewer is the product of a *tekhne* that is both an engineering marvel and a literary innovation: *tekhne,* that is to say, as inseparable from *episteme.* "At the beginning of its history," argues Bernard Stiegler, "philosophy separates *tekhne* from *episteme,* a distinction that had not yet been made in Homeric times." From Plato onwards a conflict arose in Greek philosophical discourse: "The philosophical *episteme* is pitched against the sophistic *tekhne,* whereby all technical knowledge is devalued." As a result, "The analysis of technics is made in terms of ends and means, which implies necessarily that no dynamic proper belongs to technical beings."[64] In Stiegler's account of the classical split between *tekhne* and *episteme* we find another way in which *Ulysses* can be considered deeply Homeric, in the sense of being pre-Socratic, because the technical objects that appear in *Ulysses* are not at all represented "in terms of ends and means." In the case of the Poddle's tongue, in fact, technical objects are granted being, if not human-being, and even the potential for speech. *Ulysses* thus "locates" narrative authority—what I've been calling panoptical narration—in the *tekhne* of public works in "Wandering Rocks" just as in "Ithaca." This panoptical narration is also a mechanical form of stream of consciousness because it is a representation of how a machine—the public works—endowed with being might think. The novel locates the imagined urban community of Dublin in the simultaneous connection of the city's inhabitants through infrastructure, and it threads that connection through the deep temporality of the city's *nomos,* Dubh Linn. In doing so, *Ulysses* forges "another relationship to technics," to borrow again from Stiegler, "one that rethinks the bond originarily formed by, and between, humanity, technics, and language."[65]

The thorny question of being for technological objects is taken up directly in the thirteenth section of "Wandering Rocks," close to the center

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of the chapter, when Stephen improbably addresses his thoughts to an electrical power station in Fleet Street: "The whirr of flapping leathern bands and hum of dynamos from the powerhouse urged Stephen to be on. Beingless beings. Stop! Throb always without you and the throb always within. Your heart you sing of. I between them. Where? Between two roaring worlds where they swirl, I. Shatter them, one and both. But stun myself too in the blow. Shatter me you who can. Bawd and butcher were the words. I say! Not yet awhile. A look around" (10.821–27).[66] Stephen's trepidation around the throb and hum of the powerhouse bears a striking resemblance to Joyce's famous fear of thunder and thunderstorms. "The thunderstorm as a vehicle of divine power and wrath," Richard Ellmann writes, "moved Joyce's imagination so profoundly that to the end of his life he trembled at the sound."[67] "Beingless beings" may be a reference to divine creative power, and since Stephen places himself "between two roaring worlds," we might imagine that he is thinking about his identity as an artist, as someone trying to access the divine in order to create something transcendent in the human world. Stephen conceives of himself, that is to say, as a mediator between the human and the divine, or the profane and the sacred.[68] The problem with this is that the power station is a thunderstorm created by humans, god's power usurped by the Dublin Corporation Electric Light Station.[69] In other words, the power station is, in some sense, the artist's competition. This, perhaps more than anything else, is the source of Stephen's ambivalence, characterized by both an urge to "be on" and a vocation to sing the machine's "heart." (Figure 1 is a photograph of the inner workings of the Fleet Street Station, a machinic, industrial, technological "heart" whose conventional ugliness contrasts sharply with Stephen's aesthetic visions.) Here is a moment when the familiar Celtic hatred of utility combines uneasily with an acknowledgment of genuine competition between utility and the aesthetic: a confrontation that ends in Stephen's turning away from it in fear and confusion.

That the power station could be the throbbing heart of "Wandering Rocks" and the sewer its municipal circulatory system bears witness to the fact that Joyce, unlike Stephen, did eventually find a way to sing the machine's heart: by using the basic technologies of the urban *polis* as epistemic engines of his fiction. The generating station that Stephen confronts

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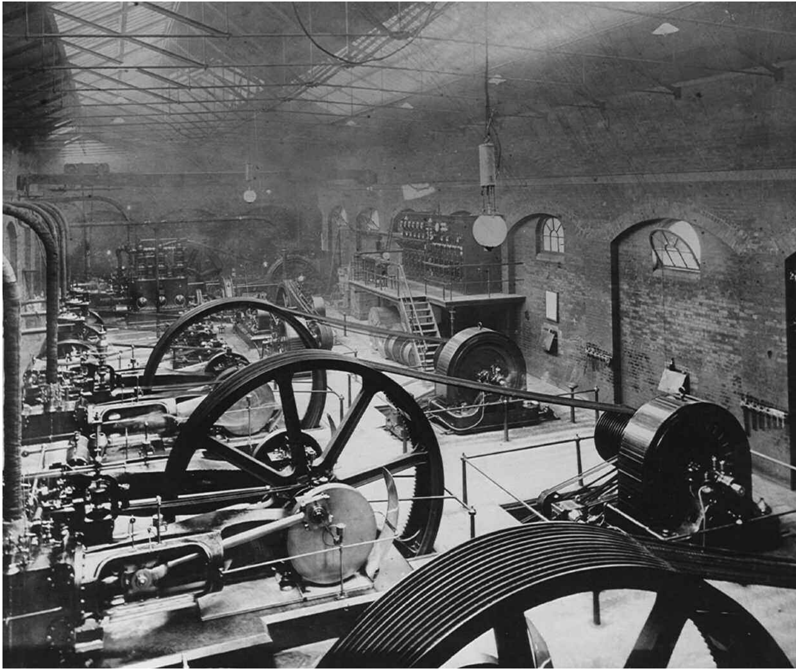

Figure 1. Dublin City Power Station at Fleet Street, about 1900. Reproduced by kind permission of ESB Archives.

on Fleet Street in "Wandering Rocks" had been around since 1892. It generated "electric light on a small scale" in the city center. The Pigeon House plant in Ringsend, which went into service in 1903, was much bigger and "facilitated the introduction of electric trams and the more widespread use of electric lighting," though "crucially, the power was not sufficient for a 24–hour supply."[70] The distinctive smokestacks of the Pigeon House were, and still are, some of the tallest structures in Dublin; they were strikingly visible from points all over the city and especially from Sandymount Strand, where Stephen walks on the beach in "Proteus," meditating on the "ineluctable modality of the visible" (3.1). Throughout *Ulysses,* Joyce presents the progress and promise of electricity as a preoccupation for Dubliners. In "Telemachus," Mulligan jokingly asks Stephen to "switch off the current, will you?" (1.28–29), though there is no electrical current in the Martello Tower; Bloom muses on "electric

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dishscrubbers" in "Circe" (15.1691); Bloom and Stephen worry about the negative effect of gas and electric light on "paraheliotropic" plant life in "Ithaca" (17.45);[71] the Cyclops hurls at Bloom a Jacob's Biscuits tin whose report is likened to an earthquake (Jacob's Biscuits was one of the first industrial clients for Dublin Corporation's electricity in the 1880s) (12.1853–1918).

Another, more direct example from "Cyclops" is a joke disparaging the public utilities—not unlike MacHugh's watercloset joke—voiced through the spirit of the lately buried Paddy Dignam. Speaking from the dead and enumerating the advantages of the afterlife, Dignam offers a satiric paean to the public utility:

> In reply to a question as to his first sensations in the great divide beyond he stated that previously he had seen as in a glass darkly but that those who had passed over had summit possibilities of atmic development opened up to them. Interrogated as to whether life there resembled our experience in the flesh he stated that he had heard from more favoured beings now in the spirit that their abodes were equipped with every modern home comfort such as tālāfānā, ālāvātār, hātākāldā, wātāklāsāt and that the highest adepts were steeped in waves of volupcy of the very purest nature (12.347–55).

The utopian hopes of the public works here run into the incongruity between the divine world and the seemingly petty earthly luxuries of all modern conveniences. The result is a joke that, by mockingly inserting the modern conveniences of watercloset and telephone into a sacred rhetoric and an exotic typography, makes "all mod cons" appear as the absolute poverty of the utopian imagination. The joke implies that under modernity technology has become an end rather than a means and that as a result man's ends become mean, and stupid. It would be a mistake, however, to allow this passage the last word in *Ulysses,* a novel that, as I've argued, tries very hard to rethink the Socratic understanding of technology beyond the standard terms of ends and means.[72] It is, instead, a joking index of the extent to which utopias—even utopias of the afterlife—cannot but be imagined in terms of the actual, in terms, that is to say, of the "collective invention of collective structures of invention."

