

FINNEGANS WAKE, MUSIC, AND DISABILITY

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ABSTRACT

This thesis considers the three-way interaction between semantics, musicality, and disability in James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake*. The silent actions of prose writing and reading, and the silent nature of the printed text, can be felt to divorce this medium from the strictly sonic medium of music altogether. Many scholars have, however, found in literary texts (particularly modernist texts) latent sonic capacities that may allow for a quasi-musical, intra-auditive reader experience.

The "Sirens" episode of Joyce's *Ulysses* has been a key focus for such musical analyses since the 1920s. Developed musical readings of *Finnegans Wake* are far fewer, though the text is often mentioned as representing an advancement of Joyce's "musicalisation" of prose to an extreme, perhaps impossible degree.

The present thesis takes an anti-able-normative (or "disablist") perspective on Joyce's testing of the (im)possibility of music in literature and of the broader possibilities of language itself. To this end, it compares *Finnegans Wake* to high- and post-modernist musical/sonic artworks that similarly pushed the established limits of the aesthetic and the semantic.

My objective is to allow literature, music, and disability to shed light on each other's conceptual and practical strengths and weaknesses. Just as states of cognitive and somatic disability are coming to be understood, not as paradigms of failure, but as potential alternative models of (dys)functionality, so we may view musical, narrative, and poetic "failures" (or "disabilities") in avant-garde arts as similarly positively dysfunctional.

The thesis cites high, late, and post-modernist compositions by Arnold Schoenberg, Anton Webern, Pierre Boulez, and John Cage. Through this, it illustrates that similar phrasal, inter-phrasal, narrative, and meta-narrative "disabilities" occur in modernisms both musical and literary. The "combinatorial" composition methods of Pierre Boulez in particular are found to share many "dysgenic" characteristics with those employed in the writing of *Finnegans Wake*.

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INTRODUCTION

The question “what is music?” troubles this thesis from beginning to end and is never answered conclusively. With any revised definition of a phenomenon, we are forced constantly to (re)define both that phenomenon and the faulty terms with which it has hitherto been defined. Such a re-definition is certainly required when, as in the present thesis, an extra-sonic (literary) understanding of “music” is sought. When we seek to pin down such an ineffable entity as music, and such an obscure and oblique term, we are forced to twist and reorientate both entity and term in order for the two to align. I have already at this early point implicitly referred to music as both a “phenomenon” and an “entity”; we may learn in the course of this study whether such differing definitions can be co-applied.

A similar problematic discourse between definition, phenomenon, and entity arises when “disability” is the matter at hand. If we exchange the word “definition” for “identity”, “phenomenon” for “condition”, and “entity” for “body”, we find that questions of what and where is disability and what, where, and who is disabled have parallels with equivalent questions as regards music. In other words, we must ask: is music, is disability, a function of designation, of context, of nature, or of some combination thereof?

A frequent postulate of this thesis is that written language – specifically creative prose, more specifically that of James Joyce, most specifically that of *Finnegans Wake* – emerges, occurs, and exists in far less ambiguous ways than either music or disability. The genesis and development of works of literature occur very largely at a graphic level, and works survive intact only in a graphic state. Music, by contrast, though it is generally founded on a written (or transcribable) para-structure, exists (or transcends existence) only in its escaping from the graphic and the permanent. Like music, disability emerges from the permanent, occurs in the temporary, and inheres only in its syntagmatic enactment. Walter Pater’s statement that “all art constantly aspires towards the condition of music” (Pater, 2010, p. 124) deploys the terms “constantly”, “aspires”, and “condition” in peculiar and provocative ways. The strange notion of a non-musical artform *aspiring*, and aspiring *constantly*, not to music’s emotive or communicative *powers*, but to its very *condition*, imagines music as inhering in a set of abstract principles, exhibiting no *state*, only a temporal *condition*. Indeed, it is perhaps music’s own *constant aspiration to a condition* (rather than any final achievement of a *state*) that defines that artform itself. We will see throughout this study that the aspiration of a permanent artform (literature) to the condition of a temporary artform (music) can be highly positively and/or negatively “disabling” for both the aspirant and the aspired-to form. It may

centrally be the aspiration of the “Sirens” episode of *Ulysses* toward the condition of fugue (see “fuga per canonem” discussed below) that renders that episode particularly – in a positive or neutral sense – “deformed” and/or “dysfunctional”.

At least in this case we have a sense of what the specific aspired-to condition may have been, that is, that of fugue. In the instance of *Finnegans Wake*, the inarticulate nature of Pater’s “condition” reasserts itself, and the work’s aspiration (toward alterity) itself becomes its condition. If we had genotextual evidence indicating quite to what in music the *Wake* – or, more accurately ‘Work in Progress’ – aspired, other than to that form’s otherness, the book’s crypto-musical nature might be at least partially revealed. I seek to demonstrate that Joyce’s art aspired more to music’s *conditionality* than to its condition, and, moreover, that the practical futility of this aspiring in effect rendered this also an aspiration toward “textual disability”.

Implicit in Pater’s axiom is a sense that any aspiration (on the part of, say, sculpture) to appropriate music’s ontology *must be* in vain. Indeed, I argue in the coming chapters that not only can – in this case – literature not *be as music is*, it can scarcely even imitate it, reduced merely to proclaiming as eloquently as possible its lofty sonic-aesthetic ambitions.

Thanks to the similar syntaxes of literature and music, however, though the former cannot sing, it can perhaps dance. As I will describe in Chapter 1A, Joyce’s friend the painter and writer Frank Budgen was known literally to dance to Joyce’s informal recitals of passages from *Ulysses*. And when we listen to Joyce’s gramophone recording of part of the Anna Livia Plurabella sequence of the *Wake*, the sensuality and kinaesthesia that we can all somewhat glean from the printed page comes vividly to life. If we restrict ourselves to the page, however, any “music” we experience is so subjectively engendered in our mind’s ear as to bear little relation to the text before our eyes. A literary text cannot indicate the duration of rests within and between phrases as can a musical score, and, crucially, there can, in prose reading, be no simultaneity either tonal or rhythmic: we “hear” one sound at a time and only one rhythm unfolding. In music, even when a melody has no accompaniment, after two or three notes have sounded, pitch relativity is established, tempo and rhythm begin to emerge, and harmony (tonal simultaneity) can be inferred. In literature’s ineluctably mono-linear apprehension, meanwhile, no such objective relativity, rhythmicity, or simultaneity can be achieved or engendered.

But these austere fundamentals of acoustic physics and sensory perception are in a sense only the beginning of the narrative of (disabled) Joycean musicality. If a profoundly deaf person can detect a rhythmic pulse and variable frequency oscillation through contact with a

vibrating surface (extra-auditive musical hearing), then ideas of musical interactions with the mute *Finnegans Wake* (intra-auditive literary listening) should perhaps not be dismissed. As an individual reader enters into discourse with the book, so academic *Wake* readers enter into discourse with one another. Even a confirmed musical-Joycean sceptic cannot begin to write about the “non-existent” music of the *Wake* without beginning a conversation with believers in an intrinsic/extrinsic music operating here. My lines of reasoning will interweave with those of other critical narratives and of the *Wake* itself. The strands of coherence in my arguments will, like music overheard, or disabled identities proclaimed, at times be woven into the warp and weft of broader experience and critical literature.

There is a general presumption on the part of academic literary critics of our own optimal readerly competence and capacity. The sense is that all accessible sources have been consulted, the text has been rigorously examined, and due care has been taken in the formulation of theoretical and analytical models. Belying this, we may see that, for example, most writing on the contested musical nature of “Sirens” sets aside, or never addresses, many of the problems with this discourse that I mentioned above. While I do not suggest that presumed critical *incompetence* and *incapacity* are in themselves useful models for textual analysis (even that of an apparently “malfunctional” text), a different posture or disposition may be adopted that will recognise that *Finnegans Wake* is a “differently-abled” text and treat it accordingly.

Sections of *Ulysses* and large swathes of *Finnegans Wake* cognitively overload us as readers and are, indeed, intelligible only through radically *differently-intelligent* means. The, as I will later conceive, “creative destruction” of past modes and “permanent revolution” in musical aesthetics executed in the 1950s by the composer Pierre Boulez offered “sonic texts” that could not be “read” in the usual ways. This was not because their construction was arbitrary or indiscriminate, but, on the contrary, because their construction was highly artificial and regulated. Similarly, the differently formed and functional, differently intelligent and intelligible chapters of *Finnegans Wake* are formed and may be apprehended only through a radical appreciation of their radical difference.

The term “sonic text” is not intended here as purely metaphorical, nor does it refer to musical scores (which I understand as “pre-textual”). Throughout the thesis we will conceive of sonically realised works of music as “texts” to be “read” just as printed books are read texts.

Such a speculative and flexible reading as I have thus far proposed is discouraged by the critical history. As I discuss in Chapter 1A, “Critical Context: Joyce, Music, and Meaning”,

an unbroken strand of conservatism runs through the musical-Joycean narrative. This is largely due to what David Herman has referred to as “the Joyce-Gilbert paradigm” (Herman, 1994, p. 475). The Gilbert in question is Joyce’s Friend and critical assistant Stuart Gilbert. The writing of Gilbert’s 1930 book on *Ulysses*, which included an extremely influential chapter on “Sirens”, was supervised by Joyce, and is thereby lent an – I believe unsafe – authority.

Chapter 1A is based on a survey of critical responses to Joycean musicality. It starts with Gilbert, and very few subsequent scholars have neglected to acclaim or reflect positively the undoubted importance of this pioneer to subsequent and ongoing analysis. Among the crucial means of Joyce’s musicalisation of the word are *deformation*, *dysfunctionalisation*, *debilitation*, and *destruction*. These disruptive means, though not the musicalisation they achieve, are deplored in hostile and revisionist criticism, and disregarded by Gilbert and some who have followed him. Part of the purpose of this chapter and of the broader thesis is to redress that sanitising process and to reveal the full disability of this “literary music”.

The verb “sacrifice” has often been used to characterise radical compositional actions within modernist art. It sometimes refers to a wholesale dispensing with one major pillar of a given art, such as representation or traditional tonality. It is also sometimes deployed to address the disfigurative cutting up of “well-formed” draft material to produce deformative collages from the resultant fragments. Gilbert indulges in the former variant when he conceives that “Sirens” “differs from most examples of “musical prose” in that “sense is not sacrificed to sound but the two are ... harmonized” (Gilbert, 1955, p. 257). Here is “the Joyce-Gilbert paradigm” in operation. Though Gilbert’s prose is of sub-Joycean eloquence, the sentiment is distinctly reminiscent of the musical Joyce of *Dubliners*, *Ulysses*, and ‘Work in Progress’. This reflexive *sense-sound-affinity* syntagm chimes strongly with the *Wake*’s “make soundsense and sensesound kin again” (121.15-6).

An impression that *Ulysses* and the *Wake*’s aspirations toward musicality threatened to give rise – and perhaps indeed gave rise – to conditions of chaos or entropy is in a sense unfair to both media. Pater’s metaphysical dictum risks leading us to overestimate both the misrule of the sonic-aesthetic and the good behaviour of words. I argue for a tempering of these expectations and a wariness of them. Indeed, what Pater may actually have meant us to read was that *the arts of sculpture, painting, and poetry constantly aspire toward the science of music*. Whether it is to music’s conceptual irrationality that literature aspires, or to its compositional logic, it is in a reading of this *aspiration* rather than of the aspired-to *condition* that Joyce’s “music” will be discovered.

Chapter 1A's critical survey traces broadly speaking: a period of post-Gilbertian musical rationalisation (including work by Lawrence Levin and Hodgart and Worthington); a reconception of Joyce's language and "music" alike as requiring translation and/or annotation (presided over by among others Anthony Burgess and Zack Bowen); a limited post-structuralist interest (here Daniel Ferrer and Jennie Wang stand out); followed by a linguistic/logistical focus taken by David Herman, Brad Bucknell, and Andreas Fischer; and finally a recent period of philological/genetic dominance featuring Michelle Witen.

Of the names I mention here, there are two that are of particular significance to this thesis. Firstly, Burgess has been a crucial influence, less for his early philological work than for his later (1982) musical study 'Re Joyce'. As I explain in Chapter 1A, 'Re Joyce' offers a dysfunctionality accordant with the irrational side of Joyce's "music". Herman, by total contrast, shows that musics both actual and aspired-to in literature may be analysed logically and dispassionately by the simple yet counterintuitive expedient of disregarding their sound.

This brings me to the key precept of the present study (touched on above): that music and literary language, though largely incommensurable in their mode of apprehension, behave very similarly at a fundamental syntactic level. Herman's *universal-grammatical* methodology in identifying parallels between "Sirens" and serial music (discussed in Chapter 2) follows Joyce's own lead in demoting content and promoting form, or, more specifically, elevating structuration above signification. Within this model, it becomes less important than usual that literature cannot sing, nor music speak, because each has internal aesthetic-semantic qualities that can be appreciated on a similar "deaf" and "dumb" basis.

Looked at in this way, the "fuga per canonem" initially identified by Gilbert (under Joyce's instruction), further pursued by Levin, Burgess, and many others, and finally brought to ground by Witen, seems, when musical ideas extrinsic to the text such as "subject" and "counter-subject" are withdrawn from the analysis, to lose some of the integrity it has built up over time.

In brief, the "fuga per canonem" theory suggests that the text of "Sirens" is constructed in a quasi-polyphonic/contrapuntal manner closely imitative of fugue. Michelle Witen's 2018 book *James Joyce and Absolute Music* takes the three-fold approach of: proving Joyce's musical acumen (sufficient to conceive of such a structure); setting the "fuga per canonem" in music-historical context (demonstrating that this term refers to a species of fugue, not of canon); and illustrating the broader importance of such "absolute" models of musicality to both the nineteenth-century philosophy of the aesthetic and to Joyce's understanding thereof. My problem here is, that while, armed with this enhanced understanding, I can *conceive of*

the fugue in “Sirens”, I cannot *hear* it. But this is what Joyce intended perhaps, that a reader should be inexorably trapped between the two opposing conditions of *belief* and *disbelief* in the “fuga”.

The crucial difference between Herman and Witen is simply that while Witen is first and foremost a Joycean, Herman is not. The present thesis to some extent shares this position with Herman’s (in so far as this disablist study partially faces away from Joyce even as it analyses his work). The four chapters consider the importance of Joycean structurative models to the narrative entities they contain, but also to the present and future construction of other textual, cultural, and personal entities of a disabled disposition.

In Chapter 1B, “Theoretical Context: *Finnegans Wake* and Disablist Sonic Textuality”, we will see *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* revealing so many disabled dispositions (both authorial and textual) that, quite fittingly, any sense of a homogenised disabled reading is dispelled. The poetics of Tourette’s syndrome, queer-disabled conceptions of time, Deaf and dumb speech, disablist hearing, and a disabled erotic each and all aid the disabling of Joyce. But, as with trying to isolate a whole and singular disabled character in *Finnegans Wake* whose disposition does not function simply as a strand of narrative construction, isolating a single and discrete bodily or cognitively impaired Joyce is challenging if not impossible. Joyce’s work is full of stutters and ticks, there is a sort of attention deficit / hyperactivity at play, he is known to have been visually impaired and a sufferer of chronic and acute eye pain, and he has been held without substantiation to have displayed symptoms of cognitive disorder, sexual perversion, socio-genetic degeneracy, and a range of other ill-defined “abject” conditions. There is also a kind of “neuro-divergence” to his working methods: he was periodically both obsessively meticulous and emotionally dissociative. We see in the genetic and pre-textual material a deformative trajectory of development, and, moreover, the ends to which he was all the time progressing are often in themselves deeply semantically dysfunctional.

The eclecticism of the studies discussed in Chapter 1B reflects the diffuse nature of disablist work on modernist writing and the broader scattered nature of disabled history. Some of the texts are expressly concerned with Joyce, others provide theoretical underpinnings to my own disablist readings in later chapters. The survey falls chronologically into six broadly defined sections. The first two entries (by Ronald Schleifer and Bent Sørensen) address the poetic and narrative potential of Tourettic language. The next three (by Elizabeth Freeman, Tobin Siebers, and Robert McRuer) offer respectively feminist-queer, disablist, and queer-disablist theoretical frameworks that will later emerge as important to my

sonic-disablist analysis. After these come two studies (by H-Dirksen Bauman and Brian Kane) interested in d/Deafness and sign languages as they relate to poetic, aesthetic, and critical culture. Then the primary disablist text for this thesis (Joseph N. Straus's *Extraordinary Measures*) is discussed at some length. This is by far the most comprehensive extant volume on disability and musical form. It is not until the sub-chapter's assessment of texts by Dominika Bednarska, Christopher Eagle, and Joseph Brooker that Joyce himself comes into the disabled aesthetic-semantic picture. These studies address in turn disabled sexuality in *Ulysses*, stammering in *Finnegans Wake*, and Tourettic "involutions" (Brooker, 2016, p. 105) in Joyce. Finally, we have two works by Marion Quirici and Maren Tova Linett on the eugenic, and more broadly *eugenious*, nature of Joyce's work as "degenerate" in its modernism.

This study's application of "disability aesthetics" paradigms (conceived by Siebers and Quirici) to the dysgenic and disingenuous sonic-semantics of *Finnegans Wake* may test the flexibility of this analytic model. While the disablisms of sign language poetry and crip performance art discussed in "Bauman 2008" and "Siebers 2006" in Chapter 1B are susceptible to this *dys-aesthetic* interpretation, the more universalist dysgenesis of *Finnegans Wake* may be less so. Like the term "music", the terms "disability" and "aesthetic" may need to be realigned.

I concur with Joseph Straus's general understanding that music is, for an artform, unusually deformative in its non-representationality. Mine is, however, a more absolute conception of music's inherent disablist a-semantic nature than Straus's. This said, *Extraordinary Measures*, like "*Finnegans Wake, Music, and Disability*", places form before content, structuration before signification. By this means, a book or piece of music may be treated more as a "body" or "environment" than as a repository of knowledge, more an ontology than an epistemology.

Under Siebers' model, understandings of the textual body or environment of *Finnegans Wake* can be enhanced by the incursion into that entity or space of a disabled corporeal body. This is also certainly true of the harmonically "dysfunctional" "organisms" or "ecologies" of serialist and other modernist musics.

Chapter 2, "Schoenberg and the Well-formed *Wake*", initially stands back from the sonic sphere of music, entering instead the transmutable realm of syntax, a silent space in which Joyce might be more rationally understood. The overall foundational secondary text for this study, Herman's "'Sirens' after Schoenberg", finds in that episode an alignment with the compositional method of serialism rather than with the musical paradigm of fugue. With the

term “serialism” I will here refer to a method and aesthetic originating with the so-called Second Viennese School centred around Arnold Schoenberg, Anton Webern, and Alban Berg, and radically developed by Pierre Boulez. This term was largely retrospectively coined, and takes on widely differing meanings depending on who is using it and in what language. I will expand upon the particular technicalities required for comparisons with *Finnegans Wake* as I go. Suffice to say that it is toward the ostensibly “entropic” soundworld of Boulez that we are travelling, and it is as much this apparent surface “chaos” that we are interested in as the technique’s more convoluted systematism.

Joyce gave to the early incarnations of the *Wake* the designation ‘Work in Progress’. In seeking in this work of literature a conditionality and contingency akin to music’s embodiment not in completion but in progression, this implied state of unfinishedness is a useful starting point. Serial music and Wakean prose are forever in flux because one must translate them as one goes: relatively few familiar rudiments of euphony and eugeny are in place.

In common with philological scholarship as regards the person of James Joyce, ableist meta-culture is ambivalent as to what deformity or dysfunction serialism suffers from, but it is sure there’s something: aphasia, psychosis, depression, stammering, autism...? Such prodigiously high-functioning modes as serialism and “Wakeism” are, as we will see in Chapter 2 and beyond, frequently perceived as producing abjectly failing results. Assimilation to arbitrary conventions is often viewed as more suggestive of “ability” than are non-arbitrary transgressions of convention. There is more than one way in which a body can develop: it may, like that of the author of this thesis, have sight-obscuring spots on its retinas, or, like that of the artist Alison Lapper (see Chapter 4), have been born with no arms and foreshortened legs. Similarly, the ways in which an artwork might generate and degenerate are many, varied, and worthy of analytic consideration. Both serialism and *Wake* prose radically defy teleological, uni-directional, mono-linear conventions. Each is formed, not in a line, but in a matrix, not from standard units of meaning, but from newly generated nodes, spores, or clusters of proto-meaning. Chapters 2 and 3 show that the construction of both the work of art and the body can occur at a “combinatorial” – as opposed to a linear – narrative level.

