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“The theme of *Hamlet* in Joyce’s *Ulysses*: The reflections of Stephen Dedalus’s aesthetic theory in his later theory of *Hamlet* and the specific implications that arise from it”

BAKALÁŘSKÁ PRÁCE

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Prague, 18 August 2011

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Permission

I have no objections to the BA thesis being borrowed and used for study purposes.

Souhlasím se zapůjčením bakalářské práce ke studijním účelům.

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Introduction

The presence of Shakespeare in James Joyce's *Ulysses* is generally known. The playwright appears there in many forms: as a famous renaissance figure, as an artist, as a father and mainly in terms of his works which are thought about, quoted or referred to. The sum of all these elements establishes certain communication between renaissance England and modernist Ireland that is of a vital significance in the novel. However, what must be emphasised in the first place is the way in which Joyce manipulates the playwright: rather than paying homage to him, he adopts characters, situations or quotations out of his works in order to distort and reassemble them. The result of such treatment is a purely different, often ironical message or subtext. In Booker's words, "Joyce approaches Shakespeare's texts not with awe and reverence but with scissors and paste in hand."¹

Stephen Dedalus's theory of *Hamlet* represents one of the major themes in *Ulysses*. The chapter dedicated exclusively to the theory is "Scylla and Charybdis" where Stephen delivers it to his literary acquaintances. The theory does not have its roots in *Ulysses*; its background is being formed already in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and even before that in *Stephen Hero*. This thesis deals with the gradual formation of Stephen's thoughts on aesthetics from *A Portrait* to *Ulysses*, with particular focus on his theory of *Hamlet*. At this point, it is essential to be aware of the fact that despite the acknowledged similarity between Joyce's and Stephen's views (both *A Portrait* and *Ulysses* are to a great extent autobiographical), Stephen must be regarded as a fictional protagonist. Moreover, Joyce does not hesitate to

¹ Keith M. Booker, "Shakespeare, Joyce's Contemporary: The Politics and Poetics of Literary Authority," *Joyce, Bakhtin and the Literary Tradition* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995) 156.

portray his younger alter-ego ironically – in fact, there is frequently the comical contrast between Stephen's pride and the way he is depicted by Joyce.

Stephen's theory of *Hamlet* is an attempt to prove the significance of real life for an artistic creation. Stephen concentrates on the intimate relationship between the artist and his protagonists, using religious analogies. He presents a view on what an ideal artist should be like and tries to support it with the model-artist Shakespeare. The theory is not wholly logical, discrepancies often occur. It is no wonder since the main purpose of it is an attempt of Stephen to come to terms with his personal troubles and to plan his artistic future. What is the most remarkable about the theory is its application within the narrative of *Ulysses*, which means that Joyce uses Stephen's tenets and incorporates them into the characters, relationships and events of *Ulysses*. In doing so, he adds a number of ironical shifts, distortions and other complexities. The most profound irony is that although Stephen fails to persuade both his listeners and himself by his lecture in "Scylla and Charybdis", all its opponents exist in a world running according to its rules; the relationships similar to that between King Hamlet and Hamlet, between Shakespeare and Ann Hathaway or between Hamlet and Hamnet exist within the narrative, and in several variations. At the extreme, the theory reaches beyond the narrative, implying Joyce in the role of the artist in charge, who assumes the place of Stephen's Shakespeare and thus is responsible not only for the whole wor(l)d of *Ulysses* yet likewise for the connection between him, Stephen and Bloom on the basis of Stephen's theory about Shakespeare and *Hamlet* protagonists. Concerning this "applied" theory, it is absolutely essential to stress that the protagonists from Shakespeare's *Hamlet* that are involved in it are *not* Shakespeare's directly but Shakespeare's as seen by Stephen.

The thesis is divided into four chapters, each of which focuses on one specific view on Stephen's theory of *Hamlet*. The first chapter is concerned with its origins as formed by Stephen's aesthetic views in *Stephen Hero* and *A Portrait*. It discusses the main points of the theory from an aesthetic perspective and comments on the problems one may encounter in this respect. Moreover, it outlines the irony with which Joyce treats Stephen's aesthetic views in his own, more mature theory of *Hamlet*. The following chapter sums up and explains the substance of Stephen's *Hamlet* theory and outlines the problems connected with Stephen's unreliability together with the reactions Stephen receives from his opponents. Also, it comments

on Stephen's way of delivering the speech, as well as on his psychological state that accompanies it. The third chapter analyses the manner in which Stephen's *Hamlet* theory is reflected in the narrative of *Ulysses*. It discusses the shifts the original theory has undergone and accounts for the possible roles one can perceive there. Finally, it concentrates on the arguable issue concerning the extent to which Joyce can be counted among the characters involved and on the manner in which his existence is insinuated. The final chapter discusses the issues of fatherhood and motherhood with respect to the *Hamlet* theory. It attempts to account for Stephen's attitude to life and art by explaining possible reasons for the formation of the theory. Generally, a woman attains a prominent position in *Ulysses*, while the authority of men appears to be weakened. This is reflected in the gender ambiguities occurring in the "applied" theory. These shifts are commented upon, in particular the major change involving the role of Stephen's mother. All in all, the comparison of the two different versions of the *Hamlet* theory (Stephen's and Joyce's) offers a remarkable example of a maturation of an (the) artist; Joyce's ironical detachment turns out to be more informative than Stephen's impatient endeavour and what Stephen fails to explain is, at least to some extent, clarified by the form and content of *Ulysses*.

Chapter 1:

Stephen's aesthetic theory: origins of the *Hamlet* paradox

Stephen's aesthetic theory is given attention in the draft of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, *Stephen Hero*. There, it appears mainly in his controversial lecture on "Life and Art". Subsequently, Stephen's views are condensed in *A Portrait of the Artist* to eventually assume a brand new form in *Ulysses* since there, Stephen exemplifies his aesthetic points by putting forth an example of Shakespeare's "life and art". Goldberg warns the reader not to equal Stephen's aesthetics with Joyce's, stressing that Joyce was certainly aware of Stephen's limitations.² Curiously, as to the differences among the individual versions in *Stephen Hero*, *A Portrait* and *Ulysses*, the earliest in *Stephen Hero* is closer to that in *Ulysses*; it better depicts the interconnection of life and the work of art. Yet in spite of the modifications, the main purpose of the aesthetic theory remains: even when wrapped in the *Hamlet* issue, it still primarily serves as a means for Stephen to realise his own identity rather than to introduce an original and consistent viewpoint on art. To grasp the essence of Stephen's theory of *Hamlet*, one should be acquainted with its aesthetic background: the terms and concepts Stephen employs, his views on art he holds in *Ulysses* and also Joyce's use of Stephen's aesthetics inside the narrative of *Ulysses*.

To begin with, one of the essential concepts that prepare the ground for Stephen's *Hamlet* theory is the opposition of stasis and kinesis. Static emotions

² S. L. Goldberg, "Art and Life: The Aesthetic of the *Portrait*," *Twentieth Century Interpretations of A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, ed. William M. Schutte (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1968) 64.

(comprising pity and terror) cause a so-called “aesthetic stasis” which goes hand-in-hand with spiritual detachment of the beholder. The detachment that Stephen desires is capable of producing freedom of the artist in the form of “impersonal objectivity”.³ According to Goldberg, this freedom gives meaning to the “apostolic succession” from Shakespeare to Hamnet; in other words, the freedom of the artist is the power handed on by the father to his spiritual son.⁴ In *A Portrait*, kinesis is regarded by Stephen as inferior since kinetic emotions are only physical, exciting “a purely reflex action of the nervous system”⁵. They are evoked by “improper” art. While in *A Portrait*, Stephen cuts art off everything that is physical and moral⁶, in *Ulysses* he seems to realise that kinetic appetites excited by art cannot be omitted. Noon comments on the issue by stressing that Stephen’s theory of *Hamlet* reflects the impossibility to achieve a complete stasis, which is due to man’s “incompleteness and art’s insufficiency”⁷.

These present things

The value of the artist’s life for his or her work constitutes the heart of Stephen’s *Hamlet* theory and Stephen’s occupation with this issue in *Ulysses* draws on several concepts Stephen dealt with before in *Stephen Hero* and the *Portrait*. These are:

1. The important opposition of “classical” and “romantic” temper. It represents one of the main points Stephen tries to make in *Stephen Hero*, where he strongly favours the classical temper; for him, it is a constant state of an artistic mind, not belonging to any specific age or nation. It is characterised by security, sanity, satisfaction and patience⁸, in contrast to the romantic temper which is the very opposite: insecure, impatient and above all insensible. The genres of the romantic temper (adventures, heroic tales, etc) lack engagement with life, which is wrong. The classical temper instead focuses on the “present things” and ascribes to them a

³ S.L.Goldberg, “Art and Freedom: the Aesthetic of Ulysses,” *The Classical Temper: A Study of James Joyce’s Ulysses* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1969) 82.

⁴ Goldberg, “Art and Freedom: the Aesthetic of Ulysses” 83.

⁵ James Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (London: Penguin Books, 1992) 223.

⁶ Goldberg, “Art and Life: The Aesthetic of the *Portrait*” 70.

⁷ William T. Noon, *Joyce and Aquinas* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1957) 58.

⁸ James Joyce, *Stephen Hero* (London: Paladin, 1991) 209.

meaning which an intelligent reader can discover.⁹ Thus, Stephen's main objective is that each work of art should be concerned with reality. In this respect, there is a remarkable contrast between Stephen's attitude to life and his *Hamlet* theory; on the one hand, Stephen wants to free himself from all bonds and become a detached artist. On the other, his theory argues for the very opposite: the impact of outward circumstances on the creative process. It may look like a contradiction yet it is not so since another suggestion in *Stephen Hero* is that it is the *conflict* between romantics and classicals that is the "condition of all achievement"¹⁰. Despite several inconsistencies in Stephen's aesthetic views, it could be said that in him, there has always been the requisite "battle" of these two opposing forces. This struggle must end in reconciliation, which means that a genuine artist simultaneously contemplates both "the truth of its own being and the truth of the visible world."¹¹ This is perceivable both in Stephen's account of Shakespeare and in Joyce and his creation of *Ulysses*.

2. The three forms of art: lyric, epic and drama. Lyric is the most personal artistic expression and therefore the lowest. Epic is defined by Stephen in a way that the artist enters his own narrative, "flowing round and round the persons and the action like a vital sea"¹²; it is the connecting link between the lyric and the highest form of art, the dramatic. For Stephen, the protagonists of dramatic art possess power to live a proper life of their own within the work of art due to the inherent independence of immortal dramatic art on its mortal creator. Stephen claims that dramatic art consists of "life purified in and reprojected from the human imagination"¹³. Therefore, dramatic art is the product of the classical temper: it draws on situations encountered in real life yet at the same time the artist's imagination reshapes them. The artist can exist "within or behind or beyond or above" his artwork yet he can no longer alter it; he is distanced from his work of art, "refined out of existence"¹⁴ – this in a way "deistic" approach proves essential for Stephen's theory of *Hamlet*: the artist is a ghost in relation to his creation, a ghost

⁹ Joyce, *Stephen Hero* 83.

¹⁰ Joyce, *Stephen Hero* 108.

¹¹ Robert Kellogg, "Scylla and Charybdis," *James Joyce's Ulysses*, ed. Clive Hart and David Hayman (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1974) 157.