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ART AND UTILITY: *A PORTRAIT OF THE ARTIST AS A YOUNG MAN*

Ulysses meets its most powerful resistance to that rethinking of technology in the figure of Stephen, Joyce's fictional, ironically distanced surrogate. The artist who writes *Ulysses* and the artist represented in *Ulysses* are separated by the imaginative act of writing *Ulysses.* The novel is the material evidence of how much Joyce's understanding of the relationship between modern technology and modern literature had changed since he had inhabited Stephen's point of view. Stephen's ambivalence about electricity in "Wandering Rocks" shows his contempt and competition with the public works, while, on the other hand, the sewer's prominent role in the chapter belies a wholly different writing sensibility for the postcolonial comedy of development. One of the most telling differences between *Ulysses*'s author and Stephen-as-author reveals itself in Stephen's notorious adversity to bathing, his dislike, as "Ithaca" tells us, of "the aqueous substances of glass and crystal," his distrust of "aquacities of thought and language," and, furthermore, his belief in "the incompatibility of aquacity with the erratic originality of genius" (17.247). The aquacity of the narrator's language betrays Stephen even while expressing his opinion, for if we take seriously the waterworks passage of "Ithaca" and the Poddle's voice in "Wandering Rocks" as narrative expressions of the urban totality, we are left precisely with "aquacity" as both a valorized principle of literary art (as wordplay, pun, *portmanteau*) and a literal expression of Dublin's urban essence: Dublin as a true aqua-city, defined and expressed through its waterworks and—by metonymic extension—its public works.[73]

Consider, for example, an important scene in the final chapter of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man,* in which Stephen is sitting in at a University College Dublin lecture about electricity, and during which he is bantering with his classmates rather than paying attention. Stephen's boredom is expressed as an electrical metaphor. "The droning voice of the professor continued to wind itself slowly round and round the coils it spoke of, doubling, trebling, quadrupling its somnolent energy as the coil multiplied its ohms of resistance" (210). Two things are striking about this sentence. First, its accurate and exact use of electrical terminology to describe Stephen's "resistance" (something more telling than simple

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boredom) forces the realization either that Stephen is paying more attention to the lecture than he pretends to be or that the narrator at least has paid more attention to electricity than Stephen has. Second, the metaphor is as absolutely counterintuitive as it is absolutely accurate. The standard or clichéd use of electricity as a metaphor usually signifies the polar opposite of boredom: excitement, discovery, a sudden illumination or revelation. The narrator corrects the lazy use of electricity as a metaphor by using it precisely, thereby demonstrating the dangers of an "aquacity of thought and language" of which Stephen is just becoming anxiously aware.

Resistance to electricity, not indifference: this, as we've seen, is the secondary import of the metaphor. It is a resistance born of the artist's hatred of utility, based on the (defensive) conviction of the absolute autonomy of the work of art. Art should never be useful, should never serve as a means to an end. Technological things that do serve in such a way are subordinate to art, beneath it, contemptible, boring. Such a distinction is part and parcel of Stephen's aesthetic education by way of Aquinas and Aristotle. By contrast, before his education, when Stephen is a small child, he finds wonder and terror in simple things like indoor plumbing. His childish interest mirrors Stiegler's call for "another relationship to technics . . . that rethinks the bond originarily formed by, and between, humanity, technics, and language." In this case that other relationship is to be found in the innocence of the child before he learns to separate humanity, technics, and language.

> Suck was a queer word. The fellow called Simon Moonan that name because Simon Moonan used to tie the prefect's false sleeves behind his back and the prefect used to let on to be angry. But the sound was ugly. Once he had washed his hands in the lavatory of the Wicklow Hotel and his father pulled the stopper up by the chain after and the dirty water went down through the hole in the basin. And when it had all gone down slowly the hole in the basin had made a sound like that: suck. Only louder.
>
> To remember that and the white look of the lavatory made him feel cold and then hot. There were two cocks that you turned and water came out: cold and hot. He felt cold and then a little hot: and he could see the names printed on the cocks. That was a very queer thing.

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> And the air in the corridor chilled him too. It was queer and wettish. But soon the gas would be lit and in burning it made a light noise like a little song. Always the same: and when the fellows stopped talking in the playroom you could hear it. (8)

Stephen is struck in the Wicklow Hotel by the onomatopoeic correspondence between the sound "suck" and the word *suck.* But the word *suck* is "queer" because it can also signify something else: ass-kissing, in reference to Moonan's behavior with the prefect, which causes an unspoken association, no doubt, between the anus, the "hole in the basin," and the sound "suck." Sexual anxiety and social taboo vie here with the child's polymorphous perversity because he cannot control—and is only beginning to learn to repress—the associations he is making. The result is fear over the power—and in particular the *aquacity*—of language, a fear that arises right at the site of water's entry and exit into the hotel bathroom, as if the orifices of the building were directly analogous to the orifices of the child's body.

Next he is at the bath in the Conglowes lavatory wondering at the power of the printed cocks. The words *hot* and *cold* have the power to make Stephen feel hot or cold as he contemplates them, and because the words are printed on the cocks, their association with the lavatory fixtures is indelible. Stephen does not know if the cocks make him feel hot and cold or if the words make him feel hot and cold. The key here is that childish conjunction "and," as in "and he could see the names," a parataxis that makes it impossible for Stephen to distinguish between the words as cause and the cocks as cause. Note, too, that water is entirely absent in this scene; its power to make Stephen feel hot or cold he does not consider. For him it is a contest only between public works and language. As to the question of what it is that causes Stephen's later hydrophobia, we can say with some confidence that his worry about the "aquacity" of language finds its source in the Wicklow lavatory, in the conjunction ("and") of architectural and bodily orifices, in the contiguity between the sound of words and their meaning, in the confusion of phonetic sameness ("suck"), and in semantic difference (a sucking sound down the drain versus sucking up to someone). All this remains undifferentiated for Stephen, who can only call it "queer," a term whose vagueness combines with

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its connotations of sexual impropriety to sum up quite efficiently the feeling generated by Stephen's excitement, wonder, and confusion.

A little later, Stephen calls on the certainties of religious faith to hold at bay the terrifying arbitrariness of the signifier: "Though there were different names for God in all the different languages in the world and God understood what all the people who prayed said in their different languages still God remained always the same God and God's real name was God" (23). But as he loses his belief in the catholic god, his terror of aquacity increases, and the arbitrariness of the signifier is buried under the strictures of Stephen's Aristotelian aesthetic theory. Hydrophobia is the symptom of that repression. If the watercocks offered Stephen a kind of Saussurean linguistic lesson about how language works, then the gas jet in the last paragraph of the quoted passage offers him an early intimation of what language can do beyond signifying and communicating. It can sing, adding the musical and poetic dimension to what will later be Stephen's vocation as a writer of literature. It can offer rapturous sensations, as the synesthetic description of the gas jet suggests. It is "light noise," figuratively airy, literally the sound of light: sight, sound, and touch all engaged in what is an understated description of aesthetic experience. If Stephen's introduction to language as a signifying system occurs via the taps and drains of the lavatory, his introduction to language as art comes through the gasworks. That these experiences of the power of language should be welded so firmly to public works reveals a very different conception of public works than merely as a means to an end. Here technology is not the means to art but the child's first experience of art itself, in the classical sense of *tekhne.* This is the position that the author of *Ulysses* takes up in the writing of *Ulysses,* a position far closer to Stephen as a child than Stephen as a young man.

If, as Jameson suggests, the waterworks are the real "final affirmation" of *Ulysses,* then that passage may serve also as a correction to Stephen's final affirmation in *A Portrait,* where he vows to "forge in the smithy of [his] soul the uncreated conscience of [his] race." The metaphor of the smith and (presumably) the sword gives way in *Ulysses* to the engineer and the public works as the defining force—beyond ethnicity, beyond religion, and beyond culture in the narrow sense laid out by the Irish Revival—of Irish national consciousness. Donald Theall has shown the

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extent to which Joyce thought of himself as an engineer and his texts as machines. Theall notes that Frank Budgen, who had spent time with Joyce while he was working on "Wandering Rocks," described Joyce's method as something like "an engineer at work with compass and slide-rule."[74] At some point even before finishing *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man,* then, Joyce had already discarded the forge as his principal metaphor for both artistic composition and national consciousness, in favor of the public works. In "The Dead," the final short story of *Dubliners,* we can see the origins of the shift.