As stated above, this thesis understands the sounded piece of music as a text just as a printed work of literature is a text. On this basis, the score of a musical composition is pre- or para-textual to the actual text constituted by the sound of the music itself: music is “inscribed” not on paper, but in amorphous space, legible only in its fluctuant ephemeral

realisation. Similarly, the mutable and temporary text of the human *corpus* may be read as existent only in its narrative progress, finding form only in (re)formation. This recombinative corporeal (re/de)generation can be considered alongside that of *Finnegans Wake* through a reading that, like Joyce's writing, subordinates denotation and elevates internal interrelation.

As demonstrated by Herman, Joyce's systematic but disfigurative combinatorial methods in certain episodes of *Ulysses* resemble the mirroring, inversion, transposition, and other procedures of serialism. As will emerge in Chapter 2, in *Finnegans Wake* Joyce uses the substitution of phonemes and lexemes within syntagms such as "A Nation Once Again" to achieve inter-phrasal relationships with deformative variations ("nonation wide hotel" (32.16)) that are governed less by arbitrary semantics than by a composerly attention to syntax and a performerly emphasis on rhythm.

In Chapter 3, "Boulez and the Disabling of *Finnegans Wake* II.2", we see that, while Joyce and Boulez (with *Finnegans Wake* and the *Third Sonata* for piano respectively) "sacrificed" elements of auteurship to creatively destructive compositional mechanisms, the disciplined realisation of each work ensured its coherency, though not necessarily its "functionality". Unlike other (post)Joycean musics by Berio, Carter, Cage, and others, the *Third Sonata* – as it were – *contains* nothing of its literary inspiration (*Finnegans Wake* II.2), but rather structurally re-embodies that inspiring text.

Chapters 2 and 3 illustrate the broad potential of serial and other (forbiddingly) syntax-led modernist arts (not least *Wake* language) to communicate abstractly the inner make up of their composers. The variety of different serialisms – from Schoenberg's initial scholarly experiments, through Webern's melancholy miniatures and Berg's post-Romantic operas, to cinematic incarnations from science fiction to slapstick cartoons – demonstrate the versatility and immediacy of this apparently rigid and abstruse mode. Both Schoenberg's move toward serialism from the apparently greater expressivity of his earlier "atonal" style, and Joyce's shift during the writing of *Ulysses* from traditional Realist-narrative expressivity to a more potentially direct, but in practice less generally accessible mode, exhibit a desire, also seen in abstract painting, to show rather than tell the constitution of a human spirit.

Chapter 3 illustrates the systematic yet improvisatory dynamic between the working draft of *Finnegans Wake*, its genotextual material, and Joyce's extra-literary life through a period when his iritis was partially blinding him and his daughter's mental health was declining. Through an assessment of genetic and biographical interpretations, the chapter assembles an affecting fractured narrative. Such a discernment of rationality in dysfunction and coherence

in deformity (particularly in the composition of *FW II.2*) contrasts with readings of the chapter as irrational and incoherent.

But Joyce's uncertain "disabled" status is not integral to a disabled analysis of 'Work in Progress', and a diagnosis of Lucia's specific cognitive disorder is not essential to a reading of *Finnegans Wake* as re-embodiment of "cognitive disorder". Indeed, a structural analysis of the *Wake*, and my third chapter's demonstration of a compositional affinity between the *Wake* and Boulez's Third Sonata, arise first and foremost from a radically serialistic decentring of the *author-composer's agency and personal sensibilities*.

In Chapter 3 I propose that sounds in the Third Sonata (and often in *Finnegans Wake*) are received on a highly subjective basis. Pierre Schaeffer's auditory mode "*entendre*" and his principle of "reduced listening" (initially examined in Chapter 1B) provide ways of "reading" the *Sonata* that de-necessitate total understanding of serial methods. To put it another way, these sounds are functions of subjective hearing. Such readerly intentionality is strictly limited in prose by the lingual imperative of outward semantics. *Sonata* and *Wake* push, from a musical-aesthetic and a literary-semantic position respectively, toward an internal logic and order nonetheless productive of an external irrationality and entropy. In other words, the comprehensibility of these works is very much in the mind of their perceiver. One's own subjectivity is stripped bare, whereas with traditional diatonic music or conventional prose, one is able to fall back on the "residues of past subjectivity" (Witkin, 1998, p. 130).

As discussed in Chapter 1B's theoretical survey and in later chapters, disabled-abled bodily interactions tend to produce, not normative, but disabling dynamics: both the disabled and the abled body being impaired by a mutual incomprehension. In a similar way, all *Wake* readers and *Third Sonata* listeners are at once disabled by and disabling of the texts before them. The distorting prisms through which Joyce and Boulez process their basic material are highly de-semanticising, the iconic figures produced so defiant of interrelation with other figures that they themselves dominate the reader/listener's attention, and signification is partially incapacitated.

By contrast, in the anti-aesthetic/semantic universe of John Cage's *Wake*-inspired sound-artwork *Roaratorio* (discussed in Chapter 4, "*Roaratorio* and the Incomplete *Wake*"), the iconic is subordinated beneath the concrete. On one level Cage articulates himself quite clearly here. He processes the *Wake* arbitrarily through a free-versifying machine, and the adapter/reciter's non-signifying voice emanates from a soundscape of representational noises in accord with Schaeffer's auditory mode *écouter*. In this, sonic stimuli are received

immediately as indicators of entities and phenomena in the real world. In *Roaratorio*, we principally hear, not words or tonalities denoting or connoting things, but things themselves (church bells, the noise of crowds, breaking glass, bird song... and, amid the fray, strands of music sounding as though incidentally overheard). Throughout one hears the poet-composer's omnipotent voice, saying nothing coherently, but doing so with authority, intoning non-signifying strings of lexemes like the chantings of a Zen master.

In the main body of this thesis I compare early twentieth-century "classical" music's initial retention of many principles of traditional harmony to the contemporaneous literature's reluctance to dispense with established elements of semantic "coherence". I illustrate by contrast a heterogeneity in *Finnegans Wake* sympathetic with the anarchy of pitch relationships in serialism. I propose, moreover, that, if we hear language (perhaps especially *Wake* language) as too heterogenous for even such a "disharmonious" simile to apply, we can turn to Boulez's yet more convoluted "*integral*" serialism. But then, if this aesthetically even more "disabled" comparator shows itself too functional for *Wake* reading, we might, I suggest, invoke *Roaratorio*'s poetic "chaos" (Cage and Schöning, 1979, p. 38).

As argued above, an encounter between a disabled body and an abled body (such as those of Gerty MacDowell and Leopold Bloom, or of *Finnegans Wake* and a prospective reader) will usually engender a disabled, not an abled, dynamic. To view it slightly differently, we could say that all individual bodies (corporeal and artistic) maintain within and among themselves a constant discourse between ability and disability. We will, in the frequent mantra of disability studies, all eventually become disabled (either through injury, disease, or aging). The socio-cultural nature of this mutually disabling dynamic shows disability to be less a personal condition than a universal conditionality. We see this in the reflexive characterisation of disability operative between Shem, HCE, and other figures in the *Wake*.

Without exaggerating this mutuality when, after all, from moment to moment one body is disabled and another is not, I will contend that *Finnegans Wake*, like (modernist) music, embodies the indeterminate and shifting nature of human dysfunction. The *integrally serialistic* nature of the text, its heterogeneity, plays with memory and forgetting, showing "the human condition" to be one of universal cognitive disability. The distortion and de-semanticisation of song titles and lyrics in particular hint at a sort of musical cognitive dissonance in aestheticized language that would in real life be considered suggestive of a disorder, but which is in fact a common, if temporary syndrome in human beings. Music's

disability, its dysfunctionality, finds it inhering only in its making and, unlike language, not adhering to, or cohering with, objective comprehension or intelligence.

The central endeavour of this study will be to determine what this “music” *is* – or, at least, is *not* – that can somehow enter a work of literature. Is it a logical entity/phenomenon? an irrational entity/phenomenon? or both? Outside of literature, music appears to be at once logical and irrational: logical in composition, irrational in function. But the unwitting reduction of music’s conditionality that occurs in attempts to immingle it with literature generally impair either its logical or its irrational faculty. In her interpretation of “Sirens” as fugal, Witen pays closest attention to music’s logical composition. Bucknell seeks in his analysis a unity of sound and sense, finding each at once present and absent. And Anthony Burgess proposes a harmonious co-operation between the two media. As stated above, the present thesis accepts music and language as only the most deformatively conjoined twins.

In the end, as will be shown in Chapter 1A, diverse analytic models for defining what we will conceive of as “the music of Joyce” offer equally diverse ways of “hearing” Joycean textuality. Understandings range from the utter invariability of the inherence of song or other music in literature, to confidence in the functioning of music in both *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*.

Following Siebers’ generalised theoretical conceit, we will understand *Finnegans Wake* as both a “human body” and a cultural “space”. On this basis, it must be *hypothesised* that music might somehow enter that body and operate within that space. But the four chapters of this thesis ultimately seek to demonstrate that the intricacy of Joyce’s entwining, unravelling, re-entangling, and intermingling of narratives, characters, and locations in *Finnegans Wake* might arouse a (false) spatio-temporal sense in readers akin to that engaged in listening to contrapuntal musics such as fugue. It is that sense, or faculty, before any tangible existence of music in Joyce, that the thesis aims to establish.

CHAPTER 1A. Critical Context: Joyce, Music, and Meaning

While the present thesis as a whole seeks a triangulation of the prose writing of *Finnegans Wake*, the composition of modernist music, and aesthetic and cultural formulations of disability, this first sub-chapter focusses on extant (ablist) musical analyses of Joyce that a disablist reading might challenge or supplant. The main disablist thrust of the thesis begins with Chapter 1B's assessment of works from the diffuse field of disability studies relevant to *Joyce and music*. This said, key anti-normative strands of sonic-aesthetic thought emerge throughout the present sub-chapter's Joycean critical chronology. This is restricted to essays and books that take a specifically musical approach to Joyce, except in a few cases of studies that contain extra-musical ideas key to the arguments of later chapters.

Central to this survey are musical Joycean works by Anthony Burgess. Burgess's collapsing of orthodox critical models, and his disarticulated approach as linguist, literary and critical author, and musical composer, suggest him as an honorary disablist critic. His synaesthetic shifts of perspective, audition, and conceptualisation necessitate methodologies at variance with common approaches in Joyce studies. The section of this sub-chapter covering the years 1965 to 1982 focuses on how Burgess's works aid understandings of deformative and dysfunctional relationships between Joyce's prose, musical principles, and modes of analysing text, sound, and meaning. Chapter 1A as a whole examines *functionalist* analyses of the invocation in Joyce of tonality, harmony, timbre, rhythm, dynamics, and other musical variables. It critiques certain frequently repeated but less often fully justified critical tropes, and suggests how an able-anti-normative reading can contribute to their reassessment.

There has been a persistent failure in Joyce studies to define the crucial term "music" and subsidiary terms as they may pertain in literature. A key duality for this chapter is that of what we might think of as "music in Joyce" (references and allusions to music in the texts) and "the music of Joyce" (musical experiences engendered in readers through textuality). This duality is, however, as seen in many critical analyses and in Joyce's work, not a strict binary. Extrinsic cultural resonance and intrinsic musical aesthetics are rarely, if ever, fully separable in Joyce or in broader experience. These categories give way as the thesis develops and terminology more directly pertinent to its arguments emerges.

A common – and homogenising – reading of the musicality of Joyce's works is to seek in their construction some basis in formulaic musical modes, most prominent of these being the "fuga per canonem" in relation to the "Sirens" episode of *Ulysses*. The search for fugal, canonical, or otherwise formal principles behind the episode has been so central to this

history as to serve as a route map for shifts in the direction of broader Joycean literary criticism and textual scholarship. Witness only the difference in approach between Daniel Ferrer's 'Miroirs aux sirens' of 1984 (a Lacanian post-structuralist analysis) and the same author's 2001 essay 'What Song the Sirens Sang ... Is No Longer Beyond All Conjecture: A Preliminary Description of the New "Proteus" and "Sirens" Manuscripts' (a firmly philological genetic study).

A chronology of music and meaning in Joycean criticism

Critical readings of Joyce deploying musical (combined with dysgenic) metaphors date back to the 1920s. In 1921, Clive Bell, perceiving an influence of the transgressive and transmorphic form of jazz on Joyce's style, suggested in *The New Republic* that it was Joyce's purpose "to break up the traditional sentence", conceiving that "with a will he rags the literary instrument", but that "this will has at its service talents which are only moderate." (Bell, 1921, p. 183). And in 1929 we find Ernst R. Curtius implying that *Ulysses* might be functionally unintelligible, writing that,

...each passage, each sentence, each fragment of a sentence, is comprehensible only in relation to another one. In this, too, we find the relationship of Joyce's creation with music. We must read *Ulysses* like a score and it could be printed like a score. In order to really understand *Ulysses*, we would have to be conscious of every sentence in the work—a task which is almost impossible. (Curtius, 1929, p. 468-9)

Curtius's *intra-textual reading* of "the music of Joyce" would be echoed in many later critical works, including some discussed in this chronology. As we will see, Burgess accords with Curtius in conceiving that Joyce's texts should be considered as something like musical scores, but is quick to warn against excessive intermediality. Curtius also hints here at the question of simultaneity in Joyce, a *principle* that was to become central to musical Joycean criticism. Joyce demands impossibly of his readers that they be simultaneously "conscious", if not "of every sentence", then of multiple elements of character and theme interlinking to form the whole work. Debates over whether this multiguity constitutes "polyphony" and/or "counterpoint" have dominated this area of study from Curtius onwards.

James Joyce's Ulysses, Stuart Gilbert, 1930

In 1930, Stuart Gilbert established what was to become the standard model for counterpoint in “Sirens” with the conception that, “...there are generally two, three or four overlapping parts, which, synchronized by intertwinement in the same sentence, or closely juxtaposed, produce the effect of a chord of music”. Revealingly, he then adds:

He who reads such passages as certain cultured concert-goers prefer to hear a fugue — with the parts kept mentally distinct in four, or less, independent horizontal lines of melody — will miss much of the curious emotive quality of Joyce’s prose in this episode. For most of the sensuous value of music, the enthrallment of the Sirens’ song, is missed by the musical “high-brow” who forces himself to analyse the sounds he hears and separate the music into independent lines of horizontal parts.

And he concludes: “To enjoy to the full the emotion of symphonic music the hearer should be aware of it as a sequence of chords, listen vertically as well as horizontally.” (Gilbert, 1955, pp. 252-3). Gilbert seems to regard his own particular reading/listening disposition as normative, rejecting a digressive multi-linear reading in favour of an equally problematic “chordal” understanding. Joseph N. Straus speaks of “prodigious hearing”, “normal hearing”, and “disablist hearing” (Straus, 2011, pp. 150-1). This conception of three overlapping categories de-necessitates Gilbert’s invertedly-snobbish delineation of “high-brow” as opposed to “sensuous” hearing.

Gilbert summarises the key points of action in “Sirens” (such as Bloom exiting the Ormond bar) with illustrative quotations, and refers back to these in discussing the interplay of “point and counterpoint” throughout the episode. He identifies eight – as he defines them – “themes”. As with much else in Gilbert, this analysis appears to have been drawn from privileged primary sources (Gilbert’s work having been overseen by Joyce). On an early draft of “Sirens” not generally accessible till recently Joyce wrote a list of eight terms for fugal parts. Michelle Witen (2018) transcribes these as follows:

- 1) soggetto.
- 2) contrasoggetto
(reale in altro tono: in raccorciamento).
- 3) soggetto + contrasoggetto

in contrapunto.

4) esposizione

(proposto - codetta).

5) contra esposizione

(nuovi rapporti fra (divertimenti) i detti: parecchi).

6) Tela Contrappuntistica

(episodi).

7) Stretto maestiale

(blocalis d'armonia / narricum antesi).

8) Pedale.

(NLI MS 36,639/9, Image 09-0002, 1v) (Witen, 2018, p. 128)

These themes are, as Gilbert conceived them (divided into two sets), set 1: Martha's letter; the erotic book in Bloom's pocket; the impending assignation between Boylan and Molly; and, set 2 (associated with named elements of the fugue): "the Sirens' song" (the *subject*); Bloom's "entry and monologue" (the *answer*); Boylan (the *counter-subject*); and the songs by Simon Dedalus and Ben Dollard (the *episodes*). These add up to eight. It is possible that Gilbert (in accord with Joyce's list) conceived of part three as a counterpoint between the *soggetto* ("the Siren's song") and the *contrasoggetto* (Boylan).

But Gilbert establishes the latent presence of these principles mainly then to set them aside in favour of more broadly "musical" lines of thought. His argument includes a remark pertinent to the dynamic between sound, sense, and disability in this thesis. He writes:

This episode differs from most examples of "musical prose" in that the meaning does not lose but is, rather, intensified by the combination of the two arts; sense is not sacrificed to sound but the two are so harmonized that, unless his ears, like the Achaeans', are sealed with wax against the spell, the reader, hearkening to "the voice sweet as the honeycomb and having joy thereof, will go on his way the wiser." (Gilbert, 1955, p. 257)

Gilbert clearly believes that there is a "music" to Joyce's writing, or, perhaps more accurately, in its reading. This established, he concerns himself less with whether music is somehow able to enter, and convey ideas within, literature, or what the nature of this "music" might be, than with how lingual semantics can be reconciled with sonic aesthetics. He asserts

that, in “Sirens”, “sense is not sacrificed to sound”; yet the pleasure of “his ears” at the “sensuous” qualities of Joyce’s prose suggests that neither does he feel the reverse to be so. In later chapters we will see the normative anxiety of some critics at Joyce’s “sacrificing” of sense to sound (content to form) in *Finnegans Wake*.

Another important feature of “Sirens” whose critical discussion remains coloured by “the Joyce-Gilbert paradigm” (Herman, 1994, p. 475) is its opening so-called “overture”. Gilbert writes:

[“Sirens”] opens with two pages of brief extracts from the narrative which follows. These fragmentary phrases appear almost meaningless to the reader till he has perused the chapter to its end; nevertheless, they should not be skipped. They are like the overtures of some operas and operettas, in which fragments of the leading themes and refrains are introduced ... to give, when these truncated themes are completed and developed in their proper place, that sense of familiarity which ... enhances for most hearers their enjoyment of a new tune. (Gilbert, 1955, p. 242-3)

It is striking the degree to which Gilbert’s word has, as we will see, so long been read almost as gospel. Clearly this is in large part due to his work’s supervision by Joyce. But a general critical reluctance to break away from “the Joyce-Gilbert paradigm” points, I believe, to an abiding conservative tendency in musical Joyce studies that a disablist approach may help to redress.

James Joyce and the making of Ulysses, Frank Budgen, 1934

Frank Budgen’s account of the musical inspiration of “Sirens” concentrates on Joyce’s love of the tenor voice and the cult of the tenor singer in Dublin. Budgen was self-professedly not a music authority, and he offers little comment on contrapuntalism in the episode. He may have felt that Gilbert had comprehensively covered this ground. That said, the short passage in which Budgen does address this topic (though obliquely) is dense with important ideas:

...both arts—that of the musician and that of the poet—can run together, singly or in double harness. Both use sounds that follow one another in time, and both use written symbols to conserve and communicate them. Notes lie like words on paper nebeneinander and like words they float in the air — or seem to float in the air —

nacheinander. Poet and musician only part company when the musician writes his notes übereinander and sends them forth on the airs in clusters and swarms. The poet is bound to sense, and if he followed the musician here he would leave sense behind. ... The chord is their last point of contact. Here no doubt but that Joyce has followed him, not in The Sirens episode of *Ulysses* but in his Work in Progress. Joyce can give some of the effect of four voices singing together, but not the fact. (Budgen, 1972, p. 135-6)

Budgen's binaries of *poet* and *musician*, *written symbols* and *sounds* in time, *nacheinander* and *nebeneinander* (plus *übereinander*), *sense* and *sense left behind*, and the *effect* and the *fact* of *polyphony* comprise a neat summary of the main conceptual problems for the topic of counterpoint in Joyce. Budgen's addition of *übereinander* to the usual analytic binary of *nacheinander* and *nebeneinander* (derived from Gotthold Lessing's *Laokoon*) helps to indicate the full knottiness of the spatio-temporal issues at play. As well as objects (letters or musical graphemes) alongside one another, Budgen asks us to think of sounds (verbal or musical phonemes) on top of one another. This is a notably more *deformalist*, *dysfunctionalist* paradigm than Gilbert's, one for which 'Work in Progress' and not "Sirens" is the logical subject.