¹² Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* 233.

¹³ Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* 233.

¹⁴ Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* 233.

who can no longer change anything as the ghost of King Hamlet cannot. According to Noon, the concept of a work of art cannot be seen as complying with Stephen's definition of "dramatic art". He writes that the poet Shakespeare in Stephen's *Hamlet* theory "is based not on the principle that the dramatic artist is refined out of existence but on the principle that artist puts himself into his work"¹⁵ and that the purpose of the theory is to prove the omnipresence of Shakespeare's personal experience in all the protagonists of his plays.¹⁶ However, it rather seems that the creator puts *aspects* of himself, refined by his imagination, into his work of art, not his real "self". Likewise, it is essential to be aware of the distinction between Stephen's theory in "Scylla and Charybdis" and its later reorganisation by Joyce in the plot of *Ulysses*. While the former agrees partly with my view and partly with Noon (as the lecture proceeds, Stephen leaves the concept that Shakespeare is Hamlet's ghost and accepts another one, that the artist and his work are one), in the case of the latter there is a great deal of evidence for Joyce being precisely the artist "refined out of existence" and it is possible to discover links between him and particular protagonists (more on this issue in the third chapter).

3. The importance of the artist's life for his work is also related to the Aristotelian (and scholastic) notion of knowledge where the "spiritual" essence of things that art tries to capture can be found only in the things themselves. Goldberg expands on this issue: for Aristotle and the scholastics, everything is composed of matter and form. When getting to know an object or a phenomenon, the person achieves possession of the "abstracted form of the object"¹⁷. Since the capacity for knowledge is endless, the soul of an individual can be seen as the "form of forms" (Stephen reflects on this issue in *Ulysses*: the soul is "in a manner all that is: [...] the form of forms"(31)). When creating, the artist uses the forms stored in his mind¹⁸. This confirms he or she cannot create anything out of the void; everything has already been encountered in the course of his or her life and his or her imagination only adjusts it.

¹⁵ Noon 57.

¹⁶ Noon 57.

¹⁷ Goldberg, "Art and Freedom: the Aesthetic of Ulysses" 73.

¹⁸ Goldberg, "Art and Freedom: the Aesthetic of Ulysses" 74.

Religious parallels

“Damn that fellow’s noise in the street.” (623)

Stephen works on his aesthetics “by the light of [...] Aristotle and Aquinas”¹⁹. However, Stephen diverts from Aquinas in that he is not engaged in religion yet purely in art – therefore, one should not look for any theological statement in Stephen’s views. In the words of Goldberg, we can see the religious parallels as “only analogies, not identifications”.²⁰ Stephen battles against “the antique principle that the end of art is to instruct, to elevate and to amuse”²¹ and he chooses Aquinas as the background for his views because he is too abstract and his definition of beauty does not contain any puritanic view on aesthetic purpose.²² Interestingly, Stephen’s rejection of religion seems to contradict the way in which he works with its tenets; sometimes he tries to justify his views referring to the Church (for instance when defining spiritual fatherhood) so it is evident that even though he strives to appear defiant, there is still hidden respect towards religion in him.

The relation between a work of art and the artist

Stephen’s idea of forming an artist is based on the Sabellian heresy - a view in which there is no difference in the persons of the Trinity. In order for the artist to become capable of producing dramatic art, he needs to become his own father first, which must be preceded by disposing of all relations and responsibilities. As for the relation between the artist and his work of art, Stephen’s concept can remind one of the Sabellian heresy, too, yet the issue is overall more complex, as has already been insinuated above in the passage on dramatic art.

Regarding the organisation of a work of art, Kellogg’s view is that Stephen rejects Sabellian heresy and bases his *Hamlet* theory relations on the Trinity. Kellogg suggests that the artist sends a consubstantial second person into his creation in order

¹⁹ Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* 202.

²⁰ Goldberg, “Art and Life: The Aesthetic of the *Portrait*,” 67.

²¹ Joyce, *Stephen Hero* 84.

²² Joyce, *Stephen Hero* 84.

to “mediate between him and himself”.²³ Thus, Stephen has “the jesuit strain injected the wrong way” because it is the creation that is eternal and immutable, not the creator, who is only a ghost as he is subjected to the temporal order.²⁴ Nevertheless, provided that Stephen based his theory on Aquinas, it seems that the artist sends two persons, or “processions“, in Aquinas’s terminology, into his creation, not only one. Aquinas puts it in the following way: “The divine processions can be derived only from the actions which remain within the agent. In a nature which is intellectual, and in the divine nature these actions are two, the acts of intelligence and of will.”²⁵ Hence, Aquinas distinguishes between two processions based on intelligence and will and thus explains the Word (Son) and Love (Holy Ghost). Although the analogy in *Ulysses* can be by no means equalled with Aquinas (there is no religious purpose in Stephen’s doctrine), it is fairly probable that Stephen’s “applied Aquinas” aesthetic theory adheres to the basic premises concerning the Trinity. Shakespeare is seen by Stephen as the father of the whole *Hamlet*, yet the processions from him are only two; the ghost and prince Hamlet. Likewise, Aquinas’s explanation fits the relation between Joyce and his protagonists Stephen and Bloom, which will be discussed in the third chapter. Rader perceives the whole Trinity inside the plot of *Ulysses* – Stephen as “Son”, Bloom as “Father” and sailor Murphy as “Holy Ghost”, the “narrative” version of Joyce.²⁶ William T. Noon, in contrast, sees the relation between the artist and his work in terms of Sabellian heresy, stating that Stephen perceives no distinction between the artist and his work.²⁷ Noon further implies that the abandoning of the Trinity concept and change towards Sabellian heresy is a gradual process.²⁸ That is true since Stephen abolishes the distinctions between Hamlet, Hamlet’s ghost and Shakespeare only later in his “Scylla and Charybdis” speech: at the beginning he wants to prove that it was the King Hamlet with whom Shakespeare identified *more* than with Hamlet – which clearly implies that at least at the beginning, he does *not* see them as equal. As the speech progresses, it becomes evident that for Stephen, the ghost *is* Hamlet and therefore Shakespeare is not mainly

²³ Kellogg 168.

²⁴ Kellogg 168-169.

²⁵ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, IntraText CT, FP Q[27] A[5] Body Para. 1/1, 30 June 2011 <http://www.intratext.com/IXT/ENG0023/_PR.HTM#K>

²⁶ Ralph W. Rader, “The Logic of *Ulysses*,” *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 10, No. 4 (Jun., 1984), *jstor*, 15 January 2011 <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/1343311>> 570.

²⁷ Noon 115.

²⁸ Noon 122.

King Hamlet but “all in all” (272). The same tendency manifests itself in the narrative of *Ulysses*; Stephen becomes Bloom and Bloom becomes Stephen²⁹: they merge into “Blephen and Stoom”.

Those written worlds

“In the beginning was the word, in the end the world without end.” (626)

Some of Stephen’s aesthetic views are set into motion in the narrative of *Ulysses*, for instance the world-work of art analogy. It might have been the indispensability of the symbiotic relationship between art and life that encouraged Stephen to invent the link between the world created by God and a work of art created by an artist. As soon as the artist goes through a negative experience “that must be wished for”³⁰, gets rid of all bonds, and becomes an androgynous unmade unbegotten figure (to be discussed in the chapter four), he makes use of his “virgin womb of imagination”³¹ and is finally able to create a new world. Or word? In *Ulysses*, the play on word and world is unceasing, as well as the traces of the God-artist analogy. The “Word”, with capital “W”, means not only God’s Word in *Ulysses*, yet clearly also an outcome of an artistic activity. Stephen wants to know the “word known to all men” (680-683), which is most probably “love” (although other interpretations exist, for instance that it is Molly’s final “yes”³² or, according to the speech of May’s ghost in “Circe”, it could be also “prayer” or “mother”(682)). Notably, in Aquinas, Love is equalled with the Holy Ghost³³. Since it is possible to read Bloom as an equivalent of King Hamlet’s ghost (which creates the analogy with the “Holy Ghost”), it could be understood as an implied proof that Stephen really needs to make friends with Bloom.

Another Thomist concept obviously operating within *Ulysses* is predestination; the future is unchangeable, everything is pre-ordered by God. It influenced not only Stephen’s theory, but mainly its reflection in the narrative of *Ulysses* as “ineluctability” runs through it all and Stephen is, literally, the w(W)ord

²⁹ Noon 123.

³⁰ Richard Ellmann, *Ulysses on the Liffey* (London: Faber and Faber, 1972) 87.

³¹ Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* 236.

³² Mack Smith, “The Structural Rhythm of *Ulysses*: Dominant to Love to Return,” *Twentieth Century Literature*, Vol. 30, No. 4 (Winter, 1984), *jstor*, 17 January 2011 <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/441409>> 418.

³³ Aquinas FP Q[27] A[5] Body Para. 1/1.

being predetermined to create the world of *Ulysses*. What is worth stressing at this point is the paradoxical nature of the narrative of *Ulysses* in that it predetermines itself: in other words, the narrative predicts, via Stephen the artist as a young man, the future creation of its already existing self. Stephen fails to recognize the paradox: for him, through the present all future “plunges to the past.” (238) In fact, present and future merge in *Ulysses* - the work of art that Joyce, the mature version of Stephen, manages to create (*Ulysses*) is autonomous even in relation to time.

To sum up, what is implied by Stephen's thoughts in *Ulysses* is that the creation of art originates in and draws from real life and yet it must not reproduce it accurately, completely. The subject of art should be moved into another level of existence, the artistic, where one can recognize the shadow (the “ghost”) of the ordinary world yet at the same time can be aware of the difference between the two worlds, the created one and the real one. In fact, this well applies to *Ulysses*, too; though harbouring a great number of autobiographic features, they are modified to such an extent it is no more possible to regard it as a biography. The production of a work of art draws from the rules of the classical temper, yet furthermore, there need to be also features of the romantic temper which provide it with symbolic timelessness.

Chapter 2

Essential points of Stephen's *Hamlet* theory

"It's quite simple. He proves by algebra that Hamlet's grandson is Shakespeare's grandfather and that he himself is the ghost of his own father." (21)

Perhaps the most obvious reason for Stephen's choice of Shakespeare is that Shakespeare exemplifies a great artist, who easily falls within the category of a godlike creator whom Stephen introduced in his aesthetic theory and thus Stephen's God-artist analogy fits perfectly. Furthermore, Shakespeare, at least from Stephen's perspective, represents the fusion of the classical and the romantic temper³⁴ to a great extent. Shakespeare is above all English and therefore every quote of him or mention of him implies England and with it inevitably the English rule over Ireland. As Stephen wants to break free from Ireland, the use of Shakespeare as a model artist for himself only strengthens his rebellion. Another view could be that Stephen selects Shakespeare as a representative of an artist of cosmopolitan relevance over Irish provincialism. This is not the only private reason of Stephen for selecting Shakespeare: Maud Ellmann suggests that Stephen's choice of the play *Hamlet* might have been influenced by his Oedipal complex because he saw the analogy between him and Hamlet who was not able to kill Claudius because his uncle made his subconscious wish come true.³⁵ Schutte summed this view up when he wrote that Stephen "settled on the career of William Shakespeare as one which may provide a

³⁴ Kellogg 157.