IN THE WORKS: "THE DEAD"

> *Even the twilight which illuminates our private and intimate lives is ultimately derived from the much harsher light of the public realm.*
>
> —Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*

"The Dead," Joyce confided to his brother Stanislaus, is "a ghost story."[75] The statement is false to the extent that the story remains within the boundaries of the expectations for realist fiction: no ghosts appear, though characters often feel "haunted." The statement is true to the extent that Joyce modeled the story on gothic fiction and ghost stories and emulated the mood that those stories evoked. He accomplishes this through a trick of the light; reading the role of gaslight in "The Dead" is the key to understanding how. The public works haunt "The Dead" in the form of the gasworks. Michael Furey is described as "a boy in the gasworks."[76] If Furey is the obvious "ghost" in the story, it is his medium and not his spirit that is the message. And in the word *medium,* we should hear a reference both to the Aristotelian philosophical concept and to the Yeatsian (or perhaps Madame Blavatskian) mystical concept. As Luke Gibbons has argued,

> Despite all Joyce's skepticism towards the occult and spiritualism [developed in contradistinction to and with a certain contempt for Yeats and the Irish Revivalists], he retained an interest in key theosophical

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> concerns such as cyclical history and the pursuit of arcane, hermetic knowledge. One particular aspect that held an enduring fascination was the possibility of world memory, an "akasic" medium, as described in *Ulysses,* that records "all that ever anywhere wherever was." . . . For while the shade of Michael Furey is clearly lodged, at one level, in Gretta Conroy's unconscious, it also has a "trans-subjective" element, impinging on Gabriel's consciousness as if it had an (after)life of its own.[77]

Furey is indeed "impinging on Gabriel's consciousness" and in a "trans-subjective" way, but the "akasic medium" is hardly mysterious here: it is gaslight, in particular the gas-fueled streetlight outside the window of Gabriel and Gretta's room in the Gresham Hotel. Joyce's "skepticism towards the occult and spiritualism" plays out in the way he sets up Michael Furey's haunting as rooted in a very material, even mundane, source, wholly explicable without any recourse to the supernatural. It is Joyce's way of undermining the occultism of the Revival while at the same time writing a ghost story that participates in the Revival's tradition. Remaining within the tradition while subtly undermining its mysticism, Joyce can thus offer an alternative model of national community via the medium of public works. He writes a gothic story about Irish nationality that turns on a very modern technology, the gasworks, instead of some other supernatural source by which to explain the occulted experience of his protagonists. The "shade of Michael Furey" "imping[es] on Gabriel's consciousness" because Furey's ghost is conveyed via the "akasic" medium of the gaslight streaming into Gabriel and Gretta's hotel room. Mysticism is no longer opposed to modernity, as it was for the Revivalists; instead, Joyce suggests that modernity contains its own modes of mysticism and, along with them, its own modes of community.

The moment "The Dead" shades into the genre of the gothic or the ghost story—the moment, that is, when the ghost of Michael Furey enters the scene—occurs as a hotel porter guides Gretta and Gabriel into their room at the Gresham Hotel.

> The porter pointed to the tap of the electric-light and began a muttered apology but Gabriel cut him short.

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> We don't want any light. We have light enough from the street. And I say, he added, pointing to the candle, you might remove that handsome article, like a good man.
>
> The porter took up his candle again, but slowly for he was surprised by such a novel idea. Then he mumbled good-night and went out. Gabriel shot the lock to.
>
> A ghostly light from the street lamp lay in a long shaft from one window to the door. (216)

Gabriel insists that the street lamp light the scene because he thinks he is creating a romantic setting in which to seduce his wife. But the street lamp—which was at the time of the story's setting gas fueled—powerfully insinuates Michael Furey into their room, creating a morbid three-way intimacy instead. The passage, however, is meaningfully ambiguous about the kind of lamplight coming in from the street, characterizing it only as from a "street lamp," failing twice to specify the source. This appears as a kind of sly refusal made up of two dissimulating answers. What kind of lamp lights the street? A "street lamp," of course. All right, but what kind of light comes out of the street lamp? "Ghostly light." Okay, but what kind of ghostly light? Would it have been too obvious to say "gaslight"? Is there a meaning to the text's refusal to name the quality of the light by its material source, relying instead on ambient description?

Luke Gibbons, in a forthcoming article, confirms that the street lamp outside the hotel is indeed a gas lamp: in 1904 Dublin was making its first transitions to electrical street lighting, but at that time it was mostly in commercial use and, as we saw in our discussion of "Wandering Rocks," there was not a twenty-four-hour supply.[78] Joyce surely knew this without saying so, because otherwise Michael Furey's ghostly presence in the Conroys' hotel room makes a lot less sense. The lamp, by the logic of the story, has to be gaslit in order to create, to borrow a phrase from Hart, "a unified vision of" the gasworks. Certainly we can hear "gaslight" in the weak rhyme Joyce evokes with "ghostly light" or even, in one of the more telling misprints in early versions of "The Dead," "ghastly light."[79] The light's ghostliness, however, may refer not only to the ghost of Michael Furey that inhabits it but also to its own soon-to-be-realized obsolescence and replacement by electrical light, whose qualities of harshness,

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brightness, and much-increased visibility would banish both the gasworks and the ghost in them to the dustbin of history. "As early as 1888," reports Colin Rynne, "Dublin Corporation had already decided to create a municipal electricity service, under its direct control, and to dispense with the services of gas for public lighting purposes." Following up that resolution in 1892, the corporation opened the Fleet Street Electrical Station, the same one Stephen confronts in "Wandering Rocks."[80] The gas lamp outside the Gresham is already, in 1904, a remnant. How would a story about a boy in the gasworks be told without gaslight? In what way would his story remain haunting at all?

Within a few moments of entering the room, Gretta tells Gabriel about Michael Furey. She describes him as a boy who "was in the gasworks" (219). "He was in the gasworks" is an Irish colloquialism denoting the fact that Michael Furey worked in the Galway gasworks, no different from saying "He was in the civil service" to mean "He worked in the civil service." But the phrase is doing more work here than just providing authentic vernacular dialogue. It does so first by abstracting us from the notion of an individual's "work" to the notion of the gasworks, an institutional brand of work; second by abstracting us from the Galway gasworks in particular to gasworks in general, pointing to the way in which every modern city or town will have a gasworks, such that it is not necessary to signal in speech any more specificity than "the gasworks" once we know that she is talking about Galway; and third by decorporealizing Furey, rendering him ambiently present in the gasworks rather than assigning him a place and definite set of activities or tasks. To say that Furey is "in the gasworks" is not a very precise kind of localization and should forcefully recall Aunt Julia's earlier usage of another colloquialism, which she utters in reference to Mr. Browne: "Browne is everywhere. . . . He has been laid on here like the gas" (207). Where do the gasworks end anyway? At the place where gas is produced, or much further on, at the ends of the gas mains through which gas is piped into streetlights, commercial buildings, government offices, and private homes—all the places, in other words, where the gas is "laid on"? The latter is, of course, the implication of the story: Furey is, it turns out, everywhere that gaslight is. This is to say that he is everywhere the story takes place, everywhere it is possible to see anything, every place about which a story of a dark night and human interaction and movement through space and time can be told.