Budgen soon returns, however, to his favoured topic of the people and places, not of Joyce's fictive worlds, but of Joyce's and Budgen's shared real ones. "Dublin is, or was, a musical town, with a particular passion for vocal music", he marks, continuing:

In *The Sirens* the Dubliners are shown to divide their interest in vocal music between opera of the Italian school and popular ballads. What makes them good orators probably makes them good singers. (Budgen, 1972, p. 137)

Both Budgen and Gilbert emphasise the semantically rudimentary (but syntactically intricate) passages that punctuate the episode. Budgen draws on his ear-witnessing of Joyce rendering his own words out loud:

Joyce's brilliant burlesques of the more banal tiddlepomp aspects of music pleased him, and all of us who heard him read them, immensely. ... This is one of them:

...George Lidwell told her really and truly: but she did not believe. First gentleman told Mina that was so. She asked him was that so. And second tankard told her so.

That that was so. Miss Douce, Miss Lydia, did not believe: Miss Kennedy, Mina, did not believe: George Lidwell, no: Miss Dou did not: the first, the first: gent with the tank: believe, no, no: did not Miss Kenn: Lidlydiawell: the tank. (*U* 11.815-20)
(Budgen, 1972, pp. 141-2)

Budgen offers no critical response to this quotation, save to remark anecdotally that,

To these simple rhythms on our homeways I invented appropriate dances. The steps wouldn't have satisfied Professor Maginni [Dennis Maginni, Dublin dance school proprietor], but they were better than I could ever do on a dance floor to the music of drums and saxophones. (Budgen, 1972, pp. 141-2)

But then, what better analytic response to the “music of” prose than an account of a dance to that music? Joseph Straus might well suggest that Budgen was here exhibiting “disablist hearing”, analysing language in silently musical, anti-semantic, kinaesthetic ways.

James Joyce: A Critical Introduction, Harry Levin, 1941

While Harry Levin's study is a broad-ranging appraisal of an author and his canon of work, it includes a brief but insightful comment on the desire of readers and critics to discern music in Joyce's words:

At close range, *Finnegans Wake* seems to realize the aspiration of the other arts toward the condition of music. The obvious musical analogies are misleading, for they imply a limitation, rather than an enlargement, of our means of expression. They encourage a doctrine of pure poetry, or prose that exists solely for the sake of euphony. Joyce is a consummate master of the music of words, but he is also a master of ‘the music of ideas’ ... His innovation is to harmonize the two modes. (Levin, 1960, p. 155)

After a brief allusion to Pater's “condition of music”, Levin here sketches out several of what would become the key concerns for the study of *Joyce and music*. He urges caution with metaphorical musicalisation, and warns against seeking pure “euphony” in the prose. It is in the very *dysphony* of Joyce's punning, Levin suggests, that we may find much of its musicality.

What Levin crucially overlooks here is the ambiguity of the word “music” itself. Having identified the dangers of “the obvious musical analogies”, he then neglects to indicate with what “music” is analogous in his argument. Far from elucidating the term, his affixing of “music” to extra-musical concepts (in “the music of words” and “the music of ideas”) simply adds to the uncertainty.

Levin also comments (ambiguously) on the idea that there is a fugal structure to “Sirens”, first acknowledging the “fuga”, then dismissing “polyphonic prose” as “a loose metaphor”. And on the “overture” he remarks, again compellingly but at odds with Gilbert and most later critics, that,

The whole passage is not a contrapuntal development of the opening phrases; the phrases are an impressionistic condensation of the passage. The introductory pages should be read as a thematic index to the following pages, but without the sequel they are meaningless. (Levin, 1960, pp. 89-90)

This invocation of antecedent-consequential relationships is an interesting early digression from the already dominant overture-fugue model. Chapter 2 of this thesis, which considers Joycean musicality from a serialist perspective, emphasises tensions between consequence and antecedence in *Finnegans Wake*, aligning these with similar tensions in the music of Arnold Schoenberg.

‘The Sirens at the Ormond Bar: *Ulysses*’, Stanley Sultan, 1959

Stanley Sultan’s ‘The Sirens at the Ormond Bar’ exemplifies mid-twentieth-century analyses that have been rejected by later critics. Zack Bowen writes that, “The contention of Sultan that the overture is parallel to the overture from the opera *Martha* is, I feel, incorrect”. Bowen also disagrees with “Sultan’s view that the sirens episode is the dramatic climax and turning point of *Ulysses*” (Bowen, 1975, p. 54).

Karen Lawrence discerns major problems with the essay’s analysis of structure, writing:

Sultan contends that the “justification” for the section is that it “imitates an operatic overture.” To see the chapter merely as an imitation of a musical form is to ignore how the stylistic antics ... are anticipated in previous chapters and continued in subsequent chapters. (Lawrence, 1981, p. 90)

Lawrence, Jean-Michel Rabaté, and other critics cited in “Herman 1994” below, find a “rhetorical” continuity within the novel as a whole not limited to musical devices. These rarely referenced but valid positions are helpful in separating “music in” from “the music of” Joyce. They judge that the density of musical allusion in “Sirens” need not correspond to a particular structural musicality that is in fact neither overwhelming in this episode nor insignificant in others.

‘The Sirens Episode as Music: Joyce’s Experiment in Prose Polyphony’, Lawrence L. Levin, 1965

By contrast, in an epitome of the “musical” school of thought, Lawrence L. Levin’s ‘The Sirens Episode as Music’ examines in more depth than any prior study the supposed contrapuntalism of “Sirens”. The questions the essay addresses as to whether Joyce had in mind a fugal and/or canonical structure for the episode, and whether such a structure can be detected in reading, are still active today. Building on Gilbert, Levin seeks to disentangle the intertwined lingual and “musical” elements and suggests how the (dys)functioning of each might help to elucidate that of the other.

Where many later critics have paid too little attention to the technicalities of counterpoint behind the episode, Levin deals with this well given the scant geno-textual data to which he had access. He writes: “All the commentators concur that the musical form is fugal, but there is a general disagreement as to what particular form within the fugal evolution Joyce utilised.” (Levin, 1965, p. 12). Levin identifies an apparent discrepancy between Joyce’s claim in a letter to Harriet Shaw Weaver that his structure for “Sirens” had “eight regular parts”, and his designation of the episode as following the form of a “fuga per canonem”. While a fugue has eight regular parts, Levin argues, a fuga per canonem does not. He suggests (going into some terminological detail) that Joyce may have confused or elided the *parts* of a contrapuntal work with its *voices*. This might, he hypothesises, help make sense of Joyce’s “Sirens” plan. Later studies have partially clarified these issues, and Witen’s *James Joyce and Absolute Music* (2018) would appear finally to have dispelled any sense that Joyce was led by a misunderstanding of distinctions between these terms.

Here Comes Everybody: An introduction to James Joyce for the ordinary reader, Anthony Burgess, 1965

With *Here Comes Everybody*, Burgess sought, in the vein more of Gilbert and Budgen than of Lawrence Levin, to make Joyce accessible to potential readers who he suggests had – so early in the story of Joyce studies – been put off by a veil of obscurity draped around the writing by literary academics. He states that, “If ever there was a writer for the people, Joyce was that writer.” (Burgess, 1987, p. 13). In the foreword he associates the phrase “here comes everybody” (32.18) with his own wish “to stress the universality of Joyce’s creations” (Burgess, 1987, p. 14). In *Bodies of Modernism*, Maren Tova Linett would also latch onto this Wakean slogan of universalism, coining the disablist variant “Here Comes Everycrip” (Linett, 2017, p. 183).

In the sub-section ‘Labyrinth and Fugue’, Burgess adds his own model for the polyphony of “Sirens” to the by that time still sparse critical discourse on the matter. His attitude to the fugal in “Sirens” is ambivalent, and he appears to view *Finnegans Wake* as more successful in its contrapuntalism than “Sirens”. He is, however, most interesting (though also most subjective) where he strays from such well-marked critical paths.

The suggestion, for instance, that there might be a sort of “tremolo” affect to “Her wavyavyeavyheavyeavyevyevyhair” (*U* 11.808-9) (Burgess, 1987, p. 139) is supported neither by musicological scrutiny nor by later work on onomatopoeia in “Sirens”. Such “lexical onomatopoeia” (Fischer, 1999, p. 250) stand on the cusp of the externally semantic and non-semantic, displaying none of what we will henceforth conceive of as music’s “internal semantics”. Burgess claims that, in *Ulysses*, “We have recapitulations, ornamented cadences, appoggiaturas” (Burgess, 1987, p. 139). Here he mixes credible analogies (recapitulation, ornamentation) with fanciful metaphorisation (appoggiatura).

Joysprick: An introduction to the language of James Joyce, Anthony Burgess, 1973

In the first chapter of *Joysprick*, ‘Signs on Paper’, Burgess the divergent linguist approaches Joycean neologisms from a semiotic perspective, viewing particular *dyslexical* constructions as visual signs as much as aural representations. From this perspective, difficulties of pronunciation are not impassable obstacles to comprehension. This is an intriguing deviation from common views of Joyce’s late work as highly verbal, phonetic, and auditory. The critical discourse which hears constructions such as “Mrkgnao!” (*U* 4.32) (the cry of Leopold

Bloom's cat) as purely onomatopoeic, disregards their symbolic representational function. Burgess sees these graphic representations of found sounds as having "a semiotic function which shall be iconic more than conventional" (Burgess, 1973, p. 22). He cites Joyce's use of soundless sigla to denote the characters in the *Wake* as a sign that he at least partially took this "iconic" view of dyslexical representation.

In attempting to codify Joyce's peculiar language, Burgess seeks to define an equally peculiar Joycean "music". Prefiguring his notion in 'Re Joyce' of "the phonemic inventory" (Burgess, 1983, p. 136), he writes:

It is as if Joyce were given a keyboard capable of striking all the English vowel phonemes and he at once began to play as many different ones as he could, leaping in wide intervals rather than treading a scale. (Burgess, 1973, p. 74)

For Burgess, Joyce is at all times and in all his works an *able* musician. The question – raised by Burgess and later critics – of whether this *ability* is in itself sufficient for the author to carry readers beyond the paradigmatic scribblings in his notebooks into a syntagmatic realisation of musical principles is crucial to this *disablist* thesis.

To an extent, this question is avoided by a distinct subset of scholars more interested in allusive musical content than in musico-textual form. This empirical, functionalist, meta-semantic tendency contrasts with the dominant broadly qualitative, dysfunctionalist, aestheticist tendency.

Musical Allusions in the Works of James Joyce, Zack Bowen, 1975

In *Musical Allusions...* Zack Bowen works on the basis of Mabel Worthington's index of over a thousand popular, classical, and sacred song allusions in Joyce, annotating and analysing their significance within the text. While he fulfils his aim "to comment on every allusion discovered" and to present "a unified critical study" (Bowen, 1975, p. 4) as well as providing elsewhere-omitted technical information, Bowen is loose in his metaphorisations of "music" and other musical terms. In reading, for instance, that in Joyce, "song references are used as music as well as a source of literary reference" (Bowen, 1975, p. 47), I wonder how a song allusion can be seen to operate "as music" any more than another reference. While I acknowledge that a qualification cannot reasonably be attached to every usage of the word

“music” in a given study, Bowen frequently fails to indicate the – admittedly often non-binary – distinction between musical allusion and musical actuality.

***The James Joyce Songbook*, Ruth Bauerle, 1982 / ‘Hodgart and Worthington: From Silence to Song’, Ruth Bauerle, 1991**

In keeping with Worthington’s and Bowen’s cataloguing methodologies, Ruth Bauerle’s *James Joyce Songbook* presents a selection of 197 songs (texts with photo reproductions of contemporary sheet music), around a quarter of the songs then known to be referenced in Joyce’s major works. Bauerle narrowed her choice down to the allusions she judged most significant to the works plus thirty-three songs that Joyce is documented as having sung often (only some of which are mentioned in his texts). The book gives the frequency of particular allusions, singling out songs alluded to five times or more in one work or in three or more works.

In 1991, Bauerle produced an essay celebrating the legacy of Mabel Worthington and her collaborator Matthew Hodgart. She begins a concise chronology (initially of general early references to *Joyce and music*) where I began this one, with Clive Bell in 1921. Coming to her main interest of the cataloguing of lyrics, she cites L. A. G. Strong’s mid-1940s indexing of some three hundred musical works. She then credits the contributions of a long list of scholars leading up to, then beyond, Hodgart and Worthington.

Bowen’s *Allusions* also receives a distinguished mention, and Bauerle cites Bowen’s audio recordings of songs alluded to in Joyce as influencing a practice from the 1960s onwards of conference performances of the songs, which eventually led to the production of a substantial series of recordings edited by Mabel Worthington in the 1970s.

Bauerle also quite rightly gives her own *Song Book* a key place in this history, and connects up the familiar names of this field of Joyce study with dozens of lesser renowned but collectively significant figures. She brings her survey up to date in the late 1980s and notes that the overall project continues. Indeed, one can draw a line from Hodgart and Worthington, through Bowen and Bauerle, to Timothy Martin, whose book on the influence of Richard Wagner on Joyce includes an extensive index of Wagnerian allusions.

‘Re Joyce’, Anthony Burgess, 1982

In common with later critics such as Andreas Fischer and Brad Bucknell, and contrary to his contemporaries Hodgart and Worthington, Bowen, and Bauerle, Burgess was interested in musical construction over musical allusion.

Regarding the *fuga per canonem*, he appears to have felt himself close to having solved this puzzle, but never fully reveals his workings. He states that,

The “Sirens” themselves represent the subject, and Bloom is the answer (the subject restated in a voice a fifth higher or fourth lower). The counter-subject, or contrapuntal accompaniment to the answer and then to each restatement of the subject, is represented by blazes Boylan, who comes to the Ormond bar – or counter, since he is the counter-subject... (Burgess, 1983a, p. 140) (*my hyphens*)

Though ‘Re Joyce’ lacked in 1982 the depth of source materials available to present-day scholarship, Burgess sets out his conception of the main “fugal statements” in “Sirens” with acute musicological understanding. With the term “fugal statement” he refers to motifs representing particular characters and phenomena, which, once introduced, are then variously transformed and intercombined throughout the episode. Most prominent of these according to Burgess are: the bright “bronze by gold” tones of Lydia Douce and Mina Kennedy; Leopold Bloom’s muted and melancholy “the Bloom is on the Rye”; and the “jingle jaunty jingle” of blazes Boylan’s cab (*U* 11.48, 11.6, 11.45).

Burgess’s use of the terms “counterpoint”, “polyphony”, and their derivatives reveals an ambivalence toward such concepts’ applicability to the analysis of Joyce. Like Karen Lawrence, Burgess associates “Sirens” with “Wandering Rocks”, taking a more integrated view of rhetorical and stylistic construction in *Ulysses* than strict fugal interpretations allow. He uses the phrase “counterpoint of action” twice, concluding that, “The very nature of literature, which functions only in time ... forbids a true counterpoint of action”. His two uses of “polyphony” speak of the “mechanical polyphony” of “Wandering Rocks” and the “human polyphony” of “Sirens” (Burgess, 1983a, p. 138). He aligns with the mainstream in his clarification that the “counter-subject” can otherwise be conceived of as the “contrapuntal accompaniment to the answer” (Burgess, 1983a, p. 140).

With regard to *Finnegans Wake*, he speaks of Joyce employing “a verbal technique which turns words into chords and discourse into counterpoint” (Burgess, 1983a, p. 146), and

suggests that in whole paragraphs we may find “multiple counterpoint” in action. Finally, as his scepticism about the *Wake* begins to emerge, he remarks that, “The contrapuntal technique is easily learned” (Burgess, 1983a, p. 147).

Indicating a jump of several pages with an ellipsis, Burgess quotes the passages describing Boylan’s departure from the Ormond bar and arrival at the Blooms’ house:

Atrot in heat, heatseated. *Cloche. Sonnez la. Cloche. Sonnez la.* Slower the mare went up the hill by the Rotunde, Rutland Square. Too slow for Boylan, blazes Boylan, impatience Boylan, joggled the mare ... Jog jig joggled stopped. Dandy tan shoe of dandy Boylan socks skyblue clocks came light to earth. (*U* 11.763-6, 11.977-8) (Burgess 1983a, p. 141)

The impression of counterpoint in these passages (with their radical inter-splicing of contrary themes) appears to play on the ambiguity and duality of musical contrapuntalism itself. Counterpoint is neither merely harmonic, nor merely rhythmic. The mensural (metrical) intersection of melodic lines articulates an inherent chordal progression. In turn, the incidence of these chords helps the listener to follow the beat in what would otherwise be a bewildering multi-rhythmic landscape. In the above passage, the interplay between Boylan’s *jingling* and the “Sonnez la Cloche” of Mina or Lydia snapping her garter for Boylan’s titillation somewhat mimics musical counterpoint. But as explored in Chapter 4, it is the ultimate failure of such quasi-musical devices in Joyce’s prose that makes them so pleasing both aesthetically and semantically.

Burgess also perceives in Joyce a certain “melodic” style of writing. ‘Re Joyce’ presents a series of short excerpts from *Ulysses*. One reads: “He foresaw his pale body reclined in it at full, naked, in a womb of warmth, oiled by scented melting soap, softly laved” (*U* 5.67-8). Burgess writes that, “To analyse these sentences is to be aware ... of hands playing the keyboard of the phonemic inventory” (Burgess, 1983a, p. 135). Phonemes do not exist in absolute relation to one another as musical notes do. Burgess seems at points to suggest that there is, or can be imposed, such a relationality. His notion of what might constitute the lingual equivalent of a *note* appears to be defined by where this unit stands in a particular context. Such units as “soap” and “laved” fulfil their quasi-tonal potential for Burgess only when the line in which they stand is read as quasi-melodic. An effect of absolute relationality is, for Burgess, created within an internal, self-sustaining system. But we can find in language neither a sequential nor an intervallic relationality between phonemes. Therefore I cannot

subscribe to Burgess's assertion that, "Joyce composes verbal melodies which seem to subsist independently of the things described". "As in true melody", he continues,

... [Joyce] exploits the possibilities of range – down from *foresaw* up to *pale*, down to *body*, forward to *reclined*, up and back to *full*, forward to *naked*, back and up to *womb*, down to *warmth*, gliding from down to up in the diphthong *oiled*, and then it is time for repetition of the front close *e* of *scented*, *melting*... (Burgess, 1983a, p. 135)

Upon what criteria these (quasi)spatial movements can be systematised is unclear. Though they appear rooted in a physio-linguistic study of verbal mouth positions, this cannot – as Burgess attempts to do – be elided with the spatiality of melody. Burgess himself admits that, "this sounds fanciful and metaphorical, like Eliot describing Edmund Spenser as the great master of melody" (Burgess, 1983a, p. 136).

Between 'Re Joyce' and David Herman's "'Sirens' After Schoenberg" (1994), the meta-narrative of "the music of Joyce" became diffuse and heterogeneous. The trail went slightly cold on the "fuga per canonem", and critics such as Ferrer and Rabaté tended to invoke music as one element of an eclectic post-modernist reading.

'The Silence of the Sirens', Jean-Michel Rabaté, 1986

Jean-Michel Rabaté's 'The Silence of the Sirens' is, as its title might suggest, less a "musical" than an "anti-musical" reading of Joyce. But while Rabaté's thesis is couched in terms that reject the Gilbertian "musical" orthodoxy, its "anti-musicologicality" is in many ways more musicological than Gilbert's cod musicology. With regard to the "musicalization" of language, Rabaté rightly observes in 1982 (published in 1986) – and this remains true today – that "no one will agree" (Rabaté, 1986b, p. 82) on the meaning of this term. And, very much in accord with the present study, for Rabaté's analysis, "musicalization" is not the only loose and potentially unhelpful concept/term overrelied upon by "musical" readings. "The musical terms, those used by Stuart Gilbert for instance, are", he points out, echoing Harry Levin, "all metaphorical and arbitrary." (Rabaté, 1986b, p. 82). He cites as an illustration "the famous "hollow fifth" which Stuart Gilbert no doubt helped by Joyce— identifies in "Are you off? Yrfmstbyes. Blmstup. O'er ryehigh blue. Bloom stood up"" (U 11.1126-7) (Rabaté, 1986b, p. 82). And he quotes Gilbert's assertion that, "Examples of the 'hollow fifth' (quinto vuoco) are such words as 'Blmstup,' where the 'thirds,' the letters oo

and ood (Bloom stood up) are omitted” (Gilbert, 1955, p. 255). This idea of the internal vowel sounds in words equating to the major/minor “thirds” in chords, and the external consonants equating to the tonics and fifths is, indeed, utterly arbitrary. As Rabaté notes, “Stephen plays a series of “empty fifths” before explaining his view on the “fundamental” and the “dominant”” (*U* 15.2106) (Rabaté, 1986b, p. 82). Neither Dedalus nor Gilbert can be relied upon here.