³⁵ Maud Ellmann, "The Ghosts of Ulysses," *James Joyce: The Artist and the Labyrinth*, ed. Augustine Martin (London: Ryan Publishing, 1990) 201.

key to the understanding of his own condition.”³⁶ What equally contributes to Stephen’s personal interest in Shakespeare, is the readiness with which he is able to distort the facts the theory is built on.

Shrewridden Shakespeare: the play is the thing.

As for the objectives of his theory, Stephen intends to substantiate that the playwright’s private life was crucial for the content and the development of the themes in his plays. Overall, it mostly draws on Stephen’s aesthetic system dealt with in the previous chapter. Stephen suggests that Shakespeare saw himself as King Hamlet rather than prince Hamlet; for Stephen, the prince epitomizes Hamnet, Shakespeare’s dead son. (265). As the theory proceeds, Stephen assumes that Ann Hathaway seduced the eight-years younger Shakespeare and when, after their marriage, Shakespeare went to London, she was unfaithful to him with his two brothers, Edmund and Richard. The theory thus implies that the vengeful ghost depicted in *Hamlet* embodied “Shakespeare’s misery over Anne Shakespeare’s adultery with his own brothers.”³⁷ Having experienced this, Shakespeare is supposed to have lost self-confidence and according to Stephen, it was his internal anger that was responsible for the “sumptuous and stagnant exaggeration of murder” (239) in *Hamlet* and in the other tragic plots that followed. For Stephen, the inhumanly acting protagonists and gory scenes helped recompense Shakespeare’s failures in sexual life. Stephen tries to corroborate this by drawing attention to the occurrence of villains named Richard and Edmund in Shakespeare’s plays and also by the fact that older, lustful, domineering women in Shakespeare’s plays, or in *Venus and Adonis*, can remind the reader of Ann Hathaway’s act. It is implied by Stephen’s account of Shakespeare’s life that a woman, be it a mother or a lover, has major significance. Furthermore, Stephen points out the atmosphere of reconciliation in Shakespeare’s romances and explains that it was caused by the birth of Shakespeare’s granddaughter due to which Shakespeare experienced sudden relief. (Contrastingly, a boy causes that the father sees “in them grotesque attempts of nature to foretell or

³⁶ William M. Schutte, *Joyce and Shakespeare* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957) 85.

³⁷ Kellogg 152.

repeat himself”(251)). Another fact which for Stephen contributes to the supposition that Shakespeare identified with King Hamlet is that he allegedly played the ghost on stage. Likewise, Stephen implies the interconnectedness of King Hamlet and Shakespeare by mentioning that but for Shakespeare’s interference, the ghost would not have known who had murdered him and thus could not have instructed Hamlet to carry out the revenge. (252) Incidentally, this also highlights the necessity for the reader to realize the relation between the artist and his characters and the dependence of the characters upon the playwright’s will.

Stephen defines a ghost as “one who has faded into impalpability through death, through absence [and/or] through change of manners” (240), implying that Shakespeare was a ghost both when alive and after death, his stay in London symbolising the absence from his family and acquaintances. For Stephen, Shakespeare was possibly also a ghost by change of manners due to facts such as his wifeless life in London, the shift in the genre of the plays after the birth of his granddaughter or his late return to Stratford signalling the end of his creative activity. Additionally, Stephen touches on the artist’s necessary detachment from all closer bonds and ties. Shakespeare’s father had to die before Shakespeare was eventually able to write a play like *Hamlet* and Shakespeare had to move to London to separate himself from his family and wife. As discussed in the previous chapter, the artist must separate himself from the rest of the world in order to become a successful artist - he must become “a father of himself”. (267)

Moreover, Stephen insinuates Shakespeare’s revenge on Ann in real life - the rejection to help her financially although being rich himself (261) and in the end bequeathing her nothing but his “secondbest bed” (261). Stephen does not forget to point out Ann’s remorse of conscience, the “agenbite of inwit” (18), after Shakespeare’s death (265). Subsequently, Stephen suggests that after Shakespeare died, his ghost stayed in *Hamlet* forever, as a mere “shadow [...] the wind by Elsinore’s rocks”(252). However, it is not exactly certain from Stephen’s account if according to him, the artist becomes the ghost only after his death or if he has been the ghost since the moment of the creation of his work of art. Kellogg seems to suggest the latter.³⁸

³⁸ Kellogg 173.

“*The truth is midway*”(272)

At the end, Stephen changes his initial statement that Shakespeare is Hamlet’s ghost into a new one: that Shakespeare is both Hamlet’s ghost and Hamlet. Stephen partially yields to Eglinton’s view when he directly repeats after him that Shakespeare is “all in all” (272), yet this outcome is anticipated earlier in his “lecture” when Stephen first outlines the inevitable interconnection between King Hamlet and Hamlet; he proposes that once Shakespeare is identified with King Hamlet, he must be identified also with Hamlet since “through the ghost of the unquiet father the image of the unliving son looks forth” (249).

Grist for Stephen’s mill: the sources

Though the *Hamlet* paradox in itself can be credited to Stephen, its background comprising Shakespeare’s “drinking and debts” comes mainly from three scholars who wrote at the turn of the 20th century: George Brandes (1842-1927), Frank Harris (1856-1931) and Sidney Lee (1859-1926)³⁹. As it is commonly known, the attractiveness of Shakespeare’s genius is partially attributed to the lack of information about him in comparison to other artists and therefore the details from Shakespeare’s life in Stephen’s sources can hardly be taken for granted. In the light of this fact, Stephen’s stress on the indispensability of Shakespeare’s *real* life for his works is actually tinged with irony.

Schutte catalogues Stephen’s sources and comments on them fairly extensively so it is known that the biggest amount of “facts” about Shakespeare mentioned during Stephen’s speech originates in Brandes’s *William Shakespeare: a Critical Study*. It furnished Joyce with details such as that Anne “captured her boy husband of eighteen”⁴⁰, the importance of a female child for the playwright or that he wrote *Hamlet* as a result of his father’s death⁴¹. However, Brandes identifies

³⁹ Don Gifford, *Ulysses annotated: Notes for James Joyce’s Ulysses* (Berkeley; Los Angeles; London: University of California Press, 1989) 192.

⁴⁰ Schutte 159-160.

⁴¹ Schutte 161.

Shakespeare with Hamlet⁴² which shows that Stephen did not stick to the sources strictly – rather, he chose only the “facts” that seemed suitable for him and his personal situation. Reading Harris provided Joyce with the information such as that Shakespeare, after his residence in London, “crept home to Stratford to die” and that “his daughters begged the dying man to put in some mention of her, and he wrote in that second best bed”⁴³. Both Brandes and Lee mention Shakespeare having played the part of Hamlet’s ghost or the details of the will Stephen speaks about⁴⁴. Brandes and Harris state that Shakespeare mourned his mother “as the noblest mother in the world” or that the loss of his son Hamnet was strongly reflected in Shakespeare’s plays *King John* and *The Winter’s Tale*. Lastly, both Lee and Harris list Shakespeare’s alleged greediness⁴⁵.

Problems of the theory

While the principal problem is characterized by the unreliability of Stephen’s sources when it comes to the details of Shakespeare’s married life and its consequences, it is not the only thing which can be regarded as a drawback. The most obvious problem is the one already touched upon in the previous chapter: Stephen regards the same person to be himself and his own son at the same time, imitating the structure of the Sabellian heresy. This is reflected both in his description of Shakespeare (who was a “father of himself” before he wrote *Hamlet*) and of Hamlet’s ghost, who seems to equal his son Hamlet in Stephen’s point of view. Furthermore, Ellmann points out that while Stephen highlights that names of Shakespeare’s brothers were used for negative protagonists, he overlooks positive characters having these names – for instance another Richard⁴⁶ (he probably means Richard II or the boy-prince Richard murdered in the Tower in *Richard III*). Kellogg draws attention to the irony in that Stephen condemns mysticism in his mind yet his theory sounds suspiciously mystical, in particular in the parts about paternity⁴⁷ (“fatherhood is a mystical estate” (266)). Then, as Schutte has noted, there are

⁴² George Brandes, *William Shakespeare: A Critical Study* (London: William Heinemann, 1899) 363.

⁴³ Schutte 164-165.

⁴⁴ Schutte 165-166.

⁴⁵ Schutte 169-170.

⁴⁶ Richard Ellmann, *Ulysses on the Liffey* 85.

⁴⁷ Kellogg 150.

moments where Stephen distorts the facts from his scholarly sources on purpose; which means that at times there is double unreliability, that of the sources themselves plus that of Stephen. For instance, Schutte mentions that Stephen stresses a daystar which arose when Shakespeare was born yet in reality, Shakespeare was eight when it happened⁴⁸. “Don’t tell them he was nine years old when it was quenched.”(269), says Stephen to himself after making the false point. Another fallacy of this kind regards Hamlet’s age; though Stephen claims Hamlet was “a beardless undergraduate” (and therefore he considers it improbable that the thirty-five year old Shakespeare identified with him - 266), Schutte draws attention to the fact that Hamlet was nineteen only in the first quarto while in later editions he was considerably older. Brandes points the change out, yet Stephen ignores it.⁴⁹

The reception

What should be emphasised at first is the lack of objectivity in the narrative of “Scylla and Charybdis”. As Kellogg notes, the narrator’s point of view succumbs to the structure of Stephen’s imagination.⁵⁰ Stephen’s opponents are virtually all who are present (Lyster, Eglinton, AE, Best and Mulligan); there is no wholly and unquestionably positive evaluation of Stephen’s theory; all he can hear is either criticism or scornful remarks. Furthermore, his attempt at a lecture is continually interrupted.

The only feedback which could be taken as positive comes from the librarian Lyster, who says to Stephen: “Mr Dedalus, your views are most illuminating”⁵¹. Yet this could hardly be considered sincere since both the reader of *Ulysses* and Stephen know that Lyster is not present during a substantial part of the discussion – every time Lyster leaves the room, it is stressed in the narrative⁵². Lyster does not say anything of importance on the topic; his remarks seem to be mere politeness towards Stephen, in the same manner as he behaves toward everybody.

⁴⁸ Schutte 174.

⁴⁹ Schutte 64.

⁵⁰ Kellogg 163.

⁵¹ James Joyce, *Ulysses* (London: Penguin Books, 1992) 247. Further references to this book appear in parentheses in the text.

⁵² Schutte 34.

Of all the participants in the discussion, the neo-platonist Russell (alias AE) is the quietest. At the beginning, he defends Plato, refuses to pry into the family life of a great man (241) and renounces Stephen's theory before it even starts to be delivered by denying the relevance of the poet's "drinking and debts" (242) for his literary achievement.

John Eglinton, in contrast, seems to have quite a lot to say. He does not hesitate to interrupt Stephen's speech with his remarks, many of which seem to be, however, rather an attempt to mock the whole theme (by making fun of Stephen, Shakespeare, or Ann Hathaway) than to present a satisfactory counter-argument and defend it. Schutte notices signs of a dispute between Stephen and Eglinton at the beginning of "Scylla and Charybdis" since Lyster is "urban to comfort them"⁵³. Eglinton tries to discredit Stephen's theory – his perspective upon art is an example of a pure "romantic temper", in particular of its "incoherence" Stephen argues against.⁵⁴ Interestingly enough, Eglinton's not very seriously meant remarks cause that Stephen elaborates on the theme. First it concerns Ann Hathaway ("she died for literature at least" – 243), then he is the first to mention "the spirit of reconciliation" (249) in Shakespeare's later plays (which leads Stephen to talk about "the sundering" that preceded) and he briefly comments on the actress playing Hamlet in Dublin, which is extended in the chapters with Bloom. Moreover, his "prove that he was a jew" (263) suggests, despite its apparent falsity when it comes to Shakespeare, the inevitable connection between Shakespeare and Bloom (to be dealt with in the following chapter). Eventually, Eglinton appears to reassess his previous statement that Shakespeare is Hamlet ("if you want to shake my belief..."(248)) by a proposal that Shakespeare is "all in all"(272) and Stephen readily confirms it.