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He encompasses the entire visual field of the story from beginning to end, with the one exception of the hotel porter's candle. The only real inaccuracy in Gretta's description of what Furey "was" rests in her use of the past tense. Furey *is* in the gasworks. Of course, her choice of words is overdetermined by Gabriel's hostile question "What was he?" which embodies not the reality of Furey's pastness but Gabriel's determined wish for it, as well as a dismissive objectification—not "Who was he?" but "What was he?" Gabriel attempts with the question both to dehumanize Furey and at the same time to initiate a social comparison by which he, Gabriel, seems more appealing. Was he a cosmopolitan bourgeois writer like myself? Do you not prefer me to a boy who, because he worked in the gasworks, had no real hope for the social mobility you have achieved through your marriage to me?[81] In the larger Joycean context, however, of the way that Stephen in *A Portrait* responds to the electricity lecture; of his hydrophobia in response to his early aesthetic experiences in the lavatory; and of his nervous—I am arguing, jealous—response in *Ulysses* to the Fleet Street electrical plant, can we not see in Gabriel's reaction to Michael Furey more than the surface story of sexual jealousy? Gabriel seizes Furey as a sexual rival, but actually he feels his humiliation most keenly as inflicted not by Furey in particular but by "a boy in the gasworks," which may be to say the gasworks themselves. Again we see the anxious comparison and competition between the writer—this time Gabriel—and the public works, the same anxiety we saw in Stephen in *A Portrait* and in *Ulysses,* and for which the drama of sexual jealousy between Gabriel and Michael is, in part at least, a cover story.[82]

The gasworks, then, are the medium by which the ghost of Michael Furey haunts the characters in "The Dead" "trans-subjectively," as Gibbons puts it. It is remarkable how well such trans-subjectivity can stand as a version of the imagined community of the nation. And it is equally remarkable that, when critics take up the last paragraph of "The Dead" as an instantiation of the imagined national community, the snow—and not the gasworks—stands as the metaphor for that community. The snow, however, is really a trick of the light. Snow reflects light; it doesn't produce it. And if it is snowing, there is cloud cover, which is to say that there is no natural light in "The Dead," which begins around ten o'clock and ends before sunrise—no moon, no stars, and no sun. What does snow look like in pitch darkness? It doesn't look like anything, because it, like

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everything else, is not visible in pitch darkness. The image, then, of the snow falling generally all over Ireland forces the reader to imagine snow visually, which is impossible unless we are to imagine a light source where, precisely, there is no natural light source. We are in a world lit only by gas, and Furey is thus "in" the works—the fictional works, so to speak—in ways so fundamental that we have to consider him, and gaslight too, as something more than merely a theme of the story, or the point of the story, or the subject of the story. Gaslight and Furey are even more embedded in the narrative apparatus than that: in fact, they might be said to *be* the narrative apparatus in some important sense, or at least an indispensable part of it. In other words, "The Dead" stages a confrontation between two historically antagonistic modes of writing or representing Ireland: literary culture versus engineering culture. This is to see gaslight not as an *akasic* medium but rather as a medium in the classical Aristotelian sense of the word. For Aristotle, according to Kevis Goodman, a medium is "a necessary condition of sense perception, although not a sufficient one (. . . [media] are part of a complex relationship that includes the accessibility of the object and the development of the faculty of sense)." "As in the example of the ether," Goodman further suggests, such media "can easily escape notice, lurking somewhere beneath conscious perception."[83] Joyce, mobilizing gaslight as a trope, illuminates the medium by which perception is possible and, because gaslight is pointedly technological—as opposed to natural—casts as a narrative medium that which is in fact an infrastructural medium.

The snow is immaterial to the imagined community; it is not a medium in the Aristotelian sense; and it is in any case a natural phenomenon that does not and cannot respect national boundaries. The opposition between a modernity embodied by Gabriel and a traditional or authentic Irishness embodied by Michael Furey is also false. The very existence of the Galway gasworks—as immediately comparable to the Dublin gasworks—renders, instead, a modernity always already inscribed in every character and every location in "The Dead." The gasworks are an entirely modern institution with no links to any rural idyll or traditional culture. The transition to electricity in Dublin is, far from being an indication of the difference between the modern East and the traditional West, rather a proof of the relentless pace of change within an all-encompassing modernity. "Here," Kevin Whelan suggests, "lay Joyce's most profound

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insight: the Irish in this condition were not deprived of modernity—they literally embodied it."[84] Michael Furey in this sense both embodies the gasworks and is embodied by them.

The real stakes in "The Dead" are between the newspapers (which are the public organs that report the snow to be "general all over Ireland") and the gasworks (which are the public works that allow us to visualize the snow as "general all over Ireland" [225]). Michael and Gabriel are the opposing poles of nation building, two competing versions of Bourdieu's "collective structures of invention": the culture of the word versus engineering culture, their antagonism exemplified in Gabriel's sexual jealousy. The narrating voice of "The Dead" is the synthetic dissolution of the opposition between the two. Joyce marries them, realizing in the process the meaning of public works as both literary and infrastructural or, in Stiegler's or Heidegger's terms, technological. A "queer" marriage, to be sure, an eccentric one: but it is exactly this to which—in no small part—Joyce's unique place in the modernist canon is to be attributed.

"FOR POSSIBLE, CIRCUITOUS OR DIRECT, RETURN": *ULYSSES,* AGAIN

To show how such a union—of literary and engineering cultures via the concept of public works—should be in some sense utopian in Joyce's work, we return once again to the taxpayers in *Ulysses.* One of the things *Ulysses* is best known for is its dogged and meticulous mapping of the geography of the Dublin cityscape as it was in 1904. As Duffy demonstrates, that cityscape was under erasure by British bombardment in 1916, just as Joyce was writing some of the most geographically detailed chapters of *Ulysses.* Joyce started writing "Ithaca" in earnest in late February or early March of 1921, though he had already done extensive notetaking for the chapter.[85] Between the conflagration of 1916, when large parts of Dublin were destroyed, and the signing of the Anglo-Irish Treaty in December 1921, when the southern counties became a Free State, the imagined national community was in a zone of epistemological uncertainty. In this period, as Enda Duffy emphasizes, "knowledge of the physical city and its features shared by the citizens assume[d] greater importance in fostering anything approximating an 'imagined community.'" Thus he

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accounts in some part for Joyce's fixations on waterworks and sewers. And yet, Duffy continues, "without the existence of some viable civic communal relations, the link that the ethnologist claims to discern between the built environment and the community relations it memorializes . . . can scarcely exist either."[86]

It is to the idea of "some viable civic communal relations" that the taxpayers in "Ithaca" speak, however recalcitrantly. With the destruction of the physical city, the sphere of civic finance makes its phantom appearance as that other mode of imagined community. Although the question of the *desire* for such a mode of imagined community is wholly buried under the disavowal of indebtedness that we saw in the waterworks passage, it emerges boldly elsewhere in "Ithaca":

> What rendered problematic for Bloom the realisation of these mutually selfexcluding propositions?
>
> The irreparability of the past: once at a performance of Albert Hengler's circus in the Rotunda, Rutland Square, Dublin, an intuitive particoloured clown in quest of paternity had penetrated from the ring to a place in the auditorium where Bloom, solitary, was seated and had publicly declared to an exhilarated audience that he (Bloom) was his (the clown's) papa. The imprevidibility of the future: once in the summer of 1898 he (Bloom) had marked a florin (2/-) with three notches on the milled edge and tendered it in payment of an account due to and received by J. and T. Davy, family grocers, 1 Charlemont Mall, Grand Canal, for circulation on the waters of civic finance, for possible, circuitous or direct, return.
>
> Was the clown Bloom's son?
>
> No.
>
> Had Bloom's coin returned?
>
> Never.
>
> Why would a recurrent frustration the more depress him?
>
> Because at the critical turningpoint of human existence he desired to amend many social conditions, the product of inequality and avarice and international animosity. (17.973–92)[87]

Desire announces itself in this passage in two ways. Most obviously, it announces itself when Bloom marks the coin. The pathos of this gesture

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is its commonality—we have all either done this, or received in routine exchange and with at least mild curiosity someone else's attempt to do this. The act "marks" the desire for a *return of the same* in a money economy whose circulating medium is by definition indifferent to such a desire. It doesn't matter, technically, if Bloom ever sees his florin again. He will see many such florins, each of them with the exact same exchange value as the one he marked. We might understand this as a gesture of dealienation in the sense that Bloom is fighting abstract equivalence with physical particularity, the singularity of "his" florin. We might understand this as an attempt to reimagine civic finance as an imagined community, reflecting not alienation but personalized integration, a state structure that could somehow recognize difference, perhaps even, we might dare say, a reimagination of the state that could somehow recognize and respect subalterity—again, a weak utopian gesture at best, the sheer bathos of which is staged by the other episode involving, of all things, a circus, a clown, and public humiliation.