Speaking more broadly of the musical terminology used in much Joyce criticism, Rabaté writes: “[m]y contention is that classical rhetorics can describe all these musical figures as well, if not better than, the vocabulary of musicology” (Rabaté, 1986b, p. 83). As we will see in later chapters of the present thesis, this total rejection of musical in favour of rhetorical vocabulary is unnecessary so long as the main problem with much musical Joyceanism (less the words used than the failure to (re)define them) is addressed. Nonetheless, Rabaté’s suggested rhetorical lexicon provides a useful bridge between the abstract theoretical terminology of music and the concrete semantic reality of the *Wake*. His list of potential descriptors and examples thereof includes:

“prosthesis (addition of sound or syllable to a word): “endlessnessnessness”” (*U* 11.750)

“interpolation: “he (who?) gazed in the coffin (coffin?)...”” (*U* 11.291)

“chiasmus: “Like lady, ladylike”” (*U* 11.336)

“asyndeton: “Will? You? I. Want. You. To.”” (*U* 11.1096)

“assonance: “muffled hammerfall in action”” (*U* 11.294)

“echolalia: “Impertnthn thnthnthn”” (*U* 11.2)

(Rabaté, 1986b, p. 83-4).

Though I concur with Rabaté’s sense of the potential flabbiness of “musicalization” as a paradigm of formal innovation in literature, the term has the advantage over “music” and “musical” of indicating a process rather than a state, a conditionality rather than a condition. At the heart of his critical model is an understanding that “signifiers” (rearranged and reconstructed using rhetorical procedures) have an “evocative power” (Rabaté, 1986b, p. 84) of their own, and need not – and indeed cannot – borrow those of intervals or chords (constructed and arranged based on the principles of “functional harmony”).

Setting aside Gilbert’s unsound *literary harmony* in favour of the “Sirens” episode’s more viably quasi-musical syntax), Rabaté conceives that music “appears” as “a *pretext* for the radicalization” of a literary “process” (Rabaté, 1986b, p. 84). In accord with this, the

present thesis views music both as a *pretext* (excuse) for, and *pretextual* (extrinsic) to, the radicalisation of “Sirens”, of “Circe”, of the *Wake*, and of any Joyce or other (modernist) text.

Though it is most often for philological studies that this unsafe pretext and this fundamental pretextuality are crucial stumbling stones (too much being read into Joyce’s musical musings in his notebooks), biographical and historicist readings can also fall prey to these factors.

Joyce and Wagner: A Study of Influence, Timothy Martin, 1991

In *Joyce and Wagner...* (1991), Timothy Martin considered how Joyce followed Richard Wagner in pursuing the ideal of “total art” (a radical synthesis of dramatic, poetic, and musical elements). Though the book has a biographical and historical thrust, Martin engages in more abstract debates. He argues, for example, that, “literature cannot in any absolute sense achieve what Pater had called “the condition of music” ... Even the “musical” influence on Joyce’s work is ineluctably “literary”” (Martin, 1991, pp. xii-xiii). The inclusion of an index of (Wagnerian) musical allusions is not all that Martin’s study shares with Bauerle’s *Songbook*. Like Gilbert, Budgen, Hodgart and Worthington, Bowen, and Bauerle before him, Martin conceives the interrelation of music and literature as occurring within the (normative) temporality of art history, rather than in the disruptive spatialities of artworks themselves.

Martin precedes each of his chapters with one or two provocative epigraphs pertinent to Joyce, to Wagner, and/or to art in the abstract. As with the main body of the text, references to music itself are here oblique and serve largely extra-musical analyses. Chapter Six begins with quotations from two literary modernists:

Fiction ... must strenuously aspire to the plasticity of sculpture, the colour of painting, and to the magic suggestiveness of music – which is the art of arts.

Conrad, Preface to *The Nigger of the “Narcissus”*.

But, of course, the real villain is Wagner. He has done more than any man in the nineteenth century towards the muddling of arts.

Forster, *Howards End*.

(Martin, 1991, p.142).

These (post)Paterian conceptions underpin the stance of Martin's entire study. The Conrad quotation reworks Walter Pater's conceit that artforms "aspire" to each other's conditions. Pater's assertion that "all art constantly aspires towards the condition of music" (Pater, 2010, p. 124) has become a commonplace of aesthetic discourse. The mutual and reciprocal nature of this proposed aspiration is less often invoked.

Margret Schlegel's anti-Wagnerian sentiment in *Howards End* is, despite its reactionary tone, more in sympathy with the present thesis than is Conrad's modernistic demand. Martin abstracts this critique of post-Wagnerian artistic culture from Schlegel's broader complaint about her sister Helen's synaesthesia of music with painting, painting with literature, literature with music. Margret asks the far less "cultured" Leonard Bast: "Do you think music is ... different to pictures?" And she continues:

...my sister declares they're just the same. ... Now, doesn't it seem absurd to you? What is the good of the Arts if they are interchangeable? What is the good of the ear if it tells you the same as the eye? Helen's one aim is to translate tunes into the language of painting, and pictures into the language of music. ... Now, this very symphony [Beethoven's 5th] that we've just been having—she won't let it alone. She labels it with meanings from start to finish; turns it into literature. (Forster, 1992, p. 35-6)

Notwithstanding the simplistic terms of Margret's argument, she broaches several areas of difficulty for discourse over Joycean musicality. "What" indeed "is the good of the ear if it tells you the same as the eye?" And why should we wish, and what would it mean, to "Translate" words "into the language of" music?

Martin's presumption that history and authorial biography are fixed parameters within which artworks function may seem to divide him from a post-structuralist critic like Jennie Wang, whose musical analysis extends into the politics of reading and the instabilities of mediality. But Wang's contemporaneous 'The Player's Song of *Finnegans Wake*' is no more or less subjective within Joycean critical epistemology than is Martin's historicist analysis.

'The Player's Song of *Finnegans Wake*: Translating Sound Sense', Jennie Wang, 1991

Wang begins her paper with the apparently rather Burgessian postulate that,

If Joyce in *Ulysses* is performing a “musical comedy” with lyric songs, in *Finnegans Wake* he practically places the “viola d’amore” in the reader’s hand and invites him to play the music of transformative phonetics on the metaphysical, metaphorical and multiple-keyed scales ... – a strange way of performing. (Wang, 1991, p. 212)

Despite her express intention to avoid “theoretical impositions”, Wang’s study has unmistakably Barthesian overtones, very much concerned as it is with “the reader” or “player” as sovereign. This said, she clearly believes that the player of the “song of *Finnegans Wake*” should be in accord with its composer. Explaining her rationale, she writes:

...much has been said about the “sound motif” or “sound sense” in *Finnegans Wake* ... yet not so much has really been heard in tune with the author’s narrative voice, his longing to be “keen again ... to make soundsense and sensesound kin again” (121.15) (Wang, 1991, p. 212)

Wang’s pushing together of language and music without total elision emphasises technical incommensurabilities while celebrating kinship of appreciation. Of the *Wake* word “multaphoniaksically”, she writes:

If we *speak* the word aloud in different ways by laying the stress on different syllables and pronounce the vowels with their possible variations, a number of possibilities begins to vibrate in the ear: “multi-phonetically, mute-phonetically, meta-phonetically, multi-punicly, metaphysically, metaphorically, musically, metaphoenixly.” But the question is: which one is “the right one”? (Wang, 1991, p. 215)

This rehearsal of the deformative dysfunctionality of *Wake* reading chimes with Ronald Schleifer’s argument – addressed in Chapter 1B – that the Touretic language in Jonathan Lethem’s novel *Motherless Brooklyn* simulates the wordplay both of real-world Tourette’s speech and of modernist poetry.

Quoting *FW* 1.1 –

So you need hardly spell me how every word will be bound over to carry three score and ten toptypical readings throughout the book of Doublends Jined (*may his forehead be*

darkened with mud who would sunder!) till Daleth, mahomahorma, who oped it closeth thereof the. Dor” (20.17-8)

– Wang conceives that,

[a]ccording to the rules of the game Joyce has laid down early in the text quoted above, we are not supposed to read any created Word as one word because, “every word will be bound over to carry three score and ten toptypical readings,” ... Therefore, if we wish to be “true” to our author, we’d better retain the multiplicity of the wor(l)d’s reality by reading the word multiply: “multi-mute-meta-phorical-phonetic-phoenix-punic- physic-musically” ... Accordingly the player must decipher the “curios” of notes and multiple scales, “ftirrowards, bagawards” in order to strike, as Joyce intends, “[this] sound of Irish sense” (12.36-13.01) (Wang, 1991, p. 216)

Wang here partially simulates the disablist “self-reflexive composing schemes” (Wang, 1991, p. 216) of *Finnegans Wake*. The fact that she discovers no “notes and multiple scales” in Joyce’s words is of no consequence as she does not attempt this. Nor does she seek to concretise these abstractions.

In *The Sound of Finnegans Wake*, Peter Myers does indeed seek notes and scales in Joyce, and also blurs distinctions between the notional and the palpable, the metaphorical and the literal.

The Sound of Finnegans Wake, Peter Myers, 1992

You won your limpopo limp from the husky hussars when Collars and Cuffs was heir to the town and your slur gave the stink to Carlow. (214.28-30)

Myers’ analysis is *sui generis* and based on unsafe assumptions about both music and language. He makes some confusing remarks about the above quotation, writing:

there is the tune – the rise and fall of pitch – together with varieties of duration and loudness, as in music; but there are also the very rapid changes of timbre: four changes in the word ‘limp’ alone. This results in a considerable complication, in that patterns of

timbre are formed. We might consider the phonemes of /l i m p/ as; say, flute oboe bagpipes drum producing sounds in very rapid succession. (Myers, 1992, p. xvi)

Unlike Burgess, Myers fails to acknowledge that much of what may be said of morpheme-by-morpheme sonicity in *Finnegans Wake* could be said regarding any work of literature. The construction “Limpopo limp” is far more limping than it is musical, far more syntactic than it is sonic-aesthetically timbrel. While Burgess’s flights of fancy are contextualised within objective analysis, Myers returns repeatedly to his unsubstantiable narrative on the “music of Joyce”.

In fairness, similar false assumptions to those behind Myers’ thesis underlie much musico-lingual commentary. He cites *The Oxford Companion to Music*’s entry for *melody*, which states:

All speech possesses the two constituents of melody, (a) pitch variation and (b) rhythm. ... Everybody in speaking any phrase speaks some syllables on a higher note and some more softly (stress), and some more lingeringly and some more curtly (quantity). This is melody. (Myers, 1992, p. xi-xii)

Myers, Burgess, and the author of this entry, each offer an ultimately specious argument concerning the *tunefulness of the word*. A quest to find the “notes” and “scales” of *Finnegans Wake* simply through closer and closer reading cannot overcome the sheer tonal and rhythmic chaos of written language.

“Sirens” after Schoenberg’, David Herman, 1994

David Herman’s “Sirens” after Schoenberg’ reassesses contrapuntal notions of Joyce’s prose. It situates Joyce as a key participant in the interdisciplinary syntactic turn of the early twentieth century, led in music by Arnold Schoenberg. Herman argues that there exists a distinct syntactical interrelationality between the radical construction of “Sirens” and Schoenberg’s serial polyphony.

Schoenbergian serial compositions (each of which arranges the twelve notes of Western harmony according to its own unique paradigm), abstract paintings (which elevate colour contrast above individual tones), and Joycean works of “prose polyphony” (with their juxtaposition and collision of opposing lines of sound and thought), all disrupt or defer a

fixed material aesthetic. By elevating structuration over finalised form, these arts (partially) forego representation, and even sometimes expression itself.

In establishing his own alternative model of style for “Sirens”, Herman cites analyses from the early-to-mid 1980s that point to a paradigmatic plurality and flexibility unnoted in fugal analyses. Karen Lawrence writes:

... the variations played on the phrases of the overture in the narrative of “Sirens” illustrate a kind of rhetorical exercise which becomes increasingly obvious in later chapters that do not have music as their “art.” The text as a verbal composition supersedes the text as an imitation of a musical composition. (Lawrence, 1981, cited in Herman, 1994, p. 474)

This aligns with Lawrence’s observation – in critiquing Sultan’s view of “Sirens” as merely imitative of musical form – of how the episodes “stylistic antics” are foreshadowed and echoed in earlier and later episodes. Similarly, as we have seen, Jean-Michel Rabaté argues that the terms of classical rhetoric can be used in place of “the vocabulary of musicology”. Daniel Ferrer suggests a redesignation of the episode’s technique as peristaltic or computational rather than sonic-aesthetic. And André Topia, citing the transferral of the act of singing to the urethra and the anus, argues that, “this simultaneous process of pulverization and reorganization into new units can be paralleled with the relationship between the phonic network and the syntactic framework of the sentence.” (Topia, 1986, cited in Herman, 1994, p. 475). Each of these models feeds into Herman’s syntactical, intermedial understanding of “Sirens”.

Herman’s reading of “Sirens” as quasi-serially “combinatorial” is the key musical jumping-off point for this thesis. Chapter 2 adapts his model to a disablist analysis of *Finnegans Wake* while establishing the dysgenic post-Schoenbergian, and ultimately post-serial conceptions developed in Chapters 3 and 4. But for the remainder of this sub-chapter, we will continue to consider other sonic-aesthetic parameters.

‘Strange Words, Strange Music: The Verbal Music of “Sirens”’, Andreas Fischer, 1999

In ‘Strange Words, Strange Music’ Andreas Fischer hypothesises that, “in an attempt to become music language will break some of its conventions, will disrupt some of its norms, will — in short — become strange.” (Fischer, 1999, p. 248). The oblique term “strange”

might be read variously as ‘exotic’, ‘alien’, ‘obscure’, ‘bizarre’...: all terms that might be applied to disabled subjects or texts.

Understandings such as Fischer’s that elevate syntactic form above semantic content are more conducive with disablist readings than are the relatively constraining analyses of fugue seekers from Lawrence Levin to Michelle Witen. “Sirens” is characterised not by a normative simulation of a particular musical genre, but by an inventive dysfunctionalisation of lingual syntax. Fischer writes:

Joycean onomatopoeia is not the natural union of meaning and form, of signified and signifier, but quite on the contrary it is the signifier freeing itself from the link with the signified and taking off all on its own. (Fischer, 1999, p. 258)

This partial freeing of sound from sense provides an inverse complement to the idea that the development of sign languages disproved Saussure’s conception of sound as “the natural bond” (Bauman, 2008, p. 4) between signifier and signified. Joyce’s pattering repetitions and wordless onomatopoeia deploy senseless sounds in the creation of internal-semantic coherency, while sign languages convey sense without the use of sound.

But as we see in the “Sirens” overture, and as Fischer (sometimes) accepts, Joyce’s separation of sound from sense is generally partial and/or temporary. Fischer writes of the overture that,

Like pure music the “themes” sounded in the overture ... appear to be practically meaningless at first, but gain meaning when they recur later on in the episode in their proper context. (Fischer, 1999, p. 249)

This dynamic between initially semi-meaningless fragments and the meaning-giving contexts into which they are finally placed approximates the syntactical relationship between musical raw materials and their compositional arrangement. In the overture, Joyce introduces the fundamental materials that will later be arranged into “meaningful” compositions.

Principal among Joyce’s methods of presenting objects, characters, themes, events, phenomena in “Sirens” is what Gilbert conceived as the “close juxtaposition” of opposing contrapuntal parts. Key examples of these parts are the “clack” of the Ormond bar clock (*U* 11.16), the “jingle” of Blazes Boylan’s carriage (*U* 11.15), and the “Tap. Tap. Tap” (*U* 11.1119) of the *blind stripling*’s cane. These are closely juxtaposed with more complex

material in an approximation of simultaneity. Themes of greater complexity include verbal exchanges, Bloom's interior monologue, and the singing of songs. As Fischer writes: "the technique [Joyce] resorts to is to cut up the various parallel continua of sound (the "themes") into short fragments and to splice them together as one continuum." (Fischer, 1999, p. 252).

The case of the piano tuner's "Tap" is in one important way distinct from my other two examples. Unlike Boylan's "Jingle" and the clock's "clack", it is not immediately clear from the context what the "Tap" is intended to represent. Its indicative value emerges only in retrograde when the piano tuner is identified as the cane-using "*blind stripling*". Fischer writes:

Joyce's cutting and splicing results in severely weakened textual cohesion within the episode. Intermittent occurrences of the isolated word "Tap," for example, which are not explained by their immediate context, remain erratic blocks of language, unless the reader pieces them together as parts of one continuum of sound and action and connects them with what he already knows about the piano tuner and his forgotten tuning fork. (Fischer, 1999, p. 253)

In an anti-normative, quasi-disablist stroke here, Fischer employs the term "severely weakened" not in a negative, but in a neutral, or even marginally positive sense. In later chapters I consider such terminological repurposing and the reconceptualisations it enables.

'Music After Joyce: The Post-Serial Avant-Garde', Timothy S. Murphy, 1999

Around the turn of the century, musical studies of Joyce began to fall into three broad categories: linguistic readings including those of Fischer and Brad Bucknell (see Bucknell 2001 below); genetic/historicist explorations such as those by Ferrer and Witen; and dual-media analyses of the relationship between Joyce and musical practise including those by Scott W. Klein and Timothy S. Murphy.

In 'Music After Joyce', Murphy identifies "two apparently contradictory impulses" in the composers Pierre Boulez (see Chapters 3 and 4) and Luciano Berio that are, he suggests, "prefigured in Joyce's writing" (Murphy, 1999, np). These resulted, Murphy conceives, in "the artist's attempt to exert total control over the musical material, and the simultaneous interest in aleatory forms that required the active participation or choice of the performer" (Murphy, 1999, np). Umberto Eco and, in turn, Murphy, encapsulate this dichotomy in the

term “*The Open Work*” (Murphy, 1999, np). Eco defines the open work “in opposition to a classical composition [that] posits an assemblage of sound units which the composer arranged in a closed, well-defined manner before presenting it to the listener.” (Murphy, 1999, np).

Murphy’s conception of *Finnegans Wake* as an “open work” is more plausible than polyphonic readings. However, an understanding of the *Wake* as (partially) indeterminate faces some similar problems. Readers must, under both models, either accept, or seek to resolve, the dichotomy between structure as firmly inscribed on the page and reader-specific processes of comprehension.

One possible definition of that Paterian “condition of music” to which *Finnegans Wake* is held to “aspire” is that: music is that artform which is realised, not in having been made, but in its making: really more a conditionality than a condition. Music may be held to exist in performance through the deferral rather than the achievement of finality. What we know about the *Wake*’s composition, including that its early incarnations were headed ‘Work in Progress’, could lead us to view the published text as somehow “open” or indeterminate.

It is partly by offering multiple ways of “reading” that certain artworks succeed; and all art to a large extent relies on openness in order to function. As Murphy writes, “Eco insists that the literary work in general, even when its order is fixed, is a “continuous potentiality of ‘openness’” (Murphy, 1999, np). Murphy notes Eco’s citing of *Finnegans Wake*, which is, Eco suggests, “finite in one sense, but in another sense it is unlimited ... by virtue of its circular construction and its puns” (Murphy, 1999, np). Eco likens the reader of *Finnegans Wake* to the listener of a post-serial composition. He cites the composer Henri Pousseur’s statement that, “...it is up to the listener to place himself deliberately in the midst of an inexhaustible network of relationships” (Murphy, 1999, np). The crucial difference is that the post-serial listener can to a great extent choose to “place himself ... in the midst” of these “relationships”, or choose not to, and still appreciate the artwork, whereas, with a prose narrative, the second option is not open to readers, because these relationships are fundamental to lingual sense and literary aesthetics.

“Sirens” and the problem of literary and musical meaning’, Brad Bucknell, 2001

Key to Brad Bucknell’s reading of “Sirens” is the dichotomy of an artform (in music) that, though experienced materially, is itself immaterial. He asks how an art whose decoding is so remote from its encoding can transmit meaning. He writes of “Sirens” that,

The allusions to music ... seem designed to call up that art's unmistakable tangibility, the clear force of its presence. But such a conjuring also brings with it the difficulty in ascertaining any singular kind of musical meaning. (Bucknell, 2010, p. 121)

Bucknell aligns with Herman in adopting a multidisciplinary strategy and rejecting established ideas around counterpoint. While Herman pays greater attention to music itself, Bucknell offers a more holistic consideration of musical and linguistic methods of arranging and conveying meaning. Bucknell writes:

Herman's suggestion that the beginning of "Sirens" is a kind of basic set [see Chapter 2], removes the sometimes unusual fugue hunting that many engage in, and supplies instead a more flexible sense of form (Bucknell, 2010, p. 128).