Best is presented as obviously devoid of his own viewpoint. He supports somebody else's idea rather than offering his own; he agrees with Russell on "prying into family life" (242) or with Eglinton that Shakespeare forgot Ann (243). In other moments, he has a tendency to divert the discussion towards issues interesting to himself by quoting/paraphrasing his favourite writers' views on Shakespeare (such as those of Mallarmé, Wilde or Coleridge). On the whole, Best does not seem to express

⁵³ Schutte 48.

⁵⁴ Joyce, *Stephen Hero* 83.

any particular concern for Shakespeare and does not contribute anything significant to the discussion.

Mulligan, whose materialism embodies Stephen's "threat to the classical temper" (83) arrives late yet it does not restrain him from mocking Stephen's theory as usual; yet Mulligan does not offer any genuine opinion either, nor seems to be much interested in Shakespeare; rather, he only wants to exasperate Stephen and entertain his friends. Later in *Ulysses*, he criticises Stephen, saying that Stephen's wits were driven "astray by visions of hell" so that "he will never capture the Attic note"(320). Mulligan associates artistic creation with joy and since he considers Stephen depressed, he concludes that Stephen "can never be a poet" (320).

Stephen's response

Although most critics seem to consider Stephen's lecture arranged, some imply that it might have been unprepared; for instance Abele considers it spontaneous, provoked by AE's statement that art "has to reveal to us ideas, formless spiritual essences"⁵⁵. There is no specific mention in *Ulysses* that the lecture was scheduled for 16 June. Yet according to Eglinton's remark that Stephen "will have it that *Hamlet* is a ghoststory" (240), it is obvious that not only Mulligan has already been acquainted with it. As for Stephen's reactions, not all of them are pronounced aloud. In fact, some key parts of the lecture stay inside Stephen's head; as Goldberg noticed, "the central points of the argument strike too close to Stephen's self for him to have given them open expression"⁵⁶ and further continues that "the real clues are his unspoken reflections"⁵⁷. Inwardly, Stephen hesitates, remembers, compares and comments on his companions (both on their appearances and lifestyle). Sometimes he seems to have difficulties concentrating and most importantly, he appears to be concerned rather with himself than with the *Hamlet* issue. Shakespeare evokes Stephen's own troubles. Actually, the semi-failure of his lecture can be at least partly attributed to the chaos in his mind overruled by the haunting vision of his mother's death. As for his spoken replies to his listeners' comments, in the first half he appears

⁵⁵ Rudolph von Abele, "The Myth of Myth," PMLA, Vol. 69, No. 3 (Jun., 1954), *jstor*, 16 January 2011 <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/460064>> 183.

⁵⁶ Goldberg, "Art and Freedom: the Aesthetic of Ulysses" 69.

⁵⁷ Goldberg "Art and Freedom: the Aesthetic of Ulysses" 69.

to behave quite self-assuredly. As Noon pointed out, Stephen is not dead serious about his *Hamlet* speech in “Scylla and Charybdis”, as his silent self-compliment attests: “I think you’re getting on very nicely. Just mix up a mixture of theologologicophilological...”⁵⁸ The real uncertainty and the foreboding of failure arrive after Mulligan’s mocking comments and when he is not invited to the literary evening. Stephen feels frustrated and wants the situation to be over at last (“Life is many days. This will end” - 275). Blamires writes that “Stephen feels his exclusion keenly”⁵⁹ and points out the occurrence of Cordelia, the banished daughter of king Lear, in Stephen’s mind. Stephen feels banished as well.

Stephen’s “no”

What constitutes Stephen’s final “no”? Quite unexpectedly, the discussion ends by Stephen’s claim that he does not believe the theory. It can hardly be said if the “no” is ironical, cynical or plainly disappointed. Yet it is a question to what extent this matters. On the whole it seems that the truthfulness of Shakespeare’s life and works is not so much an issue for Stephen. As already mentioned, the theory is rather a way of dealing with his own life. Moreover, Stephen himself must be aware of having twisted some facts and thus having adapted his theory to his own situation. Also, it is possible that Stephen’s frustration reached its peak during his slightly awkward presentation and he simply realized he was unable to defend it – due to lack of evidence, lack of authority among the listeners and his own personal troubles. In spite of the fact that Stephen doubtless displays an extensive knowledge of a number of philosophical, aesthetic, literary and critical works, the lecture is overall disorganized, perpetually interrupted and often diverted from the topic to such an extent that it turns into a rather chaotic dispute.

Kellogg states that at the end of the argument, the opponents are reconciled⁶⁰. Nevertheless, it is debatable as to what extent Stephen feels appeased and to what degree he resigns, finding himself not able to justify the issues raised by his theory.

⁵⁸ Noon 116.

⁵⁹ Harry Blamires, *The new Bloomsday book: a guide through Ulysses* (London: Routledge, 1991) 74.

⁶⁰ Kellogg 151.

Yet what Stephen did not manage to get across to his listeners seems to be richly recompensed in the reflection and extension of the theory in *Ulysses* itself.

Chapter 3:

Hamlet theory in practice

Generally, Stephen's *Hamlet* speech proved unsuccessful. The combination of various factors (Stephen's preoccupation with himself, his being aware of distorting facts, frustration) together with the listeners' mockery and disinterest caused that Stephen failed to persuade them. Yet what is intriguing is that however cold the reception in the library was, the theory can be witnessed in the narrative of *Ulysses*, without the characters' knowledge. Moreover, if the theory seemed unbelievable when Stephen presented it and Mulligan sneered at it, it is nothing when compared to its new, updated version present in the plot and the characters of *Ulysses*. As for the critical approach towards this topic, both the fact that the narrative of *Ulysses* can remind one of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and the fact that Stephen's theory is remarkably mirrored in the narrative of *Ulysses* are universally accepted. In short, Joyce applies the relations of Stephen's *Hamlet* theory within the narrative of *Ulysses*. It produces ironic effect since the protagonists are mostly unaware of it; and if they, at times, perceive some similarities with the characters of *Hamlet*, they ascribe them to metempsychosis, fate etc. However, because of the complexity of this new theory, scholarly opinions tend to differ concerning the division of roles within the theory or as to specific details and connections.

For instance, most scholars assume that Hamlet's place is taken by Stephen. Booker simply claims that "Stephen is Hamlet in the novel"⁶¹. Opposing views exist as well; Schutte identifies Stephen with the ghost when he writes that he "has associated himself not with Hamlet the son but with Hamlet the father, the solitary ghost, whose hair is sable-silvered"⁶². On the whole, the parallels should not be

⁶¹ Booker 153.

⁶² Schutte 24.

viewed in a straightforward way since Joyce is not straightforward; he does not make any clear statements of “who is who”. He insinuates rather than states and once the reader starts to be certain, a distortion suddenly crops up. Identities are in constant motion in *Ulysses* which holds true even more in the “applied theory of Stephen”; hence in many cases, more than one interpretation is possible. In addition, what should not be forgotten are the two eras in question; Renaissance characters are observed through 20th century Dubliners’ lens and all that is observed through Joyce’s modernist lens. Therefore, there are several degrees of fictitiousness; first, Stephen’s theory is Joyce’s creation. Second, Stephen draws parallels between a work of fiction (*Hamlet*) on the one hand and reality as it was three hundred years before on the other. Furthermore, Stephen is a character in a novel and finally, his theory is superadded on another fictional (though again partly autobiographical) story, *Ulysses*. Therefore, when considering the reflection of the theory in the text, it is vital to distinguish Stephen’s Shakespeare from the real Shakespeare since Stephen’s Shakespeare has been shaped according to the purpose of Stephen’s argument - his life had been interpreted by Stephen as a work of art would have been.

Is Stephen Hamlet?

There is evidence for similarities between Stephen and Hamlet. Stephen as an ironical portrait of a modern Irish Hamlet is a “dispossessed son” (51) having been mourning for his dead mother for a year. His temperament of a rather pessimistic, indecisive “bard”, spending most of the time thinking, is not unlike Hamlet either. He seems to be feeling vengeful against Mulligan, against his mother, defying his father. Moreover, the fact that his *Hamlet* theory is focused on fatherhood so much is actually evidence of how Stephen constantly puts off the solution of the issue of his mother’s death – his inaction is a sign of Hamlet more than anything else. Additionally, immediately after mentioning *Hamlet* in “Telemachus”, Stephen has a vision of seeing “his own image in cheap dusty mourning between their gay attires” (21). This could be read not only as realizing the contrast between their cheerful expressions and his black clothes, yet also that Stephen might see himself as Hamlet since Hamlet was in mourning too in contrast to the wedding participants.

The lesser parallels range from geographical suggestions (Sandycove evokes Elsinore – 21, 55) through clothes (Stephen’s “Hamlet hat” - 59) to details such as Stephen carrying Deasy’s “letter for the press” (47) and planning to go to the Ship (47). The last example is one of the Joycean ironic shifts; the letter is Deasy’s article on foot and mouth disease instead of a death sentence while the Ship is a name of a pub (255). Stephen hears “Elsinore’s tempting flood”, which again recalls the setting in relation to Elsinore (55), or calls himself “le distrait or absentminded beggar” (665), which was used for Hamlet in “Scylla and Charybdis”. Elsewhere, Stephen (either to himself or aloud) quotes lines from *Hamlet*; however, it is difficult to trace any logical link between the quotations. For instance Stephen thinks of a fragment of one of Ophelia’s madness songs (63) or uttering “to have or not to have”(663), which is a pun on a well-known quote rather than a reference to the play. Importantly, though, it is precisely this derogation, this “designifying” of Shakespeare, which seems to matter in *Ulysses*. Finally, in “Circe”, Stephen is addressed as Hamlet by Zoe. (667).

Is Stephen Shakespeare?

Stephen likewise tends to be fascinated by Shakespeare, which is doubtless the main reason why he chose to incorporate him as the central figure of his thesis. As already discussed, he obviously adjusted Shakespeare’s life to fit both the theory and his own situation. Stephen feels betrayed as well, yet not by a wife but by the Catholic Church, Ireland and his mother. Schutte proposes that May Dedalus’s pleading was an attempt to submit Stephen’s will to hers and therefore he sees it as a parallel of “Ann’s psychological castration of Shakespeare”.⁶³ Furthermore, Stephen emphasizes the impact of Shakespeare’s journey to London on his creative life and mentions his late-life return to Stratford. He is surely aware of the link between Shakespeare’s change of place and his own journey to Paris and back. At some of the points where Stephen’s position does not agree with that of Shakespeare, he imagines it, as Harry Blamires⁶⁴ or Kellogg⁶⁵ noted. For instance, Stephen was not seduced by an older woman, yet according to his internal monologue he might, as opposed to

⁶³ Schutte 108.

⁶⁴ Blamires 74.