But the episode with the clown, with which the episode of the coin is critically paired, signals the obverse side of such a desire for particularity and difference. Desire in this episode is not "marked" by Bloom's intent but rather, by the humiliating revelation of his fantasy of return through the antics of a circus clown. The episode is especially embarrassing not only because Bloom is singled out from the crowd but, more poignantly, because Bloom does in fact want his son Rudy back, and because we know that he has spent a good deal of time fantasizing about adopting Stephen Dedalus into that role. The recollection of the episode with the clown highlights the bathos of Bloom's motivations for inviting Stephen to stay the night at 7 Eccles Street. In a reversal of roles, it is now Bloom declaring paternity for Stephen rather than a clown declaring Bloom's paternity. What the episode reveals is Bloom's desire for the return of his son Rudy as in some sense less particular than it may at first have seemed—as the desire for the return of *a* son. The question that initiates the answer is driven by the previous passage, in which Bloom and Stephen are discussing future meetings, with Bloom already fantasizing a father-son relationship between the two of them. Desire is, here, the desire for a structural relation, father-son or better, "Bloom & Son," and not a relation between particularized individuals (Bloom-Rudy). The sadness of Bloom's

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desire is rendered ridiculous not only by the fact that he attaches the desire to a clown but also by the publicness of the spectacle of misrecognition and, finally, by the apposition of floating a marked coin on "the waters of civic finance, for possible, circuitous or direct, return."

The strange apposition of these two episodes reveals the ambivalences that structure the imagined community of the city. It is categorically mistaken to wish, as Bloom does, for limitless exchangeability in the sphere of familial relations, just as it is categorically mistaken to wish for absolute difference or singularity in the sphere of civic finance. The sphere of civic finance is defined by limitless exchange, the sphere of the family, by particularity. At least, this would seem to be the implication of the results: "Was the clown Bloom's son? / No. / Had Bloom's coin returned? / Never." Yet both of those wishes, however impossible, exist as one of the constitutive ambivalences of modern citizenship. It is not so important to recognize the impossibility of realizing these desires as it is to recognize that these very contrary desires structure the division between the economic and the domestic, equivalence and singularity, the impersonal and the personal, affiliation and filiation, and structure the traffic across the boundary between the two. Less important than the impossibility of the desire is the utopian wish that its very existence affirms: an imagined community that bridges the gap between them. Bloom's desire is for a city that is more like a family, but also for a family that is more like a city.

Such a desire is not the same as analogizing the city to the family, of merely wishing that the city were more like a family. On the contrary, the passage shows the extent to which the city, metaphorized as civic finance, is its own model of community, however alienated, and that that urban model of community can serve equally to remodel how one understands the family. Jameson is not wrong to argue that the archetypal patterns of father-son relationships in *Ulysses* reveal nothing but "break-down products and . . . defense mechanisms against the loss of the knowable community," or "the impoverishment of human relations which results from the destruction of the older forms of the collective."[88] But what is missing in his argument is the extent to which these new and "alienated" models of the collective are, in spite of their alienation, just that: new models of the collective. Further, his argument does not address the reciprocal consequence of modern urban life on the family: How does it

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affect family life, other than rendering it "residual"? The fantasies that arise from phenomena as impossible to hold in one's head as the urban social whole contain a utopian element that Jameson is unwilling to grant. "How can a vision of liberation," asks Emer Nolan, "be distinguished from a fantasy of it?"[89] Although nothing so grand as liberation might have been realized in Irish independence—and particularly in paying Irish taxes—that is no reason not to see in the "structure of collective invention" of taxation, or of civic finance generally, the seeds of a project of liberation, or a potential site of liberation: "For *Ulysses* is grounded in real states, in real possibilities, real outcomes, even though it recognizes how subtly these are interwoven with dreams of possibilities that have not been and may never be realized."[90] Bloom's marked coin is one of those "dreams of possibilities," one that is oddly foreclosed on and at the same time left with some weak messianic power. For, if the syntax and the verb tense of the last question and answer are broken down, we can see the possibility in the answer "Never": "Bloom's coin *had* never returned," or has never *yet* returned. *Never,* here, does not mean never. To borrow Nolan's construction, it is simply that it "has not been and *may* never be realized." Given the "imprevidibility of the future," the return of Bloom's coin is not, finally, impossible—it has a certain promise still, a faint hope.

Bloom's florin recapitulates, on the level of "the whole dead grid of the object-world," the Ulysses narrative.[91] Bloom's desirous act of marking the coin, of wishing for its return, amounts to a fetishization that endows it with its own subjecthood. Sailing the waters of civic finance, the coin attempts to make its way back to its Penelope, Bloom. Since the coin "had" never come back, it seems safe to say that if it returns at all it will be a "circuitous return" as opposed to a direct return, fraught with adventure and suspense. Jameson has a very poetic way of saying just this, although he does not talk about this particular passage: in pointing to the ways in which Bloom's fantasies are "inextricably bound up with objects," Jameson argues that Bloom's fantasies are "falsely subjective fantasies" and that finally, "here, in reality [the reality of 'Ithaca'], commodities are dreaming about themselves through us."[92] This is a provocative figuration whose import is borne out almost to the letter by the coin-as-Ulysses scenario, except that it is not commodities that are dreaming

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about themselves through us but money that is dreaming about itself through us. It is an important distinction, too, because to say commodities is to focus too narrowly on the commercial world, whereas to say money is to focus more broadly on *civic* finance, on the city and the modes of imagining its own phantasmal totality that the city enables and requires. To say *money* is not necessarily to invoke the commodity—in this case, I'm arguing, it is to invoke taxes and taxpayers, as in the first passage examined here. To imagine this marked coin as it makes its way around the city, passing through the hands of vendors, workers, government employees, municipal employees, all the while gaining that intricate and intimate knowledge of the city so prized by Duffy's eponymous colonial-metropolitan *flaneurs,* is to see the extent to which civic finance is the phantom appearance or trace of the imagined community, whose spatial and architectural orientation—whose sense of itself—was so roughly shaken by the conflagration of 1916. The coin's point of view, its special function as circulating medium, allows it privileged access to the mysteries of the social division of labor, mysteries inaccessible to the citizens alienated by that division of labor. And that is why Bloom releases it and desires its return, so that it may come back and disclose to him the humanly indescribable secrets of the urban totality.

Because the passage recapitulates minutely and spectrally the *Ulysses* conceit, there is also here at least a speculative answer to the question of who or what *narrates* "Ithaca," or at least the two passages examined here. Is it not possible—once we have described the narrating voice of the waterworks passage as a 'flow,' and once we have established that what is being described there is the movement of water through the city—that the "voice" of *Ithaca* is actually the chorus of those "waters of civic finance," reified, fetishized, and subjectivized, which, like Bloom's coin, are "dreaming about themselves through us," with "us" understood now as us "selfsupporting taxpayers, solvent, sound"? And if this were credible, then it means that the taxpayers' disavowal of indebtedness is powerfully rejected, overridden, or exposed by the dreams—utopian and communal—of those civic waters. When Bloom marks his coin, then, he moves beyond that petty-bourgeois disavowal, allowing the dream being dreamed through him to possess him fully, if momentarily. This is a kind of fetishism, to be sure; but again, to add a further corrective to Jameson, to

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say "fetishism" is not to say "commodity fetishism." It is simply that spectrality, or magic, or ghostliness upon which the whole concept of fetishism, from its origins in the prehistory of anthropology, derives itself as a so-called "scientific" concept created to explain so-called "primitive" societies.[93] This would have to be something like fetishism unbound from the commodity—to be blunt, something like a "good" fetishism. This is what Jameson's interpretation doesn't see, at least not fully. And it is this kind of imagining, this kind of magic, evoked by Jameson but not quite unfolded, that holds together the imagined community of Dublin through the historical transition and trauma of the years between 1904 and 1922.