As well as considering musical principles, Bucknell also looks at musical actions, particularly those of singing and listening to song. He quotes from "Sirens":

— Come . . . !

It soared, a bird, it held its flight ... soaring high, high resplendent, aflame, crowned, high in the effulgence symbolistic . . . everywhere all soaring all around about the all, the endlessnessnessness

— To me!

Siopold!

Consumed.

(U 11.744-53) (Bucknell, 2010, p. 157)

Simon is singing, but Leopold's song appreciation is the main musical action portrayed. The question of whose voice – of the listener, the singer, and the song's narrator – is primary leads to that of how a song (and the structure of "Sirens") may be experienced as at once ephemeral and tangible. Bucknell conceives that,

The unsteady "Siopold" coming at the crescendo of the song, again serves to remind us of the potential ambiguity and concreteness ... shared by both music and Joyce's narrative form (Bucknell, 2010, p. 158).

Bucknell implicitly aligns the tension of singer, song, and listener in the Ormond bar with that of narrator, narrative, and reader in “Sirens”. “Siopold” symbolises a fusion of singer/author and listener/reader within the episode’s fictive universe and a partial dissolution of such categories in its narrative form.

Because music itself is absent from “Sirens”, the usual obliteration of music by language in song is not a direct concern. What we find indeed is that where music would be, where we see that Joyce has sought to invoke or enact it, this absent but potent music incapacitates not only the language with which it is usually associated (the lyrics of the songs sung or invoked), but that which would describe both the fictive act of singing and the character who notionally performs that act. The invisible – to Bloom at least – singer of *M’appari*, Simon Dedalus, and the song he sings, are swamped in the aesthetic impressions of his listeners, who are also subsumed by the absent, external music of the moment:

Through the hush of air a voice sang to them, low, not rain, not leaves in murmur, like no voice of strings or reeds or whatdoyoucallthem dulcimers touching their still ears with words, still hearts of their each his remembered lives. Good, good to hear: sorrow from them each seemed to from both depart when first they heard. When first they saw, lost Richie Poldy, mercy of beauty, heard from a person wouldn’t expect it in the least, her first merciful lovesoft oftloved word. / Love that is singing: love’s old sweet song. (*U* 11.674-81)

The present but displaced singer and song in Bloom’s Ormond bar approximate the absent but displacing musician and music of the episode’s apprehension. In true music, as opposed to the inaudible “Siren’s song”, an outsider (the musician) intrudes into the dynamic between nature (sound) and self (perception). Analogously, a musician lies just outside Joyce’s text, namely Joyce himself.

Joyce’s musicianship (his guitar playing, piano playing, singing, reading of music, knowledge of music theory) has, from Gilbert onwards, been adduced by a range of Joyceans, each with a different motivation. Early commentators offered Joyce’s musical life as a sign that he was less remote, more approachable than the language alone might suggest. Later critics, including musical geneticists such as Michelle Witen, and non-fugue-hunters such as David Herman, have had quite the reverse aim, to emphasise the author’s musical erudition.

‘Playing the Square Circle: Musical Form and Polyphony in the *Wake*’, Alan Shockley, 2009

Like Wang, Alan Shockley carefully circumscribes his claims for *Wakean musicality and Joycean musicianship*. The comparators he offers of passages of baroque polyphony bring music into the discourse without imposing it directly onto the *Wake*. In common with Witen, Shockley brings to bear a strong musicological understanding. But where Witen speaks of music in the abstract, Shockley employs concrete musical examples, comparing contrapuntal construction in works by J. S. Bach to lexico-syntactic phraseology in the *Wake*.

Again like Wang, Shockley defines his “music” with a sort of keen ambiguity reflective of the *Wake*’s own dysfunctionalist semantics. He does not, as Burgess and Myers do, try to identify absolute tonality or harmony in the text, but more like Herman, listens to the ways in which Joyce, in musicalizing his language, exploited the lingual characteristics of music.

Shockley seeks to hear the *Wake*’s involutions of familiar words as like unresolving musical phrases that nonetheless imply an object note. He cites the syntactic games Joyce plays with the word *pineapple*, deforming it as “painapple” (167.15):

[As] part of a prepositional phrase, “from a painapple.” ... it forms a consequent to the antecedent construction “who kennot tail a bomb.” Painapple is close enough in spelling and sound to the familiar “pineapple” that the reader immediately ... accepts the neologism as a noun functioning in this prepositional phrase.... Just as F-sharp keeps G present even while literally displacing G in a lower neighbor figure in the Bach example [*Fugue XVI in G Minor* from *The Well-tempered Klavier*], so “painapple” both displaces and keeps “pineapple” [present] for the reader.
(Shockley, 2009, p. 107-8)

The attempted musicalisation of a novel may be perceived as an inherently disablist act. A novel cannot be music, and seeking to make it so may render it malfunctional. But perhaps, if we subscribe to Shockley’s model, this malfunction might be heard as in itself musical.

Shockley writes:

Repetition and recurrence, which define [pre-serial] musical forms, contradict the form of the novel. Joyce’s choice of circles within circles not only points to Vico, but also

gives at least a nod toward the writing of *Finnegans Wake* as a musical text. (Shockley, 2009, p. 104)

Shockley echoes Curtius, Burgess, and others in conceiving that “This text seems to require that its reading be like a performance of a contrapuntal musical piece” (Shockley, 2009, p. 105). He asserts that,

...both works (the *Wake* and an exemplar of Baroque polyphony) are motoric: both repeat and develop simple themes in complex ways and in multiple, simultaneous layers. ... Both works require multiple “readings” if they are to disclose their significant structural workings. (Shockley, 2009, p. 106)

Seeking to understand *Finnegans Wake* as *like a musical score* (or otherwise) may seem to demand specialist musical expertise, but this is in fact a largely non-musical consideration that calls for only rudimentary musicological knowledge.

Joyce’s own musical acumen may be seen in a sense to have *written white* in much of his later work, entered into the recombinative computers of *Ulysses* and the *Wake* to emerge as so much miscellaneous data. I nonetheless think that a musicological underpinning is desirable in analysing the traces of musical scholarship found in the notebooks and in later material, particularly if that scholarship is to be either validated or drawn into question. A key motivation of Michelle Witen’s work on *Joyce and music* appears to have been to defend Joyce from accusations of musicological incompetence, such as Susan Brown’s suggestion that his knowledge of music theory was “bogus to none”, and his reading from esoteric sources “inaccurate, sloppy, incomplete, illogical, and impressionistic” (Brown, 2007, np).

‘The Mystery of the Fuga per Canonem Reopened?’ Michelle Witen, 2010; ‘The Mystery of the Fuga per Canonem Solved’, Susan Brown, 2007

Though Susan Brown states in ‘The Mystery of the Fuga per Canonem Solved’ that “the fuga per canonem was more than a metaphor ... for Joyce” (Brown, 2007, np), she offers philological rather than musicological grounds for this assertion. She suggests neither how “the Siren’s [fugal] song” (Gilbert, 1955, p. 252) could be more than metaphorical, nor how “polyphony” might be achieved in prose.

Michelle Witen avoids such terminological lacunae by defining individual terms where possible and pointing out ambiguities where they arise. It is “with the aim of reopening the “mystery” to discussion” (Witen, 2010, p. 1) that Witen examines Brown’s sources and identifies her errors in their interpretation. She also points to possible musicological genotexts unconsidered by Brown but named in Joyce’s notes.

In reading Brown’s and Witen’s essays and the works that they (and I in this chronology) cite which discuss the “reality” or otherwise of *the “fuga”*, the sense that this debate has grown increasingly tortuous over time as more archival material has emerged is reinforced. In considering the binary indicated by Witen here of “those who believe” and “those who do not” (Witen, 2010, p. 1), I can find no grounds for either position. But her concision and resort to evidence before opinion are welcome, particularly in addressing such variously interpreted matters as the eight parts of the “Sirens fugue”. Her expert translations, transcriptions, and explications of the terms indicative of these parts cut through a great deal of the confusing discourse on the topic.

It is intriguing to consider whether Joyce imagined his episode as fugal and/or canonical in form. But the principles of counterpoint are shown by neither Brown nor Witen nor any other critic to have provided a fundamental basis for the composition of “Sirens”. Unless we conceive that drafts and notes constitute a reliable manual to the reading of a published volume, we should hesitate in imposing onto Joycean texts elements of harmony and rhythm unrenderable in typographical form. This said, the analysis of evidence that Joyce envisaged a fugal structure for “Sirens”, and even the unsubstantiable sense in readers that this structure is legible, are part of the afterlife of Joyce’s work. This authorial vision (such as it may have been) and this readerly sense are, nonetheless, so subjective as to be insusceptible to full critical examination.

Around the same time as Witen’s article, two studies were published that extended interdisciplinary “musical” Joycean analysis to include the fundamentals of sound, in particular Helmholtzian acoustics and Pythagorean mathematics. Comparably to Witen’s approach, Vike Martina Plock’s essay (2009) considers the musical-scientific books available to Joyce in his early years, including some that he owned, some of which he alluded to in his prose.

Joyce and the Science of Rhythm, William Martin, 2012

In *Joyce and the Science of Rhythm*, William Martin proposes that Joyce’s “dramatic

approach to prosody was informed by the scientific discourse of rhythm” (Martin, 2012, p. 27). He cites paraphrases in the major works of passages from rhythmic-scientific volumes, and gives a broad sense of the milieu of rhythmic, metrics, musicology, and sensory psychology during the period when Joyce was beginning to write seriously.

In his introduction, Martin outlines theories and practice relevant to sonic analyses of Joyce, and draws on this in the main body of the book. Of a study by Sidney Lanier he writes that the publication of *The Science of English Verse* (1880) “should be interpreted as the beginning of modern metrics” (Martin, 2012, p. 9). Martin sets out Lanier’s theory of the levels of rhythm in verse (from “first” to “sixth order”). These range from the individual beat in a poem, through metric feet, phrases, lines, stanzas, to the poem as a whole. He explains how these orders of rhythm interact and interfere with one another, then considers this theory in relation to Joyce’s prose.

Martin demonstrates that, in late nineteenth and early twentieth century rhythmic science, the rhythmicities of speech, prose, poetry, music, and the body, experienced via all senses, had begun to be viewed as interrelated, and that this principle was realised in Joyce’s narrative and poetic universes. Martin suggests that, “There is a constant tension in Joyce’s work between the practical intuition of rhythm as a temporal pattern and the aesthetic apprehension of rhythm as a spatial structure” (Martin, 2012, p. 14). This chimes with Burgess’s “human” and “mechanical” polyphonies. The “human polyphony” that Burgess finds in “Sirens” might align with Martin’s “temporal pattern[s]”, the “mechanical polyphony” that Burgess perceives in “Wandering Rocks” with Martin’s “spatial structure[s]”. It is, however, as Martin suggests, in the tension between our “practical intuition” of the temporal and human, and our “aesthetic apprehension” of the spatial and mechanical, that “Sirens”, “Wandering Rocks”, and *Ulysses* as a whole find their unique musicality.

* * *

For all their dysfunctionality, Burgess’s formulations of such key tropes of Musical Joyceanism as *narrative polyphonics* are no more at odds with mainstream academic conceptions than those (normative) conceptions are with one another. Gilbert’s chordal model, Lawrence Levin’s early fugal understanding, Herman’s dodecaphonic rethinking, Fischer’s sound-symbol duality, Bucknell’s interchange of musical signifieds and signifiers, and Witen’s *fuga per canonem dismantled* (and later *reassembled*), each shine an

interrogative light on the others. Each may read as coherent in its own terms, but be semi-unintelligible from alternative perspectives.

On this understanding, I wish to draw no immediate overarching conclusions from this chapter's survey of extant critical works, which has been intended to raise a set of (functionalist) problematics around relationships between language and music from which the disablist arguments of the overall thesis emerge. The chapter as a whole ends with an assessment in the round of the musical works discussed in 1A and the disablist works to be discussed in 1B.

CHAPTER 1B. Theoretical Context: *Finnegans Wake* and Disablist Sonic Textuality

The following critical survey contextualises the central role played by Joyce's prose writing in the sonic *deformation* and *dysfunctionalisation* of twentieth-century textuality.

Chronologically interspersed with entries directly concerned with *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* (plus post-Joycean fiction) are those introducing pertinent works of disability aesthetics and broader disablist theory and criticism.

Though we find in earlier scholarship not primarily concerned with disability some oblique comments on literary modernism's disabled aesthetics, it is not until the disablist insurgency of figures including Ronald Schleifer, Leonard Davis, and Tobin Siebers in the early 2000s that works dedicated to this topic began to emerge.

Where Chapter 1A focused on studies that have restricted their interest to the topic of *Joyce and music*, 1B considers only those critical works devoted to (sonic and/or Joycean) disability aesthetics. Until recently, the "aesthetic value" (Siebers, 2006, p. 67) of disability has been subordinated to that of other disqualified dispositions such as feminine gender, low class status, minority race, and divergent sexuality. When Len Platt wrote in 2007 of a key character in *Finnegans Wake* that –

[Shem's] construction as a "mental and moral defective" (177.16), a "hybrid made up of "an adze of a skull, an eight of a larkseye, the whoel of a nose," and "one numb arm up a sleeve" (169.11-12), is clearly shaped by eugenicist literature... (Platt, 2007, p. 86)

– his underlying priorities were first race, then class, followed in third place by ability/disability.

With a slight deviation at "Kane 2012" (explained in the introduction), I have presented the entries in chronological order to emphasise the development in Joycean and broader disability studies of conceptions of (sonic) aesthetics. This manner of arrangement inevitably results in some thematic discontinuity that grouping entries according to discipline or topic would have avoided. But I feel that the build up toward a disablist aesthetic critical mass that we see traced here, which has recently produced a sphere of scholarship sufficient to handle such challenging subjects as *Finnegans Wake* and modernist classical music, is best understood in this way.

Before embarking on the chronology proper, I will first give a brief overview of the able-normative reception and criticism of Joyce's works by contemporary critics. Early negative,

and even broadly positive readings often conflated in derogatory terms the categories of “musicality”, racial or social “inferiority”, and somatic or psychiatric “dysfunction”. Such elisions became less frequent during the later twentieth century, and are uncommon today, but this general strain of thinking occasionally re-emerges in modern criticism.

In 1919, Virginia Woolf detected in Joyce a certain “poverty of the writer’s mind” (Woolf, 1919, p. 126). Then Clive Bell’s perception in 1921 that Joyce’s deformative strategy was “to break up the traditional sentence” and “rag... the literary instrument” was undermined by his surely unsafe conclusion that these techniques were employed by an author of “only moderate” (Bell, 1921, p. 183) abilities. Though deeming an artist’s talents “moderate” does not amount to a diagnosis of somatic or psychic disability, the tone is set here for a strand of Joycean criticism that viewed the work as divergent, deficient, or defective. Within a cultural context such that a literary figure as prominent as H. G. Wells had spoken openly of eugenics in terms of “the sterilisation of failure” and “an improvement of the human stock” (Boulter, 2017, p. 106), the socially illiberal modernist Wyndham Lewis was licenced in 1926 to perceive in Joyce, Stein, and others a “willed sickness” (Lewis, 1989, p. 346) indicative of “a campaign against language and the articulate” (Lewis, 1989, p. 343).

It was as late as 2016 before a work concentrating on “Joyce’s Modernist Disability Aesthetics” (Quirici, 2016) was published. Marion Quirici examines views of Joyce as “degenerate” and “decadent”. As well as Woolf’s, Bell’s, and Lewis’s critiques, she cites Desmond MacCarthy in *The New Statesman* in 1927 judging ‘Work in Progress’ as resembling the utterances of “a person with an intellectual disability” (Quirici, 2016, p. 92). MacCarthy conceives of Joyce as “remarkable for his command of words” but with a “taste for cretinism of speech” (MacCarthy, 1927, p. 175-6).

For the most part, however, this sub-chapter, like the thesis as a whole, is concerned more with Joycean sonic disability *aesthetics* – *conceived of in formal (principally syntactical) terms* – than with the politics and ethics of disability. The specific disabilities adduced below (as discussed in the critical works cited) have relevance through their formal aesthetic impact on *Finnegans Wake* and on other literary (and some musical) modernist textualities. These disabilities include: mental disorder, queer disability, deafness, cognitive auditory impairment, gendered and erotic disabilities, stuttering, blindness, and lameness.

Starting as I will continue with regard to “thematic discontinuity”, the first two entries (as well as a later entry) examine the influence of Tourette’s syndrome on post-modernist fiction. Here links with Joyce may appear tenuous (until later in the survey, when various kinds of disablist communication and perception emerge as bearing affinities with the prose

of *Finnegans Wake*). Given the aforementioned patchiness or scatteredness of the disablist-aesthetic episteme, we may well view this thematic discontinuity as a function of a broader discontinuity in disabled and other marginalised histories in sympathy with the radical literary and musical “narratives” discussed in the thesis.

‘The Poetics of Tourette Syndrome: Language, Neurobiology, and Poetry’, Ronald Schleifer, 2001; ‘Tourette in Fiction. Lethem, Lefcourt, Hecht, Rubio, Byalick’, Bent Sørensen, 2005.

In ‘The Poetics of Tourette Syndrome...’ Ronald Schleifer identifies connections between poetic utterance (as notated on the printed page) and the verbal “dysfunctions” of Tourette’s. He points to the synthesis of orality and kinaesthesia found both in the spoken origins/realisation of poetic texts and in Tourettic verbalisation. Moreover, he argues compellingly that much of the fascination of poetry stems from sub- or extra-lingual compulsions towards repetition and variation experienced by poets, poetic listeners/readers, and people with Tourette’s alike. The source of these compulsions may, Schleifer suggests, be the oldest portions of the brain, thought to govern motor activity and basic drives, but also to be the seat of a pre-verbal language capability. He proposes that in poets as well as in people with Tourette’s these primeval neural centres might at times override “higher” regions of the brain, facilitating the production of improvisatory, punning, distorted, reordered language. We will see later how such deformative syntactic interference with literary semantics may (in the *Wake* in particular) be “heard” as a “musicalising” factor. Schleifer’s essay – together with those by Sørensen and Brooker discussed below – offers one possible disablist model of conditional or indeterminate sonic syntax for critical constructions of Joycean musicality. If there can be perceived a semi-intentional poetics in the syntactically musical utterances of speech disorders, then perhaps a comparable semi-intentional musicality can be extrapolated from the disordered poetic syntax of the *Wake*.

Schleifer makes some incisive remarks on Jonathan Lethem’s Tourette’s-infused detective novel *Motherless Brooklyn* (1999), citing the protagonist Lionel Essrog’s semi-voluntary poetic word play. In his essay on Tourette’s in fiction, Bent Sørensen observes that Lionel’s most revealing verbal ticks arise from his (*dis*)ability to permute personal proper nouns into characteristic nicknames. “Leshawn Montrose” is transfigured via “Shefawn Mongoose” and “Lefthand Moonprose” into “Fuckyou Roseprawn”. Lionel dubs this phenomenon “Tourette’s muse” (Sørensen, 2005, p. 6), suggesting that Essrog and Lethem

may, in accord with Schleifer, share a view of poetry and Tourette's as having a common root. Lethem's enactment of the recombinative (in)capacity of Tourette's becomes particularly Wakean in Lionel's own name: "Lionel, my name. Frank and the Minna Men pronounced it to rhyme with vinyl. Lionel Essrog. Line-all. Liable Guesscog. Final Escrow. Ironic Pissclam. And so on" (Sørensen, 2005, p. 6). Similarly, in Book II of *Finnegans Wake* alone, "Shem" and "Shaun" are de/reconstructed in various ways including: "the shem direction as if to shun", "jemmijohns", "jonjemsums", and "shome shunter" (249.28, 268.7, 325.17, 336.9). And as I suggested in 1A, a sort of secondary Tourettism is invoked by Jennie Wang's enactment of deformitivity in *Wake* reading. As we saw, from "multaphoniaksically", Wang extrapolates, among other variations, "multi-phonetically, mute-phonetically, ... , ... musically", and "metaphoenixly".