⁶⁵ Kellogg 176.

Shakespeare, appreciate it: “And my turn? When?” (244) “Who will woo you?” (269)

Bloom and Hamlet’s ghost

“*At four she.*” (339)

The adultery motif is another point in which Stephen’s theory matches the narrative of *Ulysses*. Additionally, Bloom, being the victim, often thinks about ghosts and “that other world named hell” (146) yet the most surprising echo of Stephen’s theory presents itself when Bloom encounters Gerty McDowell, that is, Gertrude (what’s in a name?) McDowell at the beach (471). It seems that an ultimate reversal of the original relation between King Hamlet and the Queen takes place there; Gertrude is transformed (met him what?) to a limp teenage girl looking up to Bloom who is dreaming of her. However, no contact between them is possible; and never will be as Bloom muses (498). Bloom is in a way “a ghost” for her, which could be well justified providing that their encounter really functions as a remnant of their *Hamlet* relation; once the ghost becomes the ghost, Gertrude is unable to speak to him (in *Hamlet*, she was not able to see him either). Gertrude of the 20th century is limp and a virgin – only the outward seductiveness and certain vanity remains. On the whole, the parallel between Bloom and Hamlet’s ghost is perceivable in its remains only. Moreover, there are a few major differences: first, Boylan is not Bloom’s brother. Second, the death of Bloom paralleling King Hamlet is only metaphorical (if the reader wishes to see it that way at all), and it is that of his nonexistent sexual life with Molly, their “impalpability”⁶⁶ towards each other, as Blamires called it. Third, Bloom’s son is dead and finally, Bloom does not want to take vengeance on Boylan.

⁶⁶ Blamires 73.

Bloom and Shakespeare

“Met him pike hoses”(346)

Despite Bloom’s material, family-oriented lifestyle and his condition miles away from a creative artist, more links can be surprisingly discovered between Bloom and Stephen’s depiction of Shakespeare. Bloom’s father is dead (112) as was the father of Shakespeare when he wrote *Hamlet*. Bloom’s son died eleven days after his birth, which recalls Hamnet, who died at the age of eleven. There is not yet any birth of a granddaughter, which should have brought Shakespeare rest, yet Milly seems to be a substitute for it (80, 111, 495). At times, Bloom remembers excerpts of Shakespeare’s works, including *Hamlet*: “Gravediggers in Hamlet. Shows the profound knowledge of human heart.” (138) “For this relief much thanks. In Hamlet that is” (485). He either takes them as established quotes without any further reflection on their meaning or he employs them in his internal monologue as a comment on his own situation, such as in “Nausicaa” he thinks “for this relief much thanks” after masturbating on the beach (485). He is convinced that he has used Shakespeare “for the solution of difficult problems in imaginary or real life.”(791) The narrative plays up to the identification of Bloom with Shakespeare; for instance in “Cyclops” they talk about Bloom using exactly the same words as Stephen when talking about Shakespeare in the library: “Whom does he suspect?” (439). In addition, Bloom is Jewish - Jewishness was touched upon during the lecture in connection to Shakespeare (263). Yet contrary to Stephen’s Shakespeare, Bloom is not so worried by the adultery; at the Ormond bar (341) he knows the exact time when Molly and Boylan are going to meet and yet resolves not to return home. While Stephen’s Shakespeare was urged to write gory tragedies as an expression of his discomfiture, Bloom’s initial jealousy is swiftly exchanged for almost unusual tolerance; he is in love with his wife despite her unfaithfulness and sensibly accepts her adultery as a result of natural “magnetism” (487).

In the logic of the plot of *Ulysses*, the issue of metempsychosis is probably allied with this twentieth-century re-enactment of Stephen’s theory of *Hamlet* (78). Bloom is interested in the idea of becoming “suddenly somebody else”(139) after death. As Declan Kiberd claims: “At the emotional level, Bloom relives the life of Shakespeare as much as that of Odysseus – If everyone lived on the earth long ago,

then surely he was Shakespeare, a frustrated father whose son dies and whose bossy wife cuckolds him”⁶⁷. Abele correctly emphasizes that despite all these similarities, Bloom should not be confused even with Stephen’s Shakespeare since “Bloom resembles these figures in situation, but with an entirely different tone”.⁶⁸ The change of tone is the most essential change between Stephen’s *Hamlet* theory and Joyce’s *Hamlet* theory and should be definitely taken into account. The parodic treatment of Shakespeare’s talent is clear since the only remnant of Shakespeare’s literary genius preserved in Bloom is his canvassing work, which Bloom calls “literary work” (202) and is confident enough to think about writing at least “a story for some proverb” (84). On the other hand, the association is not entirely nonsensical since in *Ulysses*, newspapers “is the readiest channel nowadays”(747), transmitting universal issues to common people. Shakespeare’s plays had a similar function for his contemporaries, dealing mainly with issues in demand.

Stephen supposes that Hamnet, had he lived, would have been Hamlet’s twin which leads to another major link. Providing that Stephen, at least partly, represents his own portrayal of Hamlet, it establishes him as a “brother” (if not twin) of Rudy which can account for some indefinite fatherly affection from the part of Bloom. Nonetheless, Joyce does not leave the relations as Stephen had them. At the end of “Circe”, a ghost of Rudy (being eleven years old, like Hamnet) appears to Bloom (702-703) while a subversion of the parallel occurs as soon as in “Proteus” where there is a mention of Stephen having an uncle Richard, which would connect him rather to Hamnet (48, 47).

Other noticeable reflections

Additionally, there is a side-mirroring of the theory. Another character, who partly resembles King Hamlet and partly Shakespeare is dead Dignam (128) who, like Hamlet’s father in *Hamlet*, is already dead when the story begins. He also has a son, who is dressed in black on 16 June (322-323). Moreover, the indication in the young Dignam’s consciousness that “pa was boosed”(324) directly refers to Mulligan’s statement that Shakespeare died “dead drunk”(262). Irony is not omitted

⁶⁷ Declan Kiberd, “Introduction to *Ulysses*,” *Ulysses* (London: Penguin Books, 2000) liv.

⁶⁸ Von Abele 361-362.

either since young Dignam seems to be more concerned with being in the papers than with his father's death (323). Besides, Dignam's ghost is mentioned already in "Cyclops" (388) and if Alf Bergan did not misunderstand which "Paddy" had died, then there is a real ghost in *Ulysses*. Another ghost of Dignam appears in "Circe", declaiming fragments of King Hamlet's speech and mentioning metempsychosis. (597) Since the latter case is most probably Bloom's hallucination, it is clear that the themes of King Hamlet's ghost and metempsychosis do not leave his mind.

Additionally, the adultery theme reoccurs also with Parnell yet is slightly shifted since Katherine O' Shea cheated on her husband with Parnell – therefore Parnell was not in the position of a cuckold. Kitty is called "whore" in "Eumaeus" (755). Interestingly, there is a whore called "Kitty" in "Circe" as well (621). Likewise, in "Wandering Rocks", a certain Countess of Belvedere is said to have been unfaithful with her husband's brother (286). Another minor similarity appears with the mention of Childs and the rumour that he "murdered his brother" (125). Last but not least, in Stephen's imagination, bits and pieces of his theory are reflected in animal kingdom as well: a fox burying his grandmother (32) or a grandfather rat (598). As in Mulligan's mocking reformulation of the theory, a mother is exchanged for a grandmother and a father for a grandfather. Interestingly, a fox is, through George Fox, compared with Shakespeare in the library scene (247).⁶⁹

A portrait of the artist as Stephen Dedalus

"He saw in a quick young male familiar form the predestination of a future."
(808)

"What? Haines said, beginning to point at Stephen. He himself?"(21)

What is certain is that in neither Stephen nor Bloom there is the figure of the "godlike creator", represented by Shakespeare in Stephen's "lecture". Stephen has not created anything of particular importance yet (despite his ambition) while in Bloom's case, the literary genius is improbable to develop at all. It seems that for the

⁶⁹ Gifford 216.

artist one has to reach beyond the boundaries of the narrative; the implications of Joyce's existence are in the text, though scarce and not direct. Although it is not normally correct to take the author of a text into account when analyzing a narrative, it should be noted that *Ulysses* is in many respects exceptional. First, the narrative features the development of an aesthetic theory. The aesthetic theory primarily deals with an author of a written work and his or her relation to the characters of the created world. Second, this theory is unquestionably reflected in the narrative. Third, in the narrative there are hints of *Ulysses* being "only" a text and what is more, even hints at some undefined, yet unrevealed figure responsible for this text. Fourth, the fact that both *A Portrait of the Artist* and *Ulysses* are to a great extent autobiographical, has been generally known. Under these conditions, the implied relation between Joyce and the narrative perhaps might be taken into account.

Yet prior to the discussion of the author himself, other requirements of Stephen's theory must be met; it must be clear that Joyce can be identified both with Bloom ("King Hamlet") and Stephen ("Hamlet"). Many scholars have stuck to the view that Stephen is young Joyce. As Rader put it, "It is now widely accepted that [...] Stephen is Joyce's immature persona in the book"⁷⁰. In other words, the Stephen in Joyce grew up, fulfilled his dream of becoming a writer and wrote *Ulysses*. Thus, he became, in Kellogg's words, the "father of all the characters"⁷¹. Although to state that Joyce simply "is" Stephen sounds very appealing, the matter should be treated with care, as I have noted earlier. Although Stephen is clearly an autobiographical character who reenacts many moments from Joyce's life, he should not be confused with Joyce – due to a number of distinctions, particularly in the details. For instance, it is true that Joyce's mother asked James to pray for her yet on the day of her death, it was his uncle who ordered him and Stanislaus to kneel⁷².

Stephen strongly resembles Joyce by appearance, behaviour, childhood and school years, family relationships, acquaintances, interests in areas such as philosophy, aesthetics, literature or music. He frequently borrows (and owes) money (37, 489). Interestingly, Ellmann pointed out that it was on June 16, 1904 when Joyce began putting together his *Hamlet* theory, making the same points as Stephen.

⁷⁰ Ralph W. Rader, "The Logic of *Ulysses*," *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 10, No. 4 (Jun., 1984), *jstor*, 15 January 2011 <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/1343311>> 569.

⁷¹ Kellogg 166.

⁷² Richard Ellmann, *James Joyce* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983) 136.

When he completed it, he outlined it to Best, Eglinton and Gogarty.⁷³ Incidentally, Joyce also lectured on Shakespeare, paying “particular attention to the psychological moment when he [Shakespeare] wrote *Hamlet*”.⁷⁴

In “Scylla and Charybdis”, Irish poets “have yet to create a figure which the world will set beside Saxon Shakespeare’s Hamlet”(236). Being addressed to Stephen, the remark seems ironic, since it is Stephen who for many embodies a modern-day Hamlet. The pejorative term for an Englishman (“Saxon”) looks ironical as well in this context since Stephen is everything but an ardent Irish nationalist. “See this. Remember.”(246) could be interpreted as Stephen’s thoughts on writing a book, since if he just wanted to write down the theory, he would not try to remember the whole scene around him. “Are you going to write it?” (274), Best asks Stephen immediately after Stephen denies believing the theory. Later, in “Oxen of the Sun”, Stephen is told: “That answer [...] will adorn you more fitly when.[...] something more [...].can call your genius father[....] All desire to see you bring forth the work you meditate. I heartily wish you may not fail them.” (543) Again, it could be interpreted as a reference to the creative work due to which Stephen will once be called genius. Schutte suggests that Stephen’s destiny matches the passage from *A Portrait* where he is “to live, to err, to fall, to triumph, to recreate life out of life”(83). Schutte is sceptical that Stephen will ever have the strength to become a godlike artist.⁷⁵, yet this comparison fits the argument that Stephen is a younger version of Joyce very well. It is Stephen’s fall that is portrayed brilliantly in *Ulysses*, one of his fruitless days. What awaits him after the action of *Ulysses* is “to triumph” and “to recreate life out of life”.