At the very least, we can suppose a powerful sub- or unconscious connective flow that creates the imagined community in *Ulysses,* quite apart from and perhaps even in spite of the more conscious and directed versions of such communal relations: cultural-nationalist revivals, armed resistances, and so on. And thanks to Joyce, we are lucky enough not to have to abandon this other imagined community to the abstracted realm of mystifications like the "collective unconscious" or an "akasic medium"; in this case, we see magic and blunt economic materialism side by side or, as it were, in the same figure: the public works. If there is a community to be found in the alienation of the modern division of labor, from the anomie of urban anonymity, it is here in Bloom's coin, or rather, in the desire that Bloom's coin represents and articulates. Rather than see only the destruction of the erstwhile face-to-face communities of the precapitalist and the premodern, as Jameson does, Joyce actually presents us in "Ithaca" and "Wandering Rocks" with a reimagining of the urban community that, while still shot through with the sense of loss and alienation that Jameson highlights, is nevertheless a powerful, hopeful, and original imagining of the urban community. Meanwhile, Bloom's coin is still out there, adventuring its way home. His hope—and ours—for its return is the promise of the community-to-come, suspended somewhere between "not yet" and "time enough, sir. . . . Time enough."

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TWO. Aquacity

Portions of this chapter were previously published, and I thank the publishers for their permission to reproduce them here: "'The Waters of Civic Finance': Moneyed States in Joyce's *Ulysses*," *Novel: A Forum on Fiction* 36 (Summer 2003): 289–306; and "A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Urban Planner: Joyce and Dublin's Engineering Cultures," *Making Space in the Works of James Joyce,* ed. Valérie Bénéjam and John Bishop (London: Routledge, forthcoming). The epigraph for the section "Collective Structures of Invention," from Giedion's *Building in France* (*Bauen in Frankreich* [Leipzig: Klinkhardt and Bierman, 1928]), is quoted from Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project,* trans. Howard Eiland and Kevin McLaughlin (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 390–91.

1. *The Third Man,* dir. Carol Reed (British Lion Film Corporation, 1949).
2. Franco Moretti, *Modern Epic: The World System from Goethe to García Márquez* (New York: Verso, 1996), 123.
3. The name is actually Martins in the film, and the quote above is slightly inaccurate (it's actually as I reproduced it later in this chapter, "Do you believe, Mr. Martins, in the stream of consciousness?").
4. Joyce, *Portrait of the Artist,* 276. Subsequent page citations to this work are given parenthetically in the text.
5. Marjorie Howes and Derek Attridge, introduction to *Semicolonial Joyce,* ed. Derek Attridge and Marjorie Howes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 7.
6. Ibid., 10.
7. Pierre Bourdieu, "Pour un savoir engagé," *Le Monde Diplomatique,* February 2002, 3. "What might be the role of activists here and now [in the age of globalization]? That of working for the collective invention of collective structures of invention" (my translation).
8. For more on this argument, see Rebecca L. Walkowitz, *Cosmopolitan Style: Modernism beyond the Nation* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), especially ch. 2, "Joyce's Triviality."
9. Joyce, *Ulysses,* 17.160–82. Subsequent chapter and page citations are given parenthetically in the text.
10. Fredric Jameson, "*Ulysses* in History," in *James Joyce and Modern Literature,* ed. W. J. McCormack and Alistair Stead (London: Routledge and Keegan Paul, 1982), 126–41.
11. Joep Leerssen, *Remembrance and Imagination: Patterns in the Historical and Literary Representation of Ireland in the Nineteenth Century* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1997), 230.

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12. Jameson, "*Ulysses* in History," 140–41.

13. Ibid., 140.

14. Ibid.

15. Ibid., 126.

16. Leerssen, *Remembrance and Imagination,* 230.

17. Ibid., 231, emphasis in original.

18. Leo Bersani, "Against *Ulysses,*" in *James Joyce's "Ulysses": A Casebook,* ed. Derek Attridge (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 227.

19. Walkowitz, *Cosmopolitan Style,* 64.

20. Ariela Freedman, "Did It Flow? Bridging Aesthetics and History in Joyce's *Ulysses,*" *Modernism/Modernity* 13, no. 1 (2006): 858.

21. James E. McClellan and Harold Dorn, *Science and Technology in World History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), 31.

22. See ibid., ch. 3, "Pharaohs and Engineers." Several descriptive passages from their chapter reveal deep resonances with Joyce's waterworks, making it seem probable that Joyce had this long history of the Urban Revolution in mind when he wrote it: "Simple gardening was superceded by field agriculture based on large-scale water-management networks constructed and maintained as public works by conscripted labor gangs (the corvée) under the supervision of state employed engineers. . . . Subsistence-level farming gave way to the production of large surpluses of cereals . . . that could be taxed, stored, and redistributed" (31). They further emphasize that "large-scale hydraulic engineering projects" were the main motivation behind "the formation of large, highly centralized, bureaucratic states" (32). There is therefore every reason to see the waterworks as a kind of master-metaphor for the modern state.

23. Freedman, "Did It Flow?" 857.

24. Joseph Brady, "Dublin at the Turn of the Century," in *Dublin through Space and Time (c. 900–1900),* ed. Joseph Brady and Anngret Simms (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2001), 221–81, especially 238–41.

25. Jacinta Prunty, *Dublin Slums, 1800–1925* (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1999), 71.

26. John Norwood, "On the Working of the Sanitary Laws in Dublin, with Suggestions for Their Amendment," *Journal of the Social and Statistical Inquiry Society of Ireland* 6, no. 43 (1873): 232, quoted in Prunty, *Dublin Slums,* 71.

27. See Kincaid, *Postcolonial Dublin,* especially ch. 1, "*Dublin of the Future* and the Emergence of Town Planning in Ireland," 1–57.

28. Prunty, *Dublin Slums,* 14.

29. Ibid., 71.

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30. Charles Cameron and Edward Mapother, "Report on the Means for the Prevention of Disease in Dublin," *Reports and Printed Documents of the Corporation of Dublin* 1 (1879): 346, quoted in Prunty, *Dublin Slums,* 71.

31. I am indebted to Kevin Whelan for first demonstrating to me the political geography of the Dublin waterworks, and Joyce's presentation of it in this passage, when I presented a version of this chapter to the Notre Dame Irish Studies Summer School in Dublin in June of 2005.

32. Bruce Robbins, "The Sweatshop Sublime," *PMLA* 117 (January 2002): 84–97.

33. We will have good reason to return to the "sweatshop sublime" in its global significance later, but for now the term needs slight modification since we are talking exclusively about municipal finance, municipal tax structures, and a municipal division of labor.

34. See entries for *solvent* and *sound* in the *Oxford English Dictionary Online,* www.oed.com, June 1, 2008.

35. Martin Heidegger, "The Question Concerning Technology," in *The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays,* trans. William Lovitt (New York: Harper Perennial, 1977), 6–7.

36. Ibid., 7. In a footnote on the same page, the translator, William Lovitt, remarks on the German verb *vershulden,* which "has a wide range of meanings—to be indebted, to owe, to be guilty, to be responsible for or to, to cause. Heidegger intends to awaken all these meanings and to have connotations of mutual interdependence sound throughout this passage."

37. The difference between the "public" as a classical category and "society" or the social whole as a purely modern category—entirely foreign to Greek and Roman thought—is outlined in Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 22–78.

38. Enda Duffy, "Disappearing Dublin," in Attridge and Howes, *Semicolonial Joyce,* 37–38.

39. Leerssen, *Remembrance and Imagination,* 231.

40. I borrow the term *messianic power* loosely from Walter Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History," in *Illuminations,* ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), 254.

41. See also Vincent Cheng's discussion of the Milkwoman scene in his *Joyce, Race, and Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 156–57. Cheng describes the scene as "a wonderful parody of ethnographic encounter with a tribal culture," a spot-on description that nevertheless fails to account for the alternatives that Joyce, as I'm arguing, offers.

42. Freedman, "Did It Flow?" 857.

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43. Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature,* trans. Willard R. Trask (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 6.

44. Ibid., 7.

45. Ibid., 5.

46. Ibid., 552–53. Thank you to Michael Sayeau, who invited me to participate in his seminar "Modernist Simplicity" at the November 2007 Modernist Studies Association Conference in Long Beach, California, where he drew my attention to Auerbach's work and particularly to the final passage of *Mimesis.*

47. Declan Kiberd, *Irish Classics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 468.

48. Ibid.

49. Clive Hart, "Wandering Rocks," in *James Joyce's "Ulysses": Critical Essays,* ed. Clive Hart and David Hayman (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), 193.