Sørensen writes of Lionel's Tourette's that it

in many ways disqualifies him from being a good detective (echolalia and other compulsions make it hard for him to work undercover), but in other ways makes him a unique detective (his compulsive attention to detail is, for instance, a great help).
(Sørensen, 2005, p. 5)

While the Realistic first-person subjectivity and normative heroism of Lethem's protagonist make comparisons with figures in *Finnegans Wake* unworkable, Lionel's verbal outbursts share a surreal narrative dysfunctionality with many verbal constructions in the *Wake*. Sørensen observes that, "even the field of detective fiction (which used to be the epistemological genre par excellence) has become infected with representations of this particularly ontologically unstable disorder" (Sørensen, 2005, p. 4). This undermining of *what we know* (or believe we know) in favour of *what we are* (as meta-lingually constructed) finds some alignment in the quasi-verbal morphology of *Finnegans Wake*. But the *Wake*'s disablist semantic-aesthetics are far more profound than those of *Motherless Brooklyn* in the text's infection, not merely with local disablings of narrative, but with disability's own anti-teleological modalities. Figures such as HCE and Shem/Shaun, though depicted (more by each other than by Joyce) as disabled, find their true disability in the concrete reality of the language from which they emerge. In contrast, Lethem's neuro-divergent character slots into a normate fictive culture and a Realist narrative framework within which he is in the end, while different, both lingually and otherwise functional.

That said, Sørensen does (I think correctly) identify disablist disruptions of linearity in particular plot strands. But when he seeks to project onto the novel as a whole something of real disability's fractured spatio-temporality, I think he overestimates Lethem's deformalist abilities/ambitions. He suggests that Lethem's interpretation of late-twentieth-century New York through the prism of Lionel's Touretic mentality

sets the scene for a non-epistemological devolution of the crime in question: clues become indistinguishable from his own symptoms; the disorder infects the sequentiality and causality of events, and leads to order becoming contingent and at best temporary; ultimately, to the Tourette sufferer, the whole of New York, from its subway system to its social hierarchies, resembles a Tourettic body, always in motion, never going anywhere with teleological certainty. (Sørensen, 2005, p. 5)

The latter part of this conception applies to real-world disabled experience, and could be extended to the broken narrative workings of *Finnegans Wake* (were "New York" replaced with "Dublin") (also see Boulez, *Third Sonata* in Chapter 3), but it does not, I think, truly pertain to the unified plotting of *Motherless Brooklyn*.

Time Binds: Queer Temporalities, Queer Histories, Elizabeth Freeman, 2010

The idea that human dispositional alterities can fracture *telos* and *tempus* in individual experience and in material, social, and textual environments has been extended – particularly by queer theorists – to include the biographical, the historical, and the historiographical.

Elizabeth Freeman's *Time Binds* offers a time-focused expansion of a field – queer theory – that has tended to concentrate more on space. If anything, this spatial bias has been even stronger in disability studies; and the term "queer" can often be replaced with "disabled" while the core arguments remain valid. Freeman proposes that "queer temporalities" (Freeman, 2010, p. 10) based on non-sequential conceptions of time can provide a *differently-historical* sense of belonging.

She identifies capitalist constructions of domestic and familial time as synchronically in step with factory rhythms. Temporal normativity, she suggests, requires that we learn how to conform to rhythms and timings that shape our physicality into legible, acceptable embodiments. We might think of the tyranny of time for HCE hearing "the ten ton tonuant

thunderous tenor toller” (35.29-32) and the chime of his pocket watch as he seeks safety in surface hetero-normativity; I address this in Chapter 4.

Freeman’s *differently-temporal* view of the historical subject accords with the Schoenbergian-Adornian sense (examined in Chapter 2) that musical subjectivity (in composition, in performance, and in listening) is tonally and harmonically, but also rhythmically and temporally, rooted in homogenising historically determined principles.

The narrative conceits of differently-embodied contact with the past in Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* are presented by Freeman as enacting queer – and I would add disablist – encounters with history. The monster’s body is viewed as “an index of temporal heterogeneity”, as it is made up of dead bodies and exhibits “nonreproductive yet still insistently corporeal kinship with the departed” (Freeman, 2010, p. 116). We receive monstrous impressions of the grotesque or hybridic bodies of both HCE (musicalized in Persse O’Reilly) and Shem, and these are bound up (teleologically) with notions of their alleged moral defects.

The key question that Freeman poses is how queer (and perhaps disabled) sensations and acts can unbind time and history from capitalism’s regulated rhythms and tempos, in turn unbinding the body from the regulating structures of gender and sexuality (and ability and disability) as markers of historical determination. Her blending and blurring of these category distinctions and her broader rethinking of temporal and narrative determinacy align her work with the non-linear construction of *Finnegans Wake* and of serial music. Moreover, her conception chimes with the *Wake*’s *textual* dramatisation of the bodily acts of writing, drafting, and note-taking as analogous with the combinatorial and paradigmatic procedures of music composition.

In other critics we find conceptions of artistic texts and processes not merely as expressive or performative of bodily acts or dispositions, but as “bodies” or “bodily” in themselves.

‘Disability Aesthetics’, Tobin Siebers, 2006

Tobin Siebers’ disablist conception of the work of art as “a body” made by another body certainly evokes the quasi-genomic narrativity of *Finnegans Wake*. Siebers Writes:

The human body is both the subject and object of aesthetic production: the body creates other bodies ... endowed with a semblance of vitality usually ascribed only to human

beings. But all bodies are not created equal when it comes to aesthetic response. Taste and disgust are volatile reactions that reveal the ease or disease with which one body might incorporate another. ... These responses represent the corporeal substrata on which aesthetic effects are based. (Siebers, 2006, p. 63)

Bodies in the modernist period (be they born or constructed) were subject to drastically varying cultural, political, and social responses. The way in which the *Wake* shows as much as tells its strange story, writing itself onto the flesh of its author and reader rather than in the ether of narrative disembodiment, lends it clear resemblances to the performance and other artworks adduced by Siebers. Referring to the work of Paul McCarthy, Siebers writes:

As the performances grow more intense and irrational, the audience begins to react to McCarthy as if he were mentally disabled. The video of *Class Fool* (1976), for example, shows the audience's reaction to his performance, moving from amusement, to hesitation, to aversion. At some level, McCarthy's commitment to elemental behaviour — smearing himself with food, repeating meaningless actions until they are ritualized, fondling himself in public — asks to be seen as idiocy, as if the core values of intelligence and genius were being systematically removed from the aesthetic in preference to stupidity and cognitive disorder. (Siebers, 2006, p. 68)

Much of what is said here about McCarthy and responses to his work could be said of Joyce and reactions to the *Wake*. Joyce's performative, enactive, embodied writing makes the (receptive) eye flicker, the cilia of the ear oscillate, the olfactory cells bristle, and the flesh crawl in ways of which standard language is incapable.

If Joyce Shemishly writes directly onto the body (or sensorium) of his readers with concretisations of the word (see Linett 2017 below), and McCarthy, through a kinetic externalisation of raw emotion, translates sensation from his own flesh to that of his audiences, then perhaps we can rethink the (im)possibility of a literary transmission of musical stimuli. Through a view of the *Wake*'s writing as gestural, as well as more typically lingual, we see an aestheticisation in the text akin to the de-semanticising musical projects of Anton Webern and Pierre Boulez. I suggested in the introduction that Joyce's writing "aspires" less to the "condition" of music than to that art's "conditionality". It may also be seen that this text seeks to mimic, not so much an abstract state or disposition of musicality, but the modus operandi of a concrete musical work. Music is, after all, the only artform that

truly and in its entirety enters the body. The medium – as well as, or instead of, the message – penetrates voluntary and non-voluntary hearers alike. By making their musics so abnormal that they were impossible to ignore or filter out (as one might a piece of conventional diatonic music), advanced dodecaphonicists like Webern and Boulez made music a more substantial, more corporeal phenomenon. This is similar to the way that disabled bodies tend to stand out as *more bodily* than ordinary “abled” ones.

Citing objects and performances by Paul McCarthy, Tyree Guyton, and Damien Hirst, Siebers writes:

Whether or not we interpret these works as aesthetic, they summon images of disability. Most frequently, they register as ... representations of irrationality or cognitive disability, or effects of warfare, disease, or accidents. How is disability related to artistic mimesis — or what Erich Auerbach called “the representation of reality”? Why do we see representations of disability as having a greater material existence than other aesthetic representations? (Siebers, 2006, p. 64)

Setting aside contentions as to whether *Finnegans Wake* and musics with which it shares compositional traits are indeed “aesthetic” (addressed in later chapters), we can certainly find in these and other Modernisms “representations [or mimeses] of irrationality or cognitive disability”.

While music itself cannot denote disability, it may have the power to engender its kinaesthesia, and to do so directly and, in a sense, unambiguously. The materiality of musical inspiration, creation, and appreciation means that what is heard, felt, understood, was always latent, partly in the body itself, and partly in a given musical culture. Pleasure and disgust, acceptance and rejection, disability and ability, arise both more spontaneously and more materially through music than through other artforms. Perhaps in radically disabling *Finnegans Wake* as he progressed through its various drafts towards a fully disabled mode, Joyce sought to capture this hyper-materiality of disabled content/textuality/response in order to unify the subject and object of his work. This is a conception explored throughout this thesis.

Siebers conceives that,

Disability is not ... one subject of art among others. It is not merely a theme. It is not only a personal or autobiographical response embedded in an artwork. It is not solely a

political act. ... [D]isability is properly speaking an aesthetic value, which is to say, it participates in a system of knowledge that provides materials for and increases critical consciousness about the way that some bodies make other bodies feel. (Siebers, 2010, p. 20)

Siebers' privileging of disability over other states and experiences chimes with Mitchell and Snyder's conception of disability as the "master trope of human disqualification" (Mitchell and Snyder, 2001, p. 3). Less hierarchical intersectionalities (between disability and minority race, low social class, femininity, homosexuality) are found in work such as Shelley Tremain's study of the kindred performativities of gender/sexuality and different embodiment from the mid 1990s onwards (Tremain, 2002).

Crip Theory: Cultural Signs of Queerness and Disability, Robert McRuer, 2006

In *Crip Theory*, Robert McRuer aligns queer and disability theories through a critique of socially imposed "compulsory heterosexuality" (Rich, 1980, p. 631) and his extrapolation "compulsory able-bodiedness" (McRuer, 2006, p. 2).

"Homosexuality and disability clearly share a pathologized past" (McRuer, 2006, p. 1), begins McRuer. And we clearly see this dual pathologisation in the encounter between HCE and "the Cad" in *FW I.2* (see Eagle 2013 and Linett 2017 below). McRuer asserts that contemporary American – and by implication broader Western – cultures are spaces where able-bodiedness, like heterosexuality, "masquerade[s] as a non-identity, as the natural order of things" (McRuer, 2006, p. 1).

McRuer is interested both in how crip and queer theories inform other fields, and how they enhance one another. Discourses of "pathology", "passing", and "rehabilitation" mark both areas of study (and also the narrative and characterisation of the *Wake*). McRuer argues that to submit to "rehabilitative logics" means licensing "normal" others to "govern, in obscure ways, who we can be." (McRuer, 2006, p. 116). He views queer and disability studies as tools in reassigning powers of construction and control over identity. The disability rights movement has long pointed out that, eventually, every human being will experience disability (a conception in sympathy with Wakean models of degeneration and fall). McRuer upholds this analysis, but also inverts it, conceiving that, "If we live long enough, all of us will become normate" (McRuer, 2006, p. 198). He exhorts Disability and queer theorists and activists to take part in determining their futures and constructing their histories.

Joyce perhaps prefigures feminist, queer, and disability theorists with the tacit insistence in *Finnegans Wake* that all individuals should engage in the construction of their own “histories”. What he is more willing to accept than are many theorists, however, is that in “reassigning powers of construction” to individuals, unintended consequences of auto-dysidentification may arise.

‘Listening to Phonocentrism with Deaf Eyes: Derrida’s Mute Philosophy of (Sign) Language’, H-Dirksen Bauman, 2008; ‘Jean-Luc Nancy and the Listening Subject’, Brian Kane, 2012

The self-construction “d/Deaf”, for instance, is one often not formulated as *disabled*, and can therefore be seen to bifurcate the deaf subject along normate-abnormate lines. The *deaf but normal* status insisted on by many deaf people risks limiting their cross-identification with disabled people while not rendering them sufficiently typical that they can “pass” as fully abled. Many Deaf people deal with this by perceiving their auditive condition as desirable and even superior to “normal hearing” (Straus, 2011, p. 151).

H-Dirksen Bauman’s ‘Listening to Phonocentrism with Deaf Eyes’ explains that before the emergence of Deaf studies in the 1970s and 80s sign languages were understood as supplemental to speech. Consequently, deaf people were identified as intellectually “sub-normal”, requiring lip-reading skills in order to approximate the behaviours and experiences of hearing people. This perceived inferiority equates to the abject or “disqualified” modes of articulation discussed by Straus as well as of many modernist musics and of late Joycean prose. In Chapter 3, I compare the gestures made by Issy (“*Mimosa multimimetica*” (267.2-3)) in her mirror to the intricate and rational, but arguably unintelligible gestures performed in playing Pierre Boulez’s *Third Sonata* for piano. Both Boulez and Issy are prodigiously intelligent, but, like deaf people, the intrinsic articulacy of their gestures can be wrongly seen/heard as failing to translate into extrinsically articulate communication.

Bauman shows how Deaf studies can reinforce the psycho-social element of Derrida’s grammatological project while Derridean ideas help to extend a Deaf studies critique into the metaphysical. Through this interaction, there emerges an enhanced conception of how d/Deaf culture(s) – particularly sign language poetics – can contribute to a challenging of logocentric and phonocentric assumptions. Bauman proposes that we can discover through a combination of Deaf and Derridean sensibilities what Derrida himself did not discover, namely the historically obscured element of gesture in the construction of language in the Western

ontological tradition. I suggested above that *Wake* language might be conceived of as partly gestural, at times achieving an immediate transference or translation from idea to feeling, creating a *mute music* of signs or gestures kindred with some types of disablist performance art. This intersection of the gestural, the kinaesthetic, and the mutely semantic is also crucial to signed languages.

Bauman reassesses two precepts of Saussurian linguistics: that signifiers are applied to signifieds arbitrarily, and that the only bond between signifier and signified is “the natural bond”, “the only true bond, the bond of sound” (Bauman, 2008, p. 4). Bauman writes that,

This crucial alignment of sound/arbitrariness has [led] to deleterious presumptions about visual, nonphonetic linguistic signs — namely, that they are limited to concrete [phenomena] and incapable of expressing abstract concepts. Such assumptions have relegated signed languages — which are more highly iconic than spoken languages — to the status of ideographic language capable of the most basic thoughts, akin to mime. (Bauman, 2008, p. 4)

Wake language (in its conventionally designative, plus lexically and semi-lexically onomatopoeic modes) is, like all spoken/written language, restricted by Saussure’s sonic bond between signified and signifier. But the reading experience that *Wake* language offers of a sort of semantic chordality disturbs the idea of this bond as arbitrary. The language at times behaves like a sort of signed language: an iconic, gestural, motoric, multi-valent, silent semantics like the gestural linguistics of Issy at her mirror. Deaf cultures were long perceived as inferior to hearing cultures or simply “low” or “degenerate” in themselves. These have been – and remain to some extent – accusations levelled at the *Wake*. A perception of crude vocabulary and rude construction has led to readings of the text as infantile and sub-lingual. Many Deaf critics, activists and artists (including signing poets) would assert that sign languages are not sub- but hyper-linguistic. They would claim that these communication systems incorporate the temporality of verbal languages, plus an additional physicality and motivity (to which *Finnegans Wake*, and even music, can only aspire).

The, as it were, contrapuntalism of sign languages (their four-dimensionality) means that, while these systems were designed to present one signifier at a time, they can in fact deploy several signifiers simultaneously. Thus, while there is an overall linearity to signing, that linearity can be made up of many counterpoised elements. Unlike signing, the *Wake*’s multilingualism and dyslexicality (anti-logocentricity), verbally-defined as they are, cannot

defy the limitations of uni-vocal language. It is, then, ironically, perhaps the very auditive, verbal origin of written language (including *Wake* language) that renders it uni-linear and so strictly non-musical. For this question to be considered in depth, however, theories of what might be called *the semantics of hearing* must be taken into account.

Brian Kane's '...The Listening Subject' *pays attention* to two thinkers who have in turn "paid great attention to issues of listening" (Kane, 2012, p. 440), namely Pierre Schaeffer, the inventor of *musique concrète*, and the philosopher Jean-Luc Nancy. Kane explains how in 'Traité des objets musicaux' (1966) Schaeffer deployed four verbs to describe four modes of listening. Kane first sketches out the two modes identified by Schaeffer to which Nancy gives least attention (*ouïr* and *comprendre*). *Ouïr* is a sort of audition whereby sounds go almost unnoticed, such as when a listener is in a noisy café reading a book. *Comprendre* refers specifically to the reception of languages. It implies a type of listening aimed at extracting the message from an utterance or proposition. Interesting for the present thesis is this verb's dual denotation of 'audition' and 'comprehension' (the sonic and the semantic). Kane writes that,

Comprendre extends from linguistic to quasi-linguistic grammars as well, like those of tonal theory. Much of what is taught in elementary harmony classes institutes this kind of listening, showing students how to identify, evaluate and understand a well-formed tonal sentence or period, one that demonstrates the requisite musical grammar. (Kane, 2012, p. 440)

Here we find three concepts each crucial to the present thesis all in interaction with one another. The term "well-formed" as applied to (a)tonal phraseology is key in Chapter 2. The idea that musical systems constitute "quasi-linguistic grammars" or syntaxes is introduced in Chapter 2, but is particularly important in Chapter 3. And the principle of comprehensibility is central to the rationale of the whole thesis, but especially to that of Chapter 4.

Kane then outlines in detail the two "listening" verbs of most interest to Nancy (*écouter* and *entendre*). *Écouter* denotes a mode of audition that Kane understands as "securely bound" to Edmund Husserl's principle of "the natural attitude", wherein "sounds are heard immediately as indices of objects and events in the world" (Kane, 2012, p. 440). Husserl conceives "the natural attitude" as our primary means of everyday engagement with the world, whereby material objects are "on-hand" (Kane, 2012, p. 440) whether or not we are particularly aware of them or occupied with them. *Entendre* shares the Latin root *intendere* with the key phenomenological concept of intentionality. Kane points out the obscurity of

this connection in the translation of *entendre* as ‘listening’. For Schaeffer, *entendre* is the mode in which we concentrate on sounds themselves rather than on significations associated with those sounds. Schaeffer dubs this *écouter réduite* (‘Reduced listening’). Here the listener avoids the appropriation of sounds as signs (as in *écouter* and *comprendre*).

When the sound itself is intended, disclosed by the reduction of the mode *écouter* and the invocation of the mode *entendre*, we are in the presence of Schaeffer’s ‘sound object’ (*l’objet sonore*). (Kane, 2012, p. 441)

In considering the different modes according to which one might “listen” to *Finnegans Wake* (as sound enravelling with sense, accompanying sense, associated with sense, separate from sense), ideas of passive listening, auditory comprehension, audition linked to materiality, and extra-linguistic listening take on great significance. Any and all of Schaeffer’s categories might be applied to the attentive action of reading and to the environmental sonic-aesthetics of listening to music.

Schaeffer’s range of hearing modes has been helpful in unifying the lingual and sonic-aesthetic elements of this thesis with its disablist components. Differences in comprehension emerge as matters at once of language, sensory perception, and personal and cultural identity and experience.

Extraordinary Measures: Disability in Music, Joseph N. Straus, 2011

In *Extraordinary Measures*... Joseph Straus demonstrates how sonic disability aesthetics can interrogate constructions of embodiment in ways informative to broader disability studies. His triangulation of music, disabled identity, and disablist experience is also useful in analysing the musicalisation, textual disablement, and experiential politicisation at play in *Finnegans Wake*. An alternative offered by the *Wake* to identitarian definitions of disability is a reading of human beings and human communication as contiguous but disjunctive, packaged in discrete bodies, sentences, songs, ideas, only to be broken up and reconnected in new configurations.

I argued in 1A that music is incapable of representation. Musical imitations of natural and human phenomena, and language superimposed onto music in the form of lyrics, are adjuncts to the clearly understood basic stuff of musical physics, aesthetics, and (internal) semantics. Apparently in accord with this understanding, Straus writes: “Until now, disability

has not entered much into discussions of music. This is probably because music is blessed and cursed by its nonrepresentational nature.” (Straus, 2011, p. 11).

Through a critique of *Extraordinary Measures*, we can tease out a few problematic assumptions at the heart of current disability theory while showing how these limiting principles can be exceeded in textual – and performance – analysis. Straus’s case studies of compositions, composers, and performers draw on an acute understanding of music, of disabled experience, and of various confluences of the two.