The touch of the artist in Bloom

“And Bloom? Let me see.” (344)

“There’s a touch of the artist about old Bloom.” (302)

As far as the parallels between Bloom and Joyce are concerned, the same problem occurs as with Shakespeare; the literary genius, as well as Joyce’s pride and self-assurance, are lacking in Bloom. However, there are similarities to find; Bloom

⁷³ Richard Ellmann, *James Joyce* 155.

⁷⁴ Richard Ellmann, *James Joyce* 775-776.

⁷⁵ Schutte 84.

detests violence (745), is interested in education and science and seems to have read a lot (although he prefers more down-to-earth interpretations). Like Joyce, Bloom keeps detailed accounts concerning expenses (836). Bloom's Jewishness and his overall lack of knowledge concerning Christianity may be taken as a symbol for Joyce's rejection of religion. As Noon writes, owing to his Jewishness, Bloom feels that he has no roots and home⁷⁶ and therefore he is "dispossessed" too – only not willingly, as Joyce and Stephen. Moreover, Ellmann compares Nora Joyce with Molly⁷⁷. Regarding the infidelity motif, there is not any evidence of Nora having cheated on Joyce; yet there is evidence of Joyce's jealousy and suspicion⁷⁸. No less, Bloom can remind the reader of Joyce in minor and yet telling remarks like for instance: "Chamber music. Could make a kind of pun on that"(364). Finally, if there is any hidden literary talent in Bloom, it comes unnoticed by Bloom's acquaintances as Lenehan's mocking remark that "there is a touch of the artist about old Bloom" (302) attests. However, the definite article before artist vaguely, yet nicely evokes Bloom's common features with Joyce; there is certainly a "touch of Joyce" in Bloom.

Stephen and Bloom

The ghost of Shakespeare is evoked in "Circe" when Bloom and Stephen look in a mirror and see there Shakespeare instead of themselves; this Shakespeare has no beard and is "crowned by the reflection of the reindeer antlered hatrack in the hall" (671). He even speaks - twice (671-672). The motif of Stephen and Bloom having a common mind and thus being connected pervades the whole novel. Stephen and Bloom seem to borrow words from each other, as if some kind of unconscious telepathy was taking place between them. Bloom's "lap it up like milk" (98) refers to Patrice lapping milk with Stephen in a bar mentioned in Stephen's internal monologue in "Proteus". In "Circe", Bloom tells Zoe she is a "necessary evil" (619). The "secondbest bed" from "Scylla and Charybdis" reoccurs in Bloom's

⁷⁶ Noon 95.

⁷⁷ Richard Ellmann, *James Joyce* 291, 376, 377.

⁷⁸ Richard Ellmann, *James Joyce* 294.

dialogue with Bello (654). The “absentminded beggar” appears in Bloom’s consciousness in “Ithaca” (851). Furthermore, on 16 June, both Stephen and Bloom are in mourning (68). Stephen’s musings about the signs around him and the meaning of his bad teeth in “Proteus” have its counterpart in Bloom’s internal monologue in “Nausicaa”: “All these rocks with lines [...] and letters [...] what is the meaning of that other world”(498). Besides, there is high probability that they shared the dream with melons and Molly – or at least their dreams approximated each other to a great extent. Bloom does not remember the dream but for: “Come in. All is prepared” (483, 497 519). Stephen has similar thoughts in “Circe”: “I dreamt of a watermelon” (674) or in “Scylla and Charybdis”: “A creamfruit melon he held to me. In. You will see”(279). Even Bloom himself realises that his mind might be connected with Stephen’s (764). The interconnection may partially explain the fact that Bloom, at least in a dream, might be willing to share his wife with Stephen (while he feels rather jealous when thinking of Boylan seducing her). In “Ithaca”, Stephen and Bloom seem to merge into each other and turn into “Blephen” and “Stoom”. Mack Smith proposes that the aim of the whole narrative is the consubstantial union of Bloom and Stephen ⁷⁹. In fact, the implication of the final fusion of Stephen and Bloom creates an interesting contrast to Stephen’s negative reply in the same chapter. It could be read as evidence that it is not necessary for Stephen and Bloom to comply with each other since they have always been, and always will be, psychically interconnected.

That other world

“Art thou there, truepenny?” (242)

“I do not like that other world.” (95)

The aforementioned notion of predestination having its origins in Aquinas seems to permeate through *Ulysses*. In “Scylla and Charybdis”, Stephen seems to anticipate his future condition as James Joyce and his presence as a mere “ghost” for the narrative: “So in the future, the sister of the past, I may see myself as I sit here now but by reflection from that which then I shall be”. (249) Although one may

⁷⁹ Mack Smith, “The Structural Rhythm of Ulysses: Dominant to Love to Return,” *Twentieth Century Literature*, Vol. 30, No. 4 (Winter, 1984), *jstor*, 17 January 2011 <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/441409>> 404.

wonder at Stephen's ability to predict his own future, it is less surprising when one realizes that Stephen is one aspect of the creator, of the "God of the novel". Kellogg expresses it thus: "Joyce tells his reader[...]: 'I, too, am the father, the older man whom this young artist would one day become.'" ⁸⁰ Goldberg claims that Joyce "hints at his own presence both within and also behind his dual protagonists". ⁸¹ Similarly, Rader claims there is "clear and insistent implication that the real author outside the book is formally inside it as the alpha and omega of its meaning." ⁸²

Another example of Stephen's at least partial awareness of his own existence inside an artistic creation may be found in "Proteus": "Wombed in sin darkness I was made too, not begotten. By them, the man with my voice and my eyes and a ghostwoman with ashes on her breath" (46 - 47). Although he is musing upon the "instant of blind rut" (267) of fatherhood and therefore the passage primarily refers to Simon and May Dedalus (whom "the ghostwoman" clearly denotes), "not begotten" indicates birth without conception while "made" directly relates to the process of creation. Besides, "the man with my voice and my eyes" can refer to Joyce as well as to Simon Dedalus. Moreover, "will" appears three times in the passage, foreshadowing Stephen's lecture later in the day and at the same time suggesting the link between Stephen's portrait of Shakespeare and Joyce.

Similarly, "Who watches me here? Who ever anywhere will read these written words? Signs on a white field." (60), another part of Stephen's internal monologue in "Proteus", may strike the reader as an implication of Stephen being a part of a book. Certainly Stephen does not realize it consciously yet it is somehow ingrained in his mind; although he writes something down on a piece of paper there ("Turning his back to the sun he [...] scribbled words"(60)), the white field with the signs and the cry about "these written words" clearly constitute an additional reference to *Ulysses*. Moreover, in his further comment, "I am caught in this burning scene"(61), Stephen describes himself as if inside a play, a constructed plot, while "caught" suggests that it is against his will.

⁸⁰ Kellogg 166-167.

⁸¹ Goldberg, "Art and Freedom: the Aesthetic of Ulysses" 95.

⁸² Rader 568.

“Why is that, I wonder, or does it mean something perhaps?” (64) Even a seemingly trivial remark like this one testifies of Stephen’s vague suspicion that his personality might have some meaning for somebody else. There is a number of similar examples in the text, most of which could be interpreted both with regard to the actual story and as an implication of their possible connectedness to Joyce. For instance, “My will: his will that fronts me. Seas between” (279) refers primarily to Stephen and his rival Mulligan being Scylla and Charybdis while Bloom passes between them (255). On the other hand, though, it can suggest Joyce, the (Will)iam Shakespeare of *Ulysses* Stephen is bound to become. In the preceding paragraph where Stephen muses about parting with Mulligan, he asks himself: “Why? That lies in space which I in time must come to, ineluctably”(279). The future is set for Stephen yet it is still too distant to be clear – there are “seas between” his present and his future self.

As for direct hints at Joyce being out there somewhere, in the other world, Adams notices Molly’s enigmatic call in “Penelope”: “O Jamesy let me up out of this pooh” (914). According to Adams, she is thus “traversing beyond the circumference of arrangement to grasp at authority”⁸³. Furthermore, he comments on the problems one encounters when he ventures to state that Molly addresses James Joyce; for Adams, it means “to dissolve authority into the historical author and raise all those problems of the relation between text and historical author that have plagued debates over intention for half a century or more”⁸⁴ which makes him give up and decide to take “Jamesy” as a common character. Rader, in contrast, refuses to treat *Ulysses* purely as a “self-existent and autonomous” text as the New Critical approach commands, as he considers its autobiographical and its personal features essential.⁸⁵

Finally, Schutte pointed out an anachronism; that Shakespeare stayed in Silver Street was not known until 1910⁸⁶ and yet Joyce makes Stephen mention it (241). One may wonder whether Joyce did not realize the date (as Schutte suggests) or whether it might have been intentional. Since as the reader knows already, a

⁸³ Hazard Adams, “Critical Constitution of the Literary Text: The Example of *Ulysses*,” *New Literary History*, Vol. 17, No. 3, Interpretations (Spring, 1986), *jstor*, 16 January 2011 <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/468830>> 610.

⁸⁴ Adams 610.

⁸⁵ Rader 567-568.

⁸⁶ Schutte 173.

“genius makes no mistakes. His errors are volitional and are the portals of discovery”. (243) Whatever the truth, it definitely contributes to the way of seeing Stephen as an aspect of the artist communicating sub-consciously with his future self.

He is both the bard and the canvasser.

To some degree, the narrative succumbs to the pseudo-logic of the *Hamlet* enigma sneered at by Mulligan, who in “Telemachus” utters the following: “He [Stephen] proves by algebra that Hamlet’s grandson is Shakespeare’s grandfather and that he himself is the ghost of his own father”(21). Provided that young Stephen is interpreted as the young Joyce, that Bloom is seen as Stephen’s “father” and at the same time Joyce’s created “son”, the fact that Stephen and Joyce are one makes Stephen become his own “grandfather” and at the same time his own “grandson”. From this point of view, Haines’s astonished reply nearly becomes relevant; “What? Haines said, beginning to point at Stephen. He himself?” (21)

To summarize, via Stephen’s theory of *Hamlet*, characters, situations and relationships both from Stephen’s account of Shakespeare’s life and from the fictitious story of *Hamlet* are carried to the twentieth century and remarkable communication, often ironic, between all those diverse points of view takes place. In addition, the links and parallels presented by Stephen do not remain the same in *Ulysses*; they shift, swap places, borrow from one another and merge together. Moreover, Stephen’s theory went so far that it enabled Joyce to become a shadowy protagonist in it. A protagonist who is a ghost; invisible, unable to change anything any longer and unable to defend himself against views that the implications pointing towards his existence are impossible to be discovered in the text.