50. Ibid., 196.

51. Ibid., 199.

52. Michael Seidel, *Epic Geography: James Joyce's "Ulysses"* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), 183.

53. See Chris Stillman, Robert Barklie, and Cathy Johnson, "Viking Iron-Smelting in Dublin's Temple Bar West," *Geology Today* 19 (November–December 2003): 216.

54. For more about the play between time and space in "Wandering Rocks," see also Luke Gibbons, "Spaces of Time through Times of Space: Joyce, Ireland, and Colonial Modernity," *Field Day Review* 1 (2005): 71–86.

55. The term is Homi Bhabha's, from his "Sly Civility," *October* 34 (Autumn 1985): 71–80. See especially 77–78, where Bhabha quotes the missionary frustration at recalcitrant natives who persist in their own religious beliefs by reinterpreting Christianity as capacious enough to accommodate them. I would simply suggest that in inventing a talking sewer, Joyce is working from within such sly civility.

56. The closest analogue that comes to mind is Bruno Latour's thought experiment in his *Aramis, or, The Love of Technology,* trans. Catherine Porter (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), where he intersperses—throughout his account of an automated public transportation system intended (but never implemented) in Paris—first-person narrative vignettes that suppose the transit system itself as a narrating voice. That voice insists on *being:* "I am lying in the middle of the large circle they are making around me, these ministers, cabinet heads, municipal officials, public employees, and engineers large and small. At the center of this big circle, I am the deep well into which

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they are tossing their wishes, their hopes, and their curses. Blessed, cursed. Loved, hated. Indifferent, passionate. Plural, singular, masculine, feminine, neutral. I am waiting for them all to grant me being. What is a self? The intersection of all the acts carried out in its name. But is that intersection full or empty? I exist if they agree, I die if they quarrel. . . . How can I become a being, an object, a thing—finally a self, yes, a full set, saturated with being—without them, without their agreement, without their coming to terms (since I myself am made from them, flesh of their flesh, a rib extracted from theirs). . . . How can I interest them all in me when they all love me differently? I can give them only what they have given me. I can hold them assembled together only if they keep me assembled. The 'I' that humans receive at birth—that is precisely what has to be created for me. I am in a prebirth state. I do not yet have a body. The dismemberment humans encounter in the tomb is my condition even before the cradle [. . .] The breath of life to which I aspire in order to make of my scattered members and my whitened bones a being that is not of reason—my soul—awaits your agreement, O you hors-d'oeuvres-eaters, who all agree today to defer my genesis until later. Indifferent to what you love. Rubicon-crossers who set up camp in the middle of the ford. Human beings contemptuous of things and thus contemptuous of yourselves" (200–202).

57. For more on the myths and meanings of the sewer, not in Dublin but in a comparative study of Paris and London, see David Pike, *Subterranean Cities: The World Beneath Paris and London, 1800–1945* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005), especially ch. 3, "Charon's Bark." See also, by the same author, *Metropolis on the Styx: The Underworlds of Modern Urban Culture, 1800–2001* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007).

58. D.A. Miller, *The Novel and the Police* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 24. Miller argues that the Victorian novel fulfills a policing function and that what he calls "panoptical narration" is "a kind of police." "Panoptical narration" fully situates what is otherwise known as omniscient narration within the ambitions of Victorian engineering culture and Benthamite utilitarianism. In Joyce's case, however, I would further gloss *police* as *polis* in order to drop the Foucauldian association with discipline, and I would assert, somewhat in contradistinction to Miller, that in *Ulysses* water and sanitation function as panoptical narrators whose mission is not discipline per se but governmentality more broadly. In *Ulysses,* a strong utopian element persists in the institution of the public works such that critics like Jameson, Leerssen, and Kiberd all pick up on it. The panoptical narrator in *Ulysses* is therefore not the same panoptical narrator of the Victorian novel, though Miller's term is tremendously instructive, in slightly modified form, for talking about modernism and Joyce in particular.

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59. Ann Banfield, *Unspeakable Sentences: Narration and Representation in the Language of Fiction* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1982), 69–70.

60. Ann Banfield, "L'Imparfait de l'Objectif: The Imperfect of the Object Glass," *Camera Obscura* 24 (Fall 1990): 77, quoted in Martin Jay, "Experience without a Subject: Walter Benjamin and the Novel," in *The Actuality of Walter Benjamin,* ed. Laura Marcus and Lynda Nead (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1993), 153.

61. In Jürgen Habermas, "Consciousness-Raising or Redemptive Criticism—The Contemporaneity of Walter Benjamin," *New German Critique* 17 (Spring 1979): 46, also quoted in Jay, "Experience without a Subject," 155.

62. Jay, "Experience without a Subject," 155.

63. Victor Hugo, *Les Misérables,* trans. Lee Fahnestock and Norman MacAfee (New York: Penguin, 1987), 1261. Hugo's French reads: "L'égout, c'est la conscience de la ville." See Victor Hugo, *Les Misérables,* 4 vols. (Paris: Éditeurs Nelson, 1930), 4:191. My thanks go to Ann Banfield for directing me to this passage in Hugo's novel.

64. Bernard Stiegler, *Technics and Time,* vol. 1, *The Fault of Epimetheus,* trans. Richard Beardsworth and George Collins (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 1.

65. Ibid., 13.

66. It is of interest to me that Alex Woloch uses this passage from *Ulysses* as an epigram to his chapter on Dickens's *Great Expectations,* "Partings Welded Together: The Character-System in *Great Expectations,*" in *The One vs. the Many: Minor Characters and the Space of the Protagonist in the Novel* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 178–243. He seems to imply, without performing a reading of the passage, that the "beingless beings" Stephen evokes in reference to the power plant might be part of his proposed novelistic "character-system" in some way. I would say: as a character, or as a part of the character-space, in the sense that, like Bloom but with more ambivalence, Stephen thinks of machines as beings that talk "in their own way" (*Ulysses,* 7.175).

67. Ellmann, *James Joyce,* 25.

68. Critics have interpreted this passage variously. Andrew Gibson sees in Stephen's "two roaring worlds" another allusion to his struggle against two masters, the Catholic Church and the British Empire. Andrew Gibson, *Joyce's Revenge* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 99. Daniel R. Schwarz is the only other critic I've come across who really emphasizes the importance of the rapidly expanding technology of electricity in this passage: "Influenced by the Futurists and perhaps, too, by Constructivists and Suprematists, Joyce was fascinated by the possibilities of machines; as Stephen responds to the energy and power of machinery, we realize that the technique of 'mechanics' has a celebratory

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function [albeit one that goes seemingly unrecognized by Stephen here]. We recall, too, that Bloom had responded to the printing machines in 'Aeolus' in terms which anthropomorphized them. . . . Isn't the pumping heart a metaphor for the throbbing dynamos of the Dublin Corporation Electric Light Station which circulate—in the form of electricity and light—the necessary nourishment to the industrial city? That his heart responds rhythmically to the pulsations of the machine . . . not only validates his aesthetic credo for the man of genius—'He found in the world without as actual what was in his world within as possible'—but stretches it to include experiences beyond encounters with other people (U.213; X.1041–2). . . . By using the heart as signifier of machinery and vice versa, Stephen is growing into the writer who might write the Irish epic." Daniel R. Schwarz, *Reading Joyce's "Ulysses"* (London: Macmillan, 1987), 156–57.

69. See Don Gifford, *"Ulysses" Annotated: Notes for James Joyce's "Ulysses"* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 276.

70. Luke Gibbons, "Ghostly Light: Specters of Modernity in James Joyce's and John Huston's *The Dead,*" in *The Blackwell Companion to James Joyce,* ed. Richard Brown (London: Blackwell, 2008), 359. Thanks to Luke Gibbons for allowing me to cite from the proofs.