In apparent contradiction to his statement concerning music’s incapacity to represent, Straus writes:

Music has a variety of descriptive powers. It can depict objects and conditions, relate events, evoke moods and bodily states, and tell stories. It can embody and express every aspect of the human condition, including disability. Direct musical representations of disability include the rhythmic pattern known as *alla zoppa* (“in a limping manner”), the high E near the end of the final movement of Smetana’s String Quartet No. 1 (“From My Life”) that represents the composer’s tinnitus ... as well as the many musical depictions of madness or mental disorder... (Straus, 2011, p. 45)

I argue throughout this thesis that the only things, entities, or phenomena that music can denote are aspects of music. It can “relate” or “tell” only that which is of itself. What is more, while music often elicits unique and ineffable psychosomatic responses in individual listeners, it cannot designate even the simplest discrete human mood or bodily disposition. A piece of music can no more tell a story than a novel can unfold a harmonic sequence. Each artform is (or can be) “narrative” in structure, but these narratives operate in very different ways. In short, music does not only not have “a range of descriptive powers”, it has no descriptive powers whatsoever (just as literature has no melodic or harmonic powers). While *alla zoppa* provides a crude ableist caricature of lameness, this is not “direct”, not “music(al)”, and not a “representation”. Of course if one is told often enough that this sound is limping, that cat-like, the other like a grandfather, one will begin to accept this. But this is association, not denotation. Smetana’s high E represents tinnitus no more than tinnitus represents Smetana’s high E.

In an internalised counterbalance to such externalised metaphorisations, Straus illustrates how versatile music’s own discrete semantics can be as disablist analytic frameworks, writing:

For the listener approaching the piece from the outside, imbalance and unrest are sources of pleasure and interest, but from the point of view of the piece's tonic, its principal harmony, they are disruptive and potentially disabling events that must be contained, abnormalities that must be normalized. (Straus, 2011, p. 49)

In the early twentieth century Western classical music saw a great proliferation of such tonal disablements. This developed from the inclusion of individual disruptive notes or chords in compositions of the Classical period, through Romantic experiments with ambiguous harmony, to radical tonal reorderings by key late nineteenth-century composers. If we compare the newly dislocated tonic in twentieth-century music to displaced elements of semantic coherence in modernist literatures, we find a de-centred semantics in the *Wake* akin to the differently-symmetric harmonics of twelve-tone music.

In crippling the body of *Finnegans Wake*, Joyce offered a para-textual simulacrum of disability. But more subtle, and more emancipatory, is his opening wide of a space into which flesh-and-blood disabled bodies and minds can enter and find their images reflected. The tonal deviations of late-nineteenth-century classical music sowed the seeds of the reconstruction of Western tonality, which were then brought to fruition by Schoenberg. Similarly, Joyce took the example of proto-modernist poets, introducing generative semantic problems into his works and extending this method to an extreme degree. Straus invokes Schoenberg's term "tonal problem" to indicate the moments in early Romantic compositions when disability first entered musical textuality. He first defines Schoenberg's basic concept:

The tonal problem is a musical event, often a chromatic note (i.e., a note from outside the principal scale) that threatens to destabilize the prevailing tonality (i.e., the sense of key). Destabilizing tonal problems have been frequently observed in the critical literature and are most commonly associated with the music of Beethoven and Schubert. (Straus, 2011, p. 48)

He then proposes an application of what we might call *problematised tonality* to disability aesthetics:

In traditional tonal music, particularly the music of Beethoven, tonal problems are often solved in a triumphant blaze. ... Schoenberg and Webern, however, have a different way

of dealing with problematic disruptions of the normative scheme. Their music offers narrative engagement with issues of disability, but without the promise that the disability can be overcome, much less in a heroic manner. ... The music creates an artistic space within which disability can be accommodated. (Straus, 2011, p. 77)

Straus considers a series of composers who – in various ways, and more and less determinately – sought to program their own disabilities into specific works. Referring to a section of Igor Stravinsky's *Requiem Canticles*, Straus writes:

The melody [traces] six different notes grouped in pairs: A-sharp-C, D-A, G-C-sharp. The first of those pairs involves a three-fold repetition of the kind Stravinsky refers to as a “stutter”: “two reiterated notes [which] are a melodic-rhythmic stutter characteristic of my speech from *Les Noces* to the *Concerto in D*, and earlier and later as well — a lifelong affliction, in fact.” (Straus, 2011, p. 87)

It is interesting quite how verbal Stravinsky's terms are here. Beyond the idea of a musical “stutter”, notes are “reiterated”, and he refers, in reference to his musical articulation in specific pieces, to “my speech”. Through this example we can illustrate the non-denotative nature of music. The imitation of stuttering in an orchestral score, unlike lingual designation, operates within no code or codifiable system. What sounded like a stutter to Stravinsky may sound like a limp to someone else. When Straus writes that an “apparent disfluency [in the stuttering sections of Stravinsky's piece] renders the melody static” (Straus, 2011, p. 88), he could almost be speaking of the paralytic phraseology of “Sirens”, “Circe”, and in particular *Finnegans Wake*.

Assuming a more theoretical perspective, Straus writes in his sixth chapter that,

An important recent movement in the fields of philosophy and linguistics has focused on the concept of embodiment. This movement, sometimes called “experientialism,” argues that we understand the world through our prior, intimate knowledge of our own bodies. Music theorists have recently extended this approach to music, arguing that it creates meaning by encoding bodily experience and that listeners make sense of music in embodied terms. (Straus, 2011, p. 106)

I seek in the present thesis to move away from identitarian analytic models – in gender, racial, queer, and disability studies – toward a focus on experience. This aligns partially with experientialism, drawing on its intertwinements of language, art, and the body. Metaphors pertinent to music that are “related to the human body and to bodily experience” (Straus, 2011, p. 106) have – particularly since the modernist era – been as much in the minds of composers and performers as in those of critics and philosophers.

Straus’s seventh chapter addresses the disability-music-meaning trichotomy through analyses of musical performers including the pianist Glenn Gould, the violinist Itzhak Perlman, and the Bass-baritone Thomas Quasthoff. Straus begins with the black, blind, and – it is now thought – autistic late nineteenth-century pianist Thomas Wiggins (“Blind Tom”). Straus writes that, “Wiggins’s performances often involved low comedy. As a Comic Misadventurer, he played his disability (and his race) for laughs, according to the conventions of the minstrel show.” (Straus, 2011, p. 134). There is certainly a lot that is vaudevillian (low, flashy, and populist) about the surface of *Finnegans Wake*, and much which exploits its author’s race (or ethnicity), his disabilities, and his prodigious talent in ways that have been perceived as cheap and exhibitionistic.

Extraordinary Measures switches between its main foci of the disabled musical artist and the disabled musical listener. In his chapter entitled ‘Prodigious Hearing, Normal Hearing, and Disablist Hearing’, Straus writes:

In opposition to the normalizing impetus of music cognition, with its unexamined reliance on the normal listener, ... I propose what I will call disablist hearing: the ways that people whose bodily, psychological, or cognitive abilities are different from the prevailing norm might make sense of music. (Straus, 2011, p. 150-1)

In his notes to this chapter, Straus contextualises his term “disablist hearing”, writing:

In using the term “disablist” here, I intend an analogy to the term “feminist,” and I describe a mode of hearing associated with disabled people, but not necessarily confined to them. (Straus, 2011, p. 150, n 1)

Straus’s identification of the “unexamined reliance on the normal listener” in the study of music casts disability as an unacknowledged universal in human experience. His use of the

word “unexamined” evokes Socrates’ statement (recorded by Plato) that “the unexamined life is not worth living” (Plato, 1947, 38a).

Finnegans Wake is a cultural and material construction that might be illuminated through its being breached by a disabled body: sounded out with a deaf ear, pierced with a blind gaze, interpreted with a neuro-non-typical sensibility. Straus quotes Tobin Siebers’ statement that,

When a disabled body enters any construction, social or physical, a deconstruction occurs ... that reveals ... the blueprint of the social rendering of the building as surely as its physical rendering. (Siebers, 2008b, cited in Straus, 2011, p. 160)

The *Wake* defies and thwarts able-normative ways of reading and encourages and facilitates disablist reading. If we are to “make sense of music”, we must penetrate through the (externally) aesthetic to the (internally) semantic. The *Wake* subverts pre-regulated denotation, perhaps imitating music’s internal semantic mode (otherwise understood as strictly aesthetic). But demanding that a literary work be more musical, or a musical work more literate, than it can really be, can impair an able-normate reader or listener, thus placing him or her in a position analogous with that of a corporeally disabled subject. Siebers continues: “Constructions are built with certain social bodies in mind, and when a different body appears, the lack of fit reveals the ideology of ability controlling the space.” (Siebers, 2008b, cited in Straus, 2011, p. 160). The Construction known as *Finnegans Wake* is “built” less with “certain” bodies in mind than most, and “when a different body” enters it, that body is less likely than usual to encounter a “lack of fit” revealing an inflexible “ideology of ability controlling the space”.

Joyce’s inclusivity – and/or otherwise – as regards disabled social subjects within his fictive universes is, however, less clear cut.

‘A Crippled Erotic: Gender and Disability in James Joyce’s “Nausicaa”’, Dominika Bednarska, 2011

Dominika Bednarska proposes that, through its alternative meta-narrative to disabled asexuality, “Nausicaa” offers a progressive understanding of how gender, sexuality, and disability interact. Referring also to the “blind stripling” sequence from “Lestrygonians”, Bednarska argues that the sensory schema of *Ulysses* disrupts received conceptions of gender, sexuality, and ability. She pre-echoes my own scepticism regarding the limping “*alla*

zoppa” in music, questioning Fritz Senn’s conceit that the “awkwardness of the prose” in Nausicaa “suggests the awkwardness of [Gerty’s] limp” (Bednarska, 2011, p. 74).

Like McRuer’s twinning of the queer with the crip, Bednarska’s “crippled erotic” has echoes of work by Judith Butler among others that established overlaps between these two fields. Bednarska explains how in *Ulysses* Joyce both sexualises disabled embodiments and normalises what have been viewed as grossly bodily forms of sexuality:

In Joyce’s writing, unusual sexual attractions and proclivities are not consistently treated as deviant or disgusting behaviors needing medical intervention; instead they are part of the stream of consciousness through which we get to know the novel’s characters.

(Bednarska, 2011, p. 84)

This idea that close readings of the sexual “perversions” of individual characters can help readers to incorporate both character and perversion into the narrative scheme illustrates the inclusive nature of Joyce’s meta-narratives and meta-textualities. The *poly-divergent* identity Bednarska proposes for Gerty (differently-feminine and deviant in terms of both sexuality and ability) is performative on both character and narrative levels. The fictive “Gerty” performs her gender and sexuality, while the Gerty of Joyce’s meta-syntax constitutes a performance of textual disablement far subtler than that perceived by Senn.

Bednarska’s analysis of Joyce’s disablist sexualisation of Gerty (under Leopold Bloom’s ableist male gaze) is coupled with her reading of Bloom’s ambivalent imagining of the erotic life of “the blind stripling”:

As Bloom describes the blind man, he imagines how difficult the situation of blindness must be in relation to women: “Must be strange not to see her. Kind of a form in his mind’s eye. The voice, temperatures: when he touches her with fingers must almost see the lines, the curves. His hands on her hair, for instance. Say it was black, for instance. Good. We call it black. Then passing over her white skin. Different feel perhaps. Feeling of white” (U 8.1127-31) (Bednarska, 2011, p. 83)

It is worth mentioning that other black and white objects that the stripling perceives by touch crucially include the five-fold black and seven-fold white keys of the piano, whose arbitrary mutual opposition in diatonic music (natural / sharp-flat) is “corrected” in serial music.

This encounter with Bloom is, as it were, the site of the stripling's disablement both in textual and fictive social terms. Both text and character are disabled here. Joyce-Bloom's impressions of disability are fragmented and mutable. Sight, voice, touch, speech, are arrayed in a mixture of abled and disabled forms: to see and "not to see"; "the voice" and the stripling's silence; "touches her" and "almost see the lines"; "call it black" and "feeling of white". We might view this as a sort of blind, mute, lingually impaired, differently-abled counterpoint. The blind piano tuner's disabling arises from an ablest translation of impairment into disability. That is to say, an experience of different-ability is turned into an identity of lack. This said, part of the poetics of this moment lie in Bloom's flashes of near-disablist empathy, wherein he understands that the stripling's difference is not as other as *less perceptive persons than himself* might imagine. This is similar to the compassionate ablism of his enlightened though sexually self-interested perspective on Gerty. Joyce's positioning of Bloom as just as inter-textually disabled as the stripling foreshadows the universal semantic disablism of *Finnegans Wake*.

"Stuttistics". On Speech Disorders in *Finnegans Wake*, Christopher Eagle, 2013

In "Stuttistics", Christopher Eagle cites Gilles Deleuze's 'He Stuttered', in which Deleuze offers "an emancipatory vision of the creative potentialities in stuttering to "make a language take flight"" (Eagle, 2013, p. 84). Deleuze sets out three ways in which an author might incorporate stuttering into a literary work. The first is to transcribe a stutter into the text. The second is to describe – without transcribing – the stutter, or, in Deleuze's words, "to say it without doing it". The third, conceived of as "when saying is doing" (Deleuze, 1997, p. 107), requires no portrayal of a stuttering character because "It is no longer the character who stutters in speech; it is the writer who becomes *a stutterer in language*". Deleuze calls this "creative stuttering" (Deleuze, 1997, p. 108). Eagle notes that, "As examples of this final and more radical possibility, Deleuze cites ... Kafka, Beckett, Artaud, and Melville", adding that, "Joyce's name is conspicuous by its absence". Eagle seeks to "address the extent to which Deleuze's three categories might apply to *Finnegans Wake*" (Eagle, 2013, p. 84). And, perceiving a semantic binary overarching Deleuze's threefold understanding, he asks "whether Deleuze's model of creative stuttering might help to clarify [the] relation between clinical portrayal and aesthetic performance of speech disorders in *Finnegans Wake*" (Eagle, 2013, p. 95).

Here we see that language is by definition always representational. Even when narrative language is not depicting or referring to a particular subject, it is representing characteristics associated with subjects. We see this frequently in the *Wake* in narrative stuttering such as “mewmew mutual daughters” (36.23). This is, unlike Stravinsky’s illiterate musical stuttering, unmistakably a narratorial enactment of disordered speech.

Though I return to stuttering and to Eagle’s analysis in later chapters, I generally exclude this condition from my conception of “disability”, and so have not made it a major component of this thesis. I have reached this view on both textual and “experiential” grounds. Firstly, stuttering in the *Wake* is more an aspect of content and local form than of my main focus of “structuration”: this surface affect is incidental to the meta(de)formation of the text as a whole. Secondly, stuttering fails to meet criteria of “sensory, learning, motor, or mobility impairment”. This exclusion may be justified by asking stammering people if they consider themselves to be “disabled”: I would suggest that most would not. I accept that my definition is partial and subjective. I appreciate that the experience of stammering may share characteristics with disability, but I maintain that “disability” is a social construct of identity not generally placed on speech disorders.

This division notwithstanding, what may be seen to bring the “clinical” and the “aesthetic” together as regards both stuttering and disability in art is the ethical. Divergent bodies, deviant bodily acts and compulsions, and “degenerate” artistic modes, all – when they meet with expectations of intelligibility and conformity – find in both the clinical and the aesthetic an ethical component. As Eagle writes of the alleged sexual deviant HCE, “His speech disorder is ... directly associated with sin, and since the transgression in question occurs in a place called Edenborough, it is even more precisely linked to the Biblical Fall of original sin.” (Eagle, 2013, p. 85). In addition to his stuttering when required to answer for his conduct in III.3, HCE’s encounter with “the Cad” in I.2 triggers a stutter linked to debilitating feelings of sexual embarrassment and fear.

There are in *Finnegans Wake* many sites of interchange between clinical, sexual, ethical, and artistic (including musical) deviancies, and the clinical among these is often the central and aggravating element. We find a similar relationship in Lethem’s *Motherless Brooklyn*. The disabled, erotic/scatological, and poetic divergencies entailed by Lionel’s Tourette’s are often expressed in the moral and ethical difficulties that his involuntary truth-revealing utterances bring about.

‘Involutions of the word: Lorrie Moore and Jonathan Lethem’, Joseph Brooker, 2016

Of the five Tourette’s-inspired novels identified by Sørensen, Lethem’s *Motherless Brooklyn* has received the most critical attention. In addition to the essay by Sørensen, there is a chapter on *Motherless Brooklyn* included in Chris Eagle’s book *Dysfluencies. On Speech Disorders in Modern Literature* (2014), and also the passing but insightful attention paid to the novel by Schleifer. This wide interest is perhaps partly due to the deft naturalism with which Lethem incorporates Tourettic traits, but it may also derive some authority from its synthesis of *Wake*-like language.

Joseph Brooker cites Michael Silverblatt’s identification of “a recurring feature of Lethem’s work: an “impulse to deform and restructure language.”” (Brooker, 2016, p. 113). Brooker highlights Silverblatt’s observation that Lionel’s Tourette’s utterances “are not [only] curses and obscenities. They’re wild improvisations, homologues, *Finnegans Wake*-like assemblages.” (Brooker, 2016, p. 113). Tourette’s and *Wake* language are mutually analogous in that each tends to cause aversion in those who encounter it, and these reactions often extend to the person behind the lingual deformation. Lethem acknowledges the Joycean influence:

I’d created a series of excuses, essentially, for Joycean wordplay, and it was always a marginalized character or characters who were allowed to thrive as a subculture in my earlier novels. In *Motherless Brooklyn* I challenged myself to take this marginalized impulse for wordplay and free association and let it drive the book. Let it stand front and center and not quarantine it the way I had in the past, and let that become structure. (Brooker, 2016, p. 113)

The word “quarantine” is revealing as regards the departure of Post-Joycean prose from the hyper-inclusive mode of Joyce’s writing itself. *Despised and rejected* though Joyce’s characters may be by each other, they are rarely quarantined by their author. The governing ethos of Joycean textuo-social order appears to be benign neglect.

Like the present thesis, Brooker’s essay concentrates on the syntactic-aesthetic rather than the socio-political implications of Tourette’s as a narrative/character device. Speaking of the Lethemism “philanthropriest”, Brooker writes that this word,

would be a plausible *Wake*-ism: it joins two words (philanthropist, priest) together in a way that retains the shape of the first, while potentially offering a new meaning at the juncture of the two. (Brooker, 2016, p. 116)

Brooker's essay is useful in its attention to linguistic particulars such as his observation that Lethemisms often have a "plausible dactylic shape". It is often in the syntactical plausibility or otherwise of Joycean and post-Joycean "involutions" that their sonic-aesthetic lies. Many authors have sought to imitate Joyce's distortions and convolutions of language. One way in which Lethem succeeds in this where others fail is in Lionel's differently-legible syntax, which Lethem derives in part from the real-life (anti)syntax of Tourette's.

'Degeneration, Decadence, and Joyce's Modernist Disability Aesthetics', Marion Quirici, 2016

So far in this survey we have seen how the terms "disability aesthetics" and "comprehensibility" are key in establishing a disablist theory of textuality. We have also touched on the real-world cultural, and ethical potency of these concepts. The final two entries in the chronology focus specifically on this political side to the lingual-aesthetic-disablist equation that is crucial to Joyce's place in modernist literary history.

In 'Degeneration, Decadence, and Joyce's Modernist Disability Aesthetics', Marion Quirici notes that,

So-called "degenerate art" was targeted by the rising Nazi party, but others outside Germany shared the attitude that modernism was an expression of sickness: Joyce's critics in England, Ireland, and the United States used imagery of degeneracy and disease to describe what they saw as the immorality, incomprehensibility, and lowness of his writing. (Quirici, 2016, p. 84)

This species of eugenic thought infecting often otherwise liberal minds in the 1930s remains relevant to disability theory and experience. Quirici explains that,

Even positive reviews of Joyce incorporated disability metaphor: John Middleton Murry's defense of Joyce in *Nation and Athenaeum* saluted the author as a "half-

demented man of genius.” Reviews like these blur the lines between innovation and genius on the one side ... and infantilism and insanity on the other. (Quirici, 2016, p. 85)

And of Virginia Woolf, Quirici writes:

Overall, she found *Ulysses* “[a]n illiterate, underbred book” [Woolf, 1978, p. 189]. ... Illiteracy could refer to a lack of learning opportunities rather than an inability to learn to read, but the inclusion of the word “underbred” ... implies an inborn deficiency. These remarks were all private, but Woolf filed a similar complaint more publicly in her 1919 essay “Modern Novels” for the *Times Literary Supplement*. There, again, she uses vocabulary of class to describe Joyce’s degraded intellect, referring to the “comparative poverty of the writer’s mind.” (Woolf, 1919, cited in Quirici, 2016, pp. 90-1)

In *Finnegans Wake* Joyce contorts Woolf’s prissily phobic judgement of him into “horrible awful poverty of mind” (192.10). While the well-recorded inculcation of a subset of modernists with eugenic and supremacist ideas is disturbing, Woolf’s eugenious and superior attacks on Joyce’s literacy and literary mind are in some ways especially objectionable. It has, perhaps wrongly, become easy to laugh off elitist slurs like “underbred”. Even more malign pseudo-scientific judgements (of an individual or group’s supposed congenital inability to read or acquire skills) may now sound more risible than dangerous. But Woolf’s characteristically snooty assault on Joyce (albeit partly private) has a particular ingrained and endemic quality to it that continues to colour ableist public life today.