Chapter 4:

Parental issues, gender complexities and *Hamlet* theory

Stephen, who feels he has been born to become an artist, has the impression that certain outward circumstances hinder his artistic development: family ties and other relationships, nationalism and religion. Stephen's uneasy relationship with his father and mother is the most crucial tie he is occupied with and which he integrates in his *Hamlet* theory. As for paternity defined in a broader sense, Stephen's *Hamlet* theory involves three kinds: a biological father, a spiritual father and a "father" of a work of art. Stephen's mother represents another complicated issue. Kellogg stresses the interdependence between Stephen's search for a father and for a woman and claims that to some extent, the former is united with the latter.⁸⁷ Stephen's *Hamlet* theory testifies of the importance and necessity of a woman, not only a lover or a wife yet also the mother. The concept of fatherhood is heavily influenced by that of motherhood. These parental issues marginally include also Stephen's relation to Church and Ireland, respectively. Similarly to the other relations from his *Hamlet* theory, these family links can be likewise discovered elsewhere in the narrative of *Ulysses*. Gender-switching is not rare, either – in fact, Joyce frequently toys with it.

The first issue at stake is the possible reason for Stephen's artistic tendencies and his individualism that were eventually responsible for the construction of his *Hamlet* theory. The first possible interpretation is that Stephen wanted to become an artist regardless of any factors - only after his mother's death he felt the sudden need to justify his guilt to himself so he created the highly personal *Hamlet* theory where his mother is seen as the guilty Anne Hathaway/Gertrude. However, this view does

⁸⁷ Kellogg, 147; 178-179.

not satisfactorily account for Stephen's detachment – it can be seen only in terms of general youthful dissatisfaction with one's parents and country. Another, yet more radical interpretation, is that the very cause could be hidden in Stephen's Oedipal complex. Murfin ascribes Stephen's feeling of destiny to be an artist to his "neurotic need to alienate himself again and again from that which he feels he cannot have".⁸⁸ It is probable that Stephen in his teenage years became subconsciously aware of the fact that the desire for his mother could never be carried out and therefore, to conceal his true, sensitive self, he developed the aesthetic theory involving the "principle" that an artist should be cut off all bonds. One of the manifestations of his deliberate detachment was his refusal to pray at his mother's deathbed – however, it proved harder than anything else before and made Stephen feel guilty for her death. Stricken by remorse of conscience mingled with bittersweet memories, to justify to himself the necessity of his act, he invented another theory – that of *Hamlet*. There, as already mentioned, it is the Queen and Ann Hathaway who are guilty, not Hamlet, with whom Stephen partly identifies. Following the "Oedipal" point of view, the reason for Stephen's choice of *Hamlet* may be, as Hill writes, the jealousy of his father's intimate contact with May that made him detest his father yet at the same time identify with him.⁸⁹ The ghost of King Hamlet affords Stephen such an opportunity especially towards the end of Stephen's speech, when Stephen asserts the sameness of the ghost and Hamlet. Stephen, when explaining the nonexistence of biological fatherhood, implies that every incestuous relationship constitutes a closer bond than that between a son and his biological father (266). To him, this ingenuity of the mother-and-son bond may justify his sinful thoughts towards her. No matter which explanation one clings to, it is certain that the perpetual stress on fatherhood in the theory helps Stephen avoid the thoughts of his dead mother. Still, the mother, though "beneath" the main argument, is constantly present in the theory.

⁸⁸ Ross C. Murfin, "What is Psychoanalytic Criticism?" *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, ed. R.B. Kershner (New York: Bedford Books, 1993) 245.

⁸⁹ Marylu Hill, "'Amor Matris': Mother and Self in the Telemachiad Episode of Ulysses," *Twentieth Century Literature*, Vol. 39, No. 3 (Autumn, 1993), *jstor*, 17 January 2011 <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/441690>> 337.

Biological and spiritual father

Goldberg points out that Stephen's scholarly viewpoint on paternity is grounded in Aristotle and Aquinas since they both claim that "the rational soul of man is not the result of natural generation."⁹⁰ To quote Stephen from the *Portrait*, human soul has "a slow and dark birth, more mysterious than the birth of the body".⁹¹ This indication that the soul is born separately from the body proves crucial in the *Hamlet* theory where Stephen distinguishes the biological and spiritual father. Stephen emphasises his preference of the spiritual over the biological fatherhood ("fatherhood[...]is a mystical estate, an apostolic succession"(266)), the reason of which may be, again, traced back to the Oedipal complex. Since if Stephen senses that Bloom would be a suitable father of his, it would shift Molly towards something resembling his "mother". Considering the implications in the narrative that Molly is interested in Stephen (922-923), there may be a vision in Stephen's mind of satisfying the innate desire for the motherly figure. Stephen is even jealous of Bloom, quoting *Othello* when the thought of Bloom and Molly having sex occurs in his mind: they are "the beast with two backs at night" (666).

Stephen's wish to be his own father

"Mother dying come home father" (52)

What should also be stressed is that for his artistic/personal purposes, Stephen must find the father only to be able to reject him afterwards. Schutte points out the paradox the following way: the father "must be done away with before creation can begin, but he must come before, or there can be no creator."⁹² When looking at the text of *Ulysses*, it appears that not only the biological father is in question, yet also the spiritual one: Stephen must dispose of both of them. Stephen's wish to get rid of all ties has a future prospect in becoming his own father, which is linked to Sabellian heresy. According to Noon, Stephen's absorption in *Hamlet*, as well as his Sabellianism, manifests his spiritual lack of paternity. He is the dispossessed son, aloof and extremely lonely. Noon suggests that Stephen abandoned the Trinity model

⁹⁰ Goldberg, "Art and Freedom: the Aesthetic of Ulysses" 79.

⁹¹ Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* 220.

⁹² Schutte 94.

because of the lack of relationships⁹³ and also because he was aware of his artistic limitations, feeling unable to conceive a son of his work of art as would be possible according to the Trinity- model. Only the mature Stephen - Joyce - succeeds in this respect.⁹⁴ Nevertheless, to draw a comparison between the *Hamlet* theory and Stephen's situation at this point, there is a substantial difference. Both Shakespeare and Hamlet lost their fathers and supposedly "became fathers of themselves"—yet in the former case the father died and in the latter was murdered. Although it may have provided the sons with more freedom to decide (in the view of Goldberg, every son is dependent on the spiritual power he receives from the father, which is the cause of the son's weakness⁹⁵), neither Hamlet nor Shakespeare had tried to gain the freedom by force when their fathers were still alive. Stephen does it deliberately.

The Fathers of Stephen

"Siopold!" (356)

Certain animosity existed between Stephen and his father even before Stephen resolved to turn into an artist. Though in the *Portrait* Simon and Stephen share a few pleasant moments together (for instance Simon's singing at the hotel⁹⁶), they are scarce. Already in the *Portrait* Stephen is suspicious of his father's character - he views him as insincere, disregards his advice and is ashamed of him. Yet the reader cannot know Simon's thoughts since everything is mediated through Stephen's point of view. In *Ulysses*, Simon is portrayed in a more complex manner; consequently, it becomes apparent that his relationship towards Stephen is, despite all complications, not entirely negative. On the contrary; in "Hades", Simon, when not contented with the company Stephen keeps, appears to be genuinely interested in his son's life (109-110). Sometimes even other protagonists confirm this view; Bloom thinks Simon is "full of his son"(110). Gradually, Stephen's rebellion against Simon intensifies, yet obviously just for the sake of rebellion. The climax of

⁹³ Noon 94-95.

⁹⁴ Noon 118.

⁹⁵ Goldberg, "Art and Freedom: the Aesthetic of Ulysses" 80-81.

⁹⁶ Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* 93.

Stephen's disavowal of his father occurs in "Eumaeus" when Stephen denies Simon by replying that he only "heard of him" and that he's "all too Irish" (718).

"No son. Rudy. Too late now. Or if not? If not?" (367)

Bloom has no son, so it is no wonder he begins to feel fatherly affection towards Stephen (hints at Bloom's homosexual interest are present as well, it only depends to what extent Mulligan and his remarks can be taken as trustworthy). As early as in "Hades", Bloom admits to himself that it is good to have a son since it is "something to hand on" (110). For a considerable part of *Ulysses*, Stephen and Bloom know each other merely by sight; their first significant encounter (if the mutual dream is not counted) conducted in silence happens towards the end of "Scylla and Charybdis" (279). The silence is profound and the whole moment prophetic, resembling an epiphany. Yet when Stephen and Bloom finally get a chance to converse, Stephen is drunk, Bloom tired and their communication stagnates. Eventually, "Ithaca" does not provide Stephen with any affinity towards Bloom; instead, he "promptly, inexplicably, with amicability [and] gratefully" (815) declines Bloom's hospitality. Besides, Bloom is rather disappointed too, in particular after Stephen's impolitely anti-semitic song (810).

The narrative seems to endorse the idea of Bloom being Stephen's father, yet only for the purpose of producing a comical effect – the relation between them is not based on the traditional idea of a parent-and-child relationship. For instance, in "Circe", Zoe assumes that Bloom is Stephen's father because they're both in black (599), showing that paternity in *Ulysses* is estimated not according to facial resemblance yet according to clothes. However, when one ignores these few suggestions, there is hardly anything which would promise a hopeful mutual relationship for the future (nor anything which would completely reject the possibility). Bloom behaves in a fatherly fashion towards Stephen in both "Circe" and "Eumaeus". Nevertheless, in his mind, he selfishly ponders the usefulness of "intellectual stimulation" (750) Stephen could grant him. It is Bloom who is talking most of the time in "Eumaeus", while Stephen stays silent and after they leave the bar Stephen feels not very comfortable when leaning against Bloom (769).

As for Stephen's final reply to Bloom, it can be read in various ways: first, as another manifestation of his artistic rebellion: the spiritual father is only a temporary "necessary evil" that must be found and then successfully overcome. Thus, there is no failure of Stephen's quest for a father. An utterly different opinion is presented by Doody and Morris: they claim that Stephen needs to encounter an authoritative, entirely masculine and mysterious father who is definitely not Bloom.⁹⁷ The task therefore fails owing to the inadequacy of a modern man. According to Doody and Morris, Stephen not only needs a new father, yet it is *indispensable* to find him since as Stephen has it in the library, the whole world created by God is founded upon spiritual fatherhood. However, Stephen's attitude toward God is notoriously ambiguous and in the library particularly critical: Stephen states he wrote badly "the folio of this world" (273). Additionally, there is the third perspective taking into account the suggestion in the narrative that Bloom and Stephen might be two aspects of one figure, Joyce; thus, the two are already allied and always will be (they are only unaware of it) and Stephen's negative answer to Bloom is therefore irrelevant. Regarding the promising adventure with his "spiritual mother" Molly, it is arguable if Stephen's gratefully amicable refusal includes also Bloom's "offer" of Molly and therefore should be understood as a confirmation of his change of mind.

Perhaps he was a woman

Fatherhood, the bond which in *Hamlet* lasted despite any competition and rivalry, is in *Ulysses* exchanged for amor matris, "subjective and objective genitive" (34). Yet it takes a good deal of time until Stephen admits to himself the truthfulness of Cranly's sentence from *A Portrait*: "whatever else is unsure [...] a mother's love is not"⁹⁸. In *A Portrait*, May Dedalus's Catholic faith makes her in Stephen's eyes a mere "victim of the system" and contributes to Stephen's "I will not serve"⁹⁹. Stephen's protest seems to be, similarly to that against his father, unjustified and exaggerated. He realises his guilt only after his mother's death: in *Ulysses*, he is still

⁹⁷ Terrence Doody and Wesley Morris, "Language and Value, Freedom and the Family in 'Ulysses'," *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction*, Vol. 15, No. 3 (Spring, 1982), *jstor*, 15 January 2011 <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/1344874>> 233.