71. The word *paraheliotropic* is richly suggestive for thinking about the consequences of public lighting. Turning night into day, which was the way many commentators at the time described such public street lighting, would have a profound effect on the diurnal rhythms of everyday life, so profound that the conversations about that effect are neutralized in repetition and banality—exactly the effect that the alienating reportage of "Ithaca" has on the particular conversation between Bloom and Stephen. The term *paraheliotropic* is not one of Joyce's pseudoscientific neologisms, scattered throughout "Ithaca." It was first used by Darwin in his *Origin of the Species* to describe plants that control their exposure to sunlight by turning their leafage at an angle to the sun's rays. As an evolutionary adaptation, this is a brilliant metaphor to describe human adaptations to the new, modern metropolis. See entry for *paraheliotropic* in the *Oxford English Dictionary Online,* www.oed.com, June 1, 2008. For more on Joycean pseudoscience in "Ithaca," see Gibson, *Joyce's Revenge,* 243–46.

72. See Nolan, "Modernism," 167. Nolan reads the passage as a parody in which "even dreams of Nirvana have been overtaken by images of a domestic paradise," and as Joyce's attempt to trace "the relationship between all sorts of material and spiritual deprivation, and concomitant fantasies of plenitude and pleasure" (167). Though I agree with Nolan about the import of the passage itself, I am arguing here that the humor of the passage is the symptom of the post-Socratic relationship to modern technology that *Ulysses* as a whole thor-

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oughly critiques; the passage is not, in other words, Joyce's last word on "all modern conveniences," but rather like MacHugh's watercloset joke, as we saw in chapter 1, the beginning of an investigation into and a dismantling of the joke's assumptions.

73. At least one other Joycean has identified the punning play in "aquacity." See Robert Adams Day, "Joyce's AquaCities," in *Joyce in the Hibernian Metropolis: Essays,* ed. Morris Beja and David Norris (Columbus: State University of Ohio Press, 1996), 3–20.

74. Quoted in Donald F. Theall, *James Joyce's Techno-Poetics* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 34.

75. Stanislaus Joyce, *Recollections of James Joyce* (New York: James Joyce Society, 1950), 20, quoted in Kevin Whelan, "The Memories of 'The Dead,'" *Yale Journal of Criticism* 15, no. 1 (2002): 69.

76. James Joyce, *Dubliners* (New York: Penguin, 1996), 219. Subsequent page citations to this work are given parenthetically in the text.

77. Gibbons, "Ghostly Light," 359.

78. Ibid., 360–61.

79. Ibid., 361.

80. Rynne, *Industrial Ireland,* 430.

81. For more on the question of Gretta's social mobility and her status as an internal migrant worker before her marriage to Gabriel, see Marjorie Howes, "How Many People Has Gretta Conroy Killed?" in her *Colonial Crossings: Figures in Irish Literary History* (Dublin: Field Day Publications, 2006), 79–93. Her essay focuses on Gretta as a figure for the Irish migrant woman whose difficult choices leave in their wake a number of broken hearts, violated class boundaries, and dead bodies.

82. All this would seem like a classic case of "gaslighting"—"to manipulate a person by psychological means into questioning his or her own sanity"—if it weren't for the fact that the term doesn't come into usage until after the release of George Cukor's 1944 film *Gaslight,* which starred Ingrid Bergman, Charles Boyer, and Joseph Cotten. (In *The Third Man* Cotten coincidentally played Holly Martins, whose character is significant to this chapter only for having nothing to say about the theory of the novel, or the stream of consciousness, or James Joyce). The film was based on Patrick Hamilton's 1938 play *Angel Street.* Patrick Hamilton, *Angel Street: A Victorian Thriller in Three Acts* (Los Angeles: Samuel French, 1966). *Gaslighting* is an anachronism as far as "The Dead" is concerned, though clearly apt as a description of the role of gaslight in Gabriel's psychological agonies. See "gaslighting," *Oxford English Dictionary Online,* January 20, 2009, www.oed.com.

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83. Kevis Goodman, *Georgic Modernity and British Romanticism: Poetry and the Mediation of History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 17–18. Goodman cites Aristotle's definition of medium in his *De Anima,* given as a visual example and wholly applicable to Joyce's use of gaslight in "The Dead": "Democritus is mistaken in thinking that if the intervening space *[to metaxu]* were empty, even an ant in the sky would be clearly visible; for this is impossible. For vision occurs when the faculty of sense is affected; as it cannot be acted upon by the seen color [i.e., of the object] itself, there only remains the medium *[to metaxu]* to act on it. So that some medium *[metaxu]* must exist; in fact, if it [*metaxu* implied from previous clause] were empty, sight would not only be not accurate but we would see nothing altogether" (*De Anima* 419a, 16–21, quoted in Goodman, *Georgic Modernity,* 18).

84. K. Whelan, "Memories of 'The Dead,'" 65.

85. Ellmann, *James Joyce,* 500–501. "Ithaca" evolved until the very last minute before publication, though the waterworks passage remained remarkably similar throughout the proofsheets. See Michael Groden, ed., *James Joyce's "Ulysses," "Ithaca" and "Penelope," a Facsimile of Placards for Episodes 17–18* (New York: Garland, 1978).

86. Duffy, "Disappearing Dublin," 49.

87. This passage remained entirely unchanged in the proofsheets for "Ithaca," like the waterworks passage, which underwent only minimal changes. See Groden, *James Joyce's "Ulysses."*

88. Jameson, "*Ulysses* in History," 131.

89. Emer Nolan, "State of the Art: Joyce and Postcolonialism," in Attridge and Howes, *Semicolonial Joyce,* 93.

90. Ibid.

91. Jameson, "*Ulysses* in History,"140.

92. Ibid., 139.

93. For the origins of the term *fetish* in John Atkins's *A Voyage to Guinea, Brasil, and the West Indies,* written in 1735, see Patrick Brantlinger, *Fictions of State: Culture and Credit in Britain, 1694–1994* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), 42. Atkins originally used the term to infantilize and "barbarianize" the natives he encountered on his journeys; Freud used it in an ostensibly depoliticized way; and Marx used it as a condemnation of capitalism. But the point is perhaps that "fetishism" of one sort or another may be the founding gesture of any given imagined community and ought not be considered an aberration or perversion of sexuality, or capitalism, or barbarism, or social organization, and so on.

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THREE. A Fountain of Nationality

1. By proposing the "allegory of the nation-state," I seek to define a third way of thinking about allegory in postcolonial literature that borrows and differentiates itself from Fredric Jameson's understanding of national allegory on one side and Abdul JanMohamed's understanding of the colonial and anticolonial Manichean allegory on the other. See Fredric Jameson, "Third-World Literature in the Era of Multinational Capitalism," *Social Text* 15 (1986): 65–88; and Abdul JanMohamed, "The Economy of Manichean Allegory: The Function of Racial Difference in Colonialist Literature," in *"Race," Writing and Difference,* ed. Henry Louis Gates (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 78–106.

2. Douglas Hyde, "The Necessity for De-Anglicising Ireland," in *Language, Lore and Lyrics: Essays and Lectures,* ed. Breandan O Conaire (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1986), 153–70.

3. O'Connor, *Haunted English,* xvii. I borrow, somewhat polemically, the title of my chapter, "Haunted Infrastructure," from the title of her book.

4. W. B. Yeats, "The De-Anglicising of Ireland," *United Ireland,* December 12, 1892, repr. in *Yeats's Poetry Drama and Prose,* ed. James Pethica (New York: W.W. Norton, 2000), 261.

5. Ibid., 262.

6. Ibid.

7. Chinua Achebe, "English and the African Writer" (*Transition* 4, no. 18 [1965]), repr. in "The Anniversary Issue: Selections from *Transition,* 1961–1976," special issue, *Transition* 75–76 (1997): 345.

8. "Fountain," *OED* Online, www.oed.com, April 15, 2009.

9. Ellmann, *James Joyce,* 102–3.

10. Ibid., 104.

11. Anthony Cronin, *No Laughing Matter: The Life and Times of Flann O'Brien* (New York: International Publishing, 1998), 75.

12. Clair Wills, *That Neutral Island: A Cultural History of Ireland during the Second World War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 33. The decline of the language was concurrent and consonant with other demographic trends. "Between 1911 and 1936 the number of agricultural labourers dropped from 300,000 to 150,000. Emigration accelerated from an average level of around 23,000 during the first two decades of the century to over 33,000 during the 1921–31 period, and there was an absolute fall of 89,000 in the size of the population." See also Andrew MacLaran, *Dublin: The Shaping of a Capital* (London: Belhaven Press, 1993), 52–53.