As I mentioned above, Quirici cites a review of ‘Work in Progress’ by Desmond MacCarthy in *The New Statesman* in 1927:

...we need not feel any sympathetic pain; for the writer, so far from being an aphasiac, is a man remarkable for his command of words. ... The taste which inspired it is taste for cretinism of speech, akin to finding exhilaration in the slobberings and mouthings of an idiot (MacCarthy, 1927 cited in Quirici, 2016, p. 92)

By highlighting such – one might say *pathologically* – adverse reactions to *Ulysses* and “Work in Progress”, Quirici demonstrates how Joyce has always been a “sufferer” of *disability* (social and/or cultural adversity arising from bodily and/or cognitive difference). While it is not clear that Joyce had any “Intellectual disability”, I think we should, for reasons

other than those suggested by McCarthy, “feel ... sympathetic pain” for a person “remarkable for his command of words”, who was, and has been, in his lifetime and since, widely misinterpreted by admirers, detractors, and faint-praisers alike. The various sorts of prodigious “cretinism” displayed by such figures as Joyce, Shem, “the blind stripling”, Thomas Quasthoff, Thomas Wiggins, Erik Satie, Igor Stravinsky, and Paul McCarthy may require a more vigilant regime of inclusion than they have hitherto enjoyed.

‘Here Comes Everycrip’ *et seq.* (from ‘Deformity and Modernist Form’ in *Bodies of Modernism*), Maren Tova Linett, 2017

Maren Linett’s ‘Here Comes Everycrip’, ‘Dysgenic Shem’, and ‘Writing on the Body’ constitute an overview of the *Wake*’s reception as it reflected ideas of racial, class, bodily, and artistic degeneracy in the 1920s and 30s.

Unlike Quirici, Eagle, and others who have focussed on textuality over teleology, Linett aims her study more at the extrinsic representation of disability than at its intrinsic nature. Her identification of Joyce’s narrative responses to criticism of his ‘Work in Progress’ is revealing, but does not explore the fundamentals of disablist literary aesthetics.

Linett writes:

HCE is (sometimes) a stutterer and a “humpback”, and ... Shem the Penman, is described by his twin brother Shaun as having a whole litany of disabilities and deformities. ... Joyce depicts the writer as disabled, degenerate, and dysgenic. But as the writer of *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*, he also functions as a creator, a life-giver. (Linett, 2017, p. 183)

If anyone, it is strictly speaking the scurrilous Shaun (as the priest in I.7) and not Joyce who “depicts” Shem as disabled and degenerate. I show in this thesis that disability and degeneration are far less interesting as aspects of content in *Finnegans Wake* than they are as devices of form. Shem’s disability is less a function of characterisation than it is a part of a deformative syntacticisation. The real disability here is the anti-semantic inconsistency of dysgenic and eugenic narrative tendencies.

In seeking to pin down a disabled Shem/Joyce creator-life-giver, Linett gives only passing attention to the experience and textualisation of disability (as opposed to its identity and designation). But her thoughtful treatment of the Shem-Shaun disabled character-

narrative disposition does at points result in an experiential and textually-analytical analysis. Shem and Shaun's dyslexical chaos of self and other, internal and external, draws Linett's review of critical reception inside Shem-Shaunishness through the brothers' reflexive concretisation of critic/author dynamics. She writes:

...when being addressed by Justius/Shاون, Justius ... accuses [Shem] of committing a "birthwrong" (*FW* 190.12); this phrase plays on *birthright*, recalling Shem's identity as Esau. But it also alludes to eugenics: since *eugenic* means well born or good birth, a birthwrong suggests a bad or dysgenic birth. (Linett, 2017, p. 187)

Linett's semantic reading of HCE's "everyman" status helps to flesh out the disablist particularity and universality of this construction, and her properly ambiguous stratification of his flaws broadly into moral, corporeal, sexual, and other elements gives cognitive and bodily deviations their rightful prominence. But it is in concluding 'Writing on the Body' that Linett most accords with the meta-textual intention of the present thesis. With reference to the Penman's excremental self-inscription – "First till last alshemist wrote over every square inch of the only foolscap available, his own body" (185.34-6) – she conceives that,

By writing on his own body, and by serving as the writer of his own "polylogue," [Fordham, 2013, p. 56] Shem becomes the text of *Finnegans Wake*—which is to say the utterly disabled, dysgenic body becomes the body of the text: deformity becomes modernism. (Linett, 2017, p. 196)

* * *

The perception of Linett and others that Joyce's "Wholesale Safety Pun Factory" (Ellmann, 1982, p. 590) was a primarily semantic mechanism overlooks the far more prominent meta-syntactical workings of this malfunctioning machine. In a quasi-musical mode, *Wake* linguistics elevate style over content, form over function, medium over message in an attempt *to harmonise the reader's ear with the writer's tongue*. Though a – in Strausian terms – "normal" semanticising reading is viable (as with serial musical works discussed in later chapters), an at once "prodigious" and "disablist" contra-semantic reading takes greater advantage of the text's uniquely "abject embodiment" (Quirici, 2016, p. 104).

While Eagle's "Stuttistics" and Linett's "Everycrip" are valuable as the only extant studies centrally interested in Wakean bodily-textual disorder, my interpretation of stuttering as – in crude terms – *non-disabled*, and of crip-semantic readings as insufficiently formal (when form is so key), leave the present thesis with no direct comparators. My musically oriented analysis understands the *Wake* as at its most disabled and most artistically radical in its syntax, its exposed structuration, and its combinatorial arrangement.

The works cited in 1B not centrally concerned with *Finnegans Wake* but with a bearing on disablist (post)modernist fiction (by Schleifer, Sørensen, and Brooker) have indirectly fed in to the thesis through their drawing of attention to the dyslexical morphology of much twentieth-century prose. Freeman's and McRuer's queer(/crip) corporeal analyses, Bauman's repositioning of gesture as a fully lingual faculty, and Bednarska's textual (dis)abling of Gerty MacDowell have had the clearest cultural-theoretical influence.

Most important at a methodological and terminological level have been Siebers essays under the heading "Disability Aesthetics", Quirici's ideas around "abject embodiment", and – most of all – Straus's musical conception of "disablism". In addition, at a more empirical level, Pierre Schaeffer's theories concerning "modes of hearing" (as revealed to me by Kane's essay) have emerged as indispensable to this study's conception of (disability) sonic-semantics.

As the critical history of *Joyce and music* has been long and fairly continuous (certainly compared to that of *Joyce and disability*), it is logical in conclusion here to summarise the relative impact on this thesis of the musical studies cited in 1A in approximate chronological order.

While Gilbert's work on Joycean musicality is scarcely referenced in this thesis outside the present chapter, it is, as a leaving-off point, critical, not only to my own, but to all musical readings of Joyce. Though neither Budgen's nor Harry Levin's analysis can compete with Gilbert's for sheer originative status, both contribute valuable strands to the discourse. Budgen's spatial (*nebeneinander/nacheinander/übereinander*) conception, and Levin's understanding of *readers' aspiration to the condition of listeners*, have clearly flowed into musical Joyceanism, not least in the present case. Lawrence Levin's essay brings together ideas from all three of these earlier scholars among others, rationalising them in the first truly and devotedly musico-Joycean study. With 'Re Joyce' Burgess provided the initial dysfunctionalist impetus for this thesis. His elision of the poetic and the musical led me to seek out more expressly "disharmonious" understandings of Joyce and anti-semantic conceptions of music, and to synthesise the two.

Most directly influential of the critics in 1A's survey, however, appear in the sequence from 1994-2001: Herman, Fischer, Murphy, and Bucknell. Fischer and Bucknell each demonstrate the potential for aesthetic rigor in "listening" to Joyce, and Murphy's discussion of Eco's theories of sonic engagement guides my own post-Adornian/counter-Cagean approach in later chapters. It will become apparent as we proceed that Herman's work constitutes my most important referent. His notion of "well-formed atonal" music challenges an ostensible opposition between "tonality" and "atonality" analogous with that of "sense" and "nonsense" in the *Wake*.

Klein, whose work first alerted me to Pierre Boulez's interest in Joyce, which is crucial to Chapters 3 and 4, is not included in the chronology because the two essays of his that I reference several times in the thesis are themselves chronologies rather than textual analyses.

The pre-eminent Joycean-musical scholar at present is undoubtedly Witen. Her 2010 essay appears in the survey but I have omitted her 2018 book. The reason for this is that her thesis is one of resolving long-standing debates and is, therefore, neither in accord with nor opposed to the present open-ended analysis. Her interest is in hierarchical nineteenth-century musical and music-philosophical paradigms, none of which can, I believe, directly contribute to a dysgenic, post-modern, differently-historical understanding. This said, it would be unthinkable to embark on any music-focussed exploration of Joyce without frequent reference to this volume, and ideas originating with Wagner, Pater, and others in the 1800s suffuse this thesis.

CHAPTER 2. Schoenberg and the Well-formed *Wake*

[T]here is no fundamental note, no viable key, in the serial world of the Modernist fiction.

Daniel Albright, *Beckett and Aesthetics* (Albright, 2003, p. 144)

In “‘Sirens’ after Schoenberg”, David Herman identifies in the eleventh episode of *Ulysses* a kinship, not with fugue as a template of musical form as per the standard critical model, but with serialism as a method of musical formation. Quite appropriately, given the anti-linear semantics he finds in the art of both Arnold Schoenberg and James Joyce, Herman seeks no linear link of influence from one artist to the other, but observes key correspondences between the two modes of composition. As Brad Bucknell notes,

Schoenberg’s *Five Piano Pieces*, opus 23 ... which give us the first compositional display of the [serial] technique, do not appear until 1923, four years after the writing of “Sirens” and one year after the publication of *Ulysses*. Herman is pointing to historical proximity ... rather than connection in linking Joyce and Schoenberg. (Bucknell, 2010, p. 128)

It is worth noting, nonetheless, that Joyce took an interest in the musical avant-garde while in Zurich (1915-19) and in Paris (1920-40), and was aware of Schoenberg’s compositions, which by the time Joyce had started work on *Finnegans Wake*, were serial compositions. The musician and theatrical collaborator with Joyce, Otto Luening, cites Joyce as asserting (in a characteristically sweeping manner) that, “For me there are only two composers. One is Palestrina and the other is Schoenberg” (Luening, 1980, p. 194). And Jack W. Weaver claimed that, by the time Joyce had finished work on *Ulysses*, he had come to admire greatly Schoenberg’s “experimental atonal music” (Weaver, 1998, p. 92).

As I will argue in this chapter, in writing *Finnegans Wake*, Joyce, as an artist testing the limits of textual comprehensibility, made comparable decisions regarding what to abandon and what to retain of earlier models of “good form” as Schoenberg had in developing serialism. As we begin to see in Herman’s essay, the Joycean project of the 1920s and 30s would share with its Schoenbergian counterpart, not merely a key interest in structure, but a promotion of structuration as the primary means of producing works of art.

Katherine O’Callaghan agrees with Herman’s assertion that “commentators have failed to situate the structure of “Sirens” in [an] early twentieth-century radicalization of ... polyphonic forms” (O’Callaghan, 2018, p. 35). She raises the concern, however, that,

[t]he situating of ... any of Joyce’s work within the development of a particular musical movement will prove insufficient if it is only the written aspect of the music, above its performative or aural aspect, that is considered. (O’Callaghan, 2018, p. 35)

Herman is explicit in not seeking to situate Joyce within any musical movement. Indeed, he distances himself from those critics who identify in the works of Joyce, or of other authors, any strictly musical characteristics. While I sympathise with O’Callaghan’s concern that Herman neglects to address musical realisation, I believe she overlooks the advantages of isolating compositional principles from matters of music making and appreciation. Such an isolation can help to avoid misleading speculation as to subjective listener and reader experience, and to avert any confusion between musical syntax and a supposed musicality in literary forms.

The present chapter works on the *dysfunctionalist* understanding established in Chapter 1A that, while, as Michelle Witen (2018) demonstrates, principles of musical (de)formation were key to the composition of some of Joyce’s works, no functioning element of musical form itself is operative in the texts. The reason for this is simply that it is, as previously argued, impossible to synthesise even basic aspects of music’s illiterate aesthetics in written language. The symbiotic relationship between music’s conception and its audible production precludes any purely lexical existence for that artform. The commensurabilities I identify in this chapter between *Finnegans Wake* and serial music apply at the syntactic level only, at which the (dis)ordering of constitutive elements may be analysed separately from the aesthetic, conceptual, or denotative characteristics of those elements.

The incapacity of non-disablist analyses and of the present disablist thesis alike fully to square objective literary study with an unavoidably subjective reading of the latent sonic-aesthetics of given literary texts mirrors the musical incapacity of those texts themselves. I will demonstrate, however, that while this musico-textual incapacity is in turn disabling of critics, this critical disablement can give rise to a sympathetic and productive response to abnormate literary textualities.

Key to this *dysfunctionalist*, *deformalist* chapter are the terms “combinatory apparatus” (as used by Herman) and the broader “combinatorics” (which I believe is more apt for present

intermedial purposes). As I explain in detail below, these terms encompass techniques (within empirical and creative disciplines) for ordering elements within a system. Those elements may be numbers, words and letters, colours, basic factors in logic, or any other small transposeable parts of a systematic whole. Such techniques, though logical and coherent in themselves, are often perceived as producing incomprehensible, dysgenic results. As Dennis Duncan (2012) explains, the use of combinatorics in written language can be traced back at least as far as the epicurean philosopher Lucretius in the classical era, and notably to the theologian Ramon Llull in the medieval period, but has latterly perhaps become most associated with the *Oulipo* group of authors (based in Paris in the 1960s and 70s) that included Raymond Queneau, Georges Perec, and Italo Calvino. The full disablist-Joycean significance of combinatorics will become evident throughout the chapter.

I depart from Herman's conception of the "well-formed" in *Ulysses* and in "atonal" (Herman 1994, p. 480) music to consider the deformative structuration of *Finnegans Wake* and of what Herman more aptly calls on one occasion "differently tonal" (Herman 1994, p. 482) music. Herman deploys the term "well-formed" in a series of incisive but sometimes normative ways. These deployments increase in referential specificity as the term clashes with elements of modernist aesthetics that resist its homogenising force. This chapter's five numbered sections address in order each of Herman's five uses of the term, testing their applicability to serialism and to *Finnegans Wake* with particular attention to what I will call "the radio announcement sequence" of *FW* II.3.

As I propose in depth below, Herman's suggestion that an "atonal" (or "differently tonal") work might be heard as "well-formed" militates against received aesthetic logic. Music is defined by "harmony", harmony by "tonality", tonality by "euphony". If a work of music does not sound euphonious to me, if, moreover, I know that it sounds dysphonious to most people, can I truly conceive of it as music? Do the dissonances of atonalism and serialism not constitute the very antithesis of "well-formed" music?

The answers commonly offered by post-modern culture to these questions are that: atonalism and serialism deliberately disqualify themselves from the category "music", and are at best ill-formed or deformative reflections of true, euphonious music. We will also see below that, compared to the notion of a well-formed atonal (or "dystonic") musical work, that of a well-formed dyslexical literary work – such as *Finnegans Wake* – may be more readily entertained, because adult human beings are generally more lingually than musically adept.

Besides a focus on *Finnegans Wake* rather than "Sirens", and a specific attention to the disabled characteristics of Schoenberg's dodecaphony and Joyce's literary contrapuntalism,

the chapter diverges from Herman's study in adopting a musico-aesthetic more than a linguistic methodology and rationale. Nevertheless, Herman's identification of syntax (rather than fugal or other musical paradigms) as key in the formation of "Sirens" is adapted here to studying the – I will argue – even more quasi-musical construction of the *Wake*.

1. "(well-formed) structures"

Herman's first use of "well-formed" is in parentheses, perhaps indicating that its application is contingent and limited to the most general notion of artistic "structures". These parentheses could, in a different context, lend a disablist self-interrogative inflection to a term whose applicability to *Ulysses* (with its anti-normative perspective on rules governing both literary and bodily form) is questionable. We might extrapolate from Herman's thesis a sense that both the authorial/readerly construction of the work of art, and the cultural/personal construction of the body, may take place at a "combinatory" – rather than a linear narrative – level. We see in the permutative and juxtapositional techniques of both Schoenberg and Joyce the creation of matrices – rather than simple lines – of structural development. My rereading of a single word from Herman's essay is an attempt to challenge the role of the attribution "well-formed" in demeaning or suppressing those anti-linear artworks to which it is often inversely applied as "ill-formed". Herman writes:

By reinterpreting Joyce's "Sirens" as an experiment in combinatory apparatus — a system for combining and recombining more or less elementary units into (well-formed) structures — we can start redefining the role of narrative itself in shaping that complex episteme that we call "modernism." ... [N]arrative form in Joyce, like musical form in Schoenberg, points to the grammatical — more specifically, the syntactic — profile of the modernist episteme. (Herman, 1994, p. 473)

Herman's choice of the "combinatory apparatus" as a model for the structurative method of "Sirens" is, despite the term's arcane air, more functional than the many fugal models that have been presented. Michelle Witen's *James Joyce and Absolute Music* (2018) examines more rationally and in more depth than any previous study the musical geno-textual sources for "Sirens", synthesises this with a sonic-aesthetic analysis of the episode itself, and demonstrates convincingly that in writing "Sirens" Joyce did indeed have in mind the structure of an eight part fugue. However, the disabling deconstruction to which Joyce was

forced (by the limits of written language) to subject this musical form means that the episode's reading can never be truly fugal. As long as the simultaneity and verticality that are essential to fugue remain beyond the capacities of other arts, the comparison remains purely metaphorical. As we will see, the particular simultaneities and verticalities of Schoenbergian dodecaphonics equally have no direct counterparts in literary form. But where key comparisons can be drawn between Joycean prose and Second Viennese School serialism is in the construction and manipulation of their respective syntaxes.

While the prose neither of "Sirens" nor of *Finnegans Wake* can be heard to simulate polyphonic forms, the latter text in particular is, as we will see in this and later chapters, (de)constructed in a demonstrably *serialistic* way. Musical serialism employs combinatorial techniques of phrasal inversion and reversal, division and arrangement, that subvert the linearity and horizontality of traditional counterpoint, rendering the vertical and the horizontal less mutually distinct. Rhythm, melody, and harmony overlap as categories in both dodecaphony and fugue. The difference is that in dodecaphony, while the paradigm of the "tone row" guides the non-linear structuration of the music, it has far less influence over any perceived spatio-temporal linearity than do the rules of fugue and the seven-note scales of traditional harmony. The tone row – also called the "basic set" (see these terms explicated below) – is newly constructed for each piece, precluding such homogenising sequential markers as ascending or descending scales. This further short-circuits the differentiation of the horizontal from the vertical, leading melody to be read as though vertically, and harmony as though horizontally. Through close analogy with this short-circuiting, we can observe in *Finnegans Wake*'s compacted structures a heterogeneous encrypted verticality not reliant on fugue's conceit of multiple intertwining lines.

The discovery that there is no multi-linear contrapuntal structure to "Sirens" may beg questions as to whether this piece of prose is not merely "ill-formed", but lacking in form *per se*. What Herman shows, however, is that by ensuring the integrity of each element within "ostensibly arbitrary sequences" (Herman, 1994, p. 480), musical and literary modernists were able to reconcile structurative heterogeneity with a stylistic unity relatively untrammelled by what Robert W. Witkin has called "the congealed residues of past subjectivity" (Witkin, 1998, p. 130).

Nonetheless, it was in part by retaining some of the parameters of linear articulation and sequential progression such as bar lines, sentence clauses, consecutive movements, and chapters that Schoenberg, Joyce, and others freed themselves up to focus on the dysgenic combination and recombination of smaller elements within the emergent structures of their

artworks. This reflected a broader interest in paradigms of limitation and permutation at the time and influential for several decades to come. Herman writes:

Arguably, both *Ulysses* and the twelve-tone row figure as synecdoches for a widespread early twentieth-century concern with combinatory apparatus as such — a concern evident not only in narrative and musical experimentation but also in research on the foundations