⁹⁸ Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* 263.

⁹⁹ Joyce, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* 260.

despondent despite the fact that it has been a year since and remorse of conscience, the “agenbite of inwit”, tortures him. May’s death is very probable to have been one of the principal inspirations for Stephen’s *Hamlet* theory. Maud Ellmann takes a view that the whole theory and its emphasis on fatherhood is only a pretext for Stephen to escape thoughts about his dead mother: his concern with the nonexisting biological paternity only leads him to claim the significance of spiritual paternity¹⁰⁰, while motherhood is pushed to the background.

In *Ulysses*, a counter-elaboration of Stephen’s theory concerning *Hamlet* is nothing exceptional. Yet perhaps the biggest change is that it is Stephen’s mother, not his father, who dies. This shift does not hinder Stephen from realising the analogy between his and Hamlet’s situations. The ghost of May Dedalus takes the place of King Hamlet in the narrative of *Ulysses* (shares it with Bloom). The situation resembles that of *Hamlet* also in the fact that May Dedalus’s death, despite being an essential part of the plot, happens somewhere in the void between *A Portrait of the Artist* and *Ulysses* (in *Hamlet*, the poisoning of the king is known only through the ghost’s narration). May Dedalus returns as a ghost, yet the nature of the ghost brings another alteration: while the ghost of King Hamlet could be confused with the living king except for his immateriality, Stephen’s dead mother has undergone after-death transformation. Her presence is invasive and unusually physical, with fetid breath and odour of wax and rosewood accompanying her (10). She steals into Stephen’s dreams and continually reminds Stephen of his guilt of not having prayed at her deathbed. Stephen calls her “a ghoul” or a “chewer of corpses” (11).

The ghost of May is very probable to be an embodiment of Stephen’s “agenbite of inwit”. As Zimmermann proposes, it has been created in Stephen’s mind in a subconscious attempt to defend himself against the self-accusation of his mother’s death.¹⁰¹ Stephen is torn between two desires – to dominate the mother as is typical for a father and to have her as loving, nurturing mother¹⁰²; both are typical outcomes of the Oedipal complex. The former tendency is responsible for the fact

¹⁰⁰ Maud Ellmann 212.

¹⁰¹ Michael Zimmerman, “Stephen’s Mothers in ‘Ulysses’”: Some Notes for the Autobiography of James Joyce,” *Pacific Coast Philology*, Vol. 10 (Apr., 1975), *jstor*, 17 January 2011 <<http://www.jstor.org/stable/1316385>> 66.

¹⁰² Hill 329.

that during his “Scylla and Charybdis” speech, Stephen sees women as untrustworthy: it is “an age of exhausted whoredom groping for its god” (265). As a result, Stephen sees May Dedalus also as Gertrude, who “betrayed him through her insistence on demanding that he pray with her”¹⁰³. Then, he perceives her as the “murdered parent” as Brenda Oded noted¹⁰⁴, yet even there the “amor matris” is not to be found quickly. Stephen does have pleasant memories of May and his genuine feelings towards her are impossible to be suppressed, yet by the means of his *Hamlet* theory, Stephen seems to be coming to terms selfishly with himself rather than with his mother’s death. His cry “non serviam” in “Circe” (682) expresses well his youthful obsession with the sole fact of disobedience rather than with art or anything else.

“And my turn? When?”(244)

The implications of Stephen identifying himself partially with Claudius are possible to be encountered in the text. The most obvious example is when Stephen inwardly uses the motive of poisoning King Hamlet during his lecture at the library: “The list. And in the porches of their ears I pour” (252). While “list” belongs to King Hamlet, the image of pouring the poison into one’s ear carries an obvious reference to Claudius and his act. It is possible that the figure of Claudius embodied the following contrast in Stephen’s mind: on the one hand his wish of incestuous intimacy with his mother, on the other the realisation of his guilt.

The grandmother under a hollybush

Ulysses contains numerous passages involving a “grandmother” – the most well-known are those with a fox burying his grandmother (32) and a dog that according to Stephen might have done the same (58). The remarkable association of animals with Stephen’s own situation can be explained on the grounds of Stephen’s bitter exchange with Mulligan on his mother’s death. Mulligan’s remark about Stephen’s mother being “beastly dead” (8) is very likely to be the cause of these

¹⁰³ Schutte 108.

¹⁰⁴ Brenda Oded, “The Maternal Ghost in Joyce,” *Modern Language Studies*, Vol. 15, No. 4 (Autumn, 1985), *jstor*, 5 June 2011 < <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3194647> > 43.

analogies in Stephen's mind. Concerning the substitution of a "grandmother" for a "mother", the reason may be traced back to Stephen's presentation in the library. There, Stephen emphasises that it was the birth of a *granddaughter* that provided Shakespeare with reconciliation since he doubts that a man can love the daughter if he has not loved her mother" (250). From this point of view, the grandmother can be perceived as a necessary evil, too. Therefore, the pervasive motif of the grandmother, paralleling the "grandfather" from Mulligan's "version" of Stephen's paradox (21), may symbolise not only the "poor old woman" Ireland that Stephen buries in the name of his artistic future, yet also Ann Hathaway and other mean, shrewd, calculating and adulterous women necessary to be disposed of. As for Stephen's renunciation of (grand)mother Ireland, and also grand(mother) Church, he sums it up in "Circe", when he states that he "must kill the priest and the king"(688). The fox having buried his grandmother represents Stephen – in "Circe", there is a metaphor of this "beastly" Stephen running and being hunted down by "Union dogs" (674). Stephen's father Simon is supporting the Unionists and therefore by rebellion against his father, Stephen struggles also against the influence of the Crown. All in all, Stephen defies both the English rule over Ireland and the Irish nationalism, which includes the Church.

Modern father weakened

What should be emphasised with regard to *Ulysses* is the weakened position of the modern father (and of a modern man in general). While the father in *Hamlet* is unquestionably an authority who deserves his revenge, men in *Ulysses* possess feminine aspects and their manly position is considerably disrupted: Bloom can hardly fit the role of King Hamlet in other way than ironical. This is best reflected in the "modern" Shakespeare in the mirror in "Circe" – he is beardless and has antlers on his head that swiftly evoke his position as a cuckold. What is more, this 20th century Shakespeare is paralysed in the face (671). Stephen himself contributes to such a view on men when he undermines the authority of biological fathers and proposes his "Sabellian" solution.

Androgynous artist

“He is about to have a baby.” (614)

Nevertheless, possession of female elements does not degrade the artist for Joyce – on the contrary, a perfect artist must be an androgyne, a “womanly man”(614). As Booker suggests, androgyny serves as a reaction against alienation and fragmentation of modern society¹⁰⁵ and Shakespeare’s face in “Circe” is a testimony to the fact that an artist needs to possess both feminine and masculine features.¹⁰⁶ Stephen seems to be tempted by the idea of an artist’s androgyny already in *A Portrait* where he wants to be a father of himself yet simultaneously to have and use the “womb of imagination”. According to Zimmermann, in *Ulysses*, Stephen recognises not only a new father in Bloom yet also a new mother in Molly.¹⁰⁷ From this perspective, when Stephen refuses Bloom’s offer in “Ithaca”, he becomes both father and mother of himself. However, the frequent “androgynous” descriptions of Bloom should not be forgotten, either: in “Circe”, he is described as “bisexually abnormal” (613) and claims he wants to be a mother (614). Thus, he fits Stephen’s idea of the androgynous artist perfectly – and his place in the “applied” theory of *Hamlet* is even more enforced. Also, he seems to be a suitable candidate for Stephen’s “mother”.

The prince as a woman

Even Hamlet is more popular as a woman: Eglinton’s statement that “Vining held that prince was a woman” (254) appears in Bloom’s consciousness as well: “Male impersonator. Perhaps he was a woman. Why Ophelia committed suicide?” (93) The information of a woman acting the part of Hamlet is alluded to several times and therefore its potential place in the ironic elaboration of Stephen’s theory in further episodes of *Ulysses* should not be entirely overlooked, especially given the amount of irony in the narrative of *Ulysses*. Kiberd highlighted Bloom’s fascination with manlike women “who strut, drink and ride like a man”¹⁰⁸. If Bloom secretly

¹⁰⁵ Booker 158.

¹⁰⁶ Booker 152.

¹⁰⁷ Zimmerman 67.

¹⁰⁸ Kiberd liii.

wishes Hamlet were a woman, the theory, equalling Stephen with Hamlet, turns upside down completely since in that case the theory turns all feminine (already including May Dedalus and the “new womanly man” Bloom - both instead of King Hamlet - and Bloom instead of Shakespeare). In fact, Stephen seems to have partly become the feminine Hamlet that Bloom favours: Bloom notices that Stephen bears striking resemblance to his mother (702) or, similarly, Zoe says that Stephen has a “woman’s hand”. (667)

Conclusion

“One day in the national library we had a discussion. Shakes.” (276)

“Done.” (376)

The association of Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* with secularised Aquinas presented through the lens of an ambitious, yet immature artist may appear peculiar, if not awkward, at times. Stephen’s views are not always clear enough – his “lecture”, which is interrupted many times and affected by Stephen’s wavering mind, does not furnish the reader with a coherent set of information. One may encounter problems already in its aesthetic backdrop (for instance whether it is Sabellian heresy or Trinity Stephen’s *Hamlet* theory sticks to) and there are more in the *Hamlet* theory proper.

Though one point of view may be that the actual content of Stephen’s *Hamlet* theory is unimportant and that it serves primarily for Stephen’s self-scrutiny, a better approach to it is to focus on its alternative version, which can be discovered in various disguises in the narrative of *Ulysses*. It is fundamental to be aware of the contrast between Stephen’s and Joyce’s (“new”, “applied”) theory: the latter is more complex, carries more implications and above all is intensely ironic. To grasp Joyce’s *Hamlet* theory does not mean to grasp Stephen’s *Hamlet* theory – yet through the later version, one may get a better glimpse of the earlier. Joyce indulges in jeering at his young alter-ego and his views – the reader frequently notices a contradiction between what Stephen thinks and what he does or between Stephen’s theory and the “real” situation in the narrative of *Ulysses*. Joyce’s treatment of the *Hamlet* theory mocks Stephen’s version in the way how it is distorted; Joyce plays with role-switching, gender and often turns the original relations upside down.

One could have the impression that the manner in which Joyce tackles the theory suppresses every serious message that could otherwise be discovered. However, this is not the truth since through the ironical portrait of Stephen, Joyce reveals a fairly earnest view of his real, mature, yet impalpable self. Self, which

corresponds to Stephen's account of a ghost of the artist present inside his work of art. The amount of cryptical sentences or short passages in the narrative implying Joyce the artist is suspiciously high. What is more, these do not appear so ironic as the rest. In fact, although it may sound extremely far-fetched, the most serious (and also the most experimental and innovative) message that both *Hamlet* theories convey seems to be Joyce's courage to explore the possibility of establishing an eternal contact between an artist and his protagonists – in a broader sense, a contact between the real and the fictitious, between the world and the word.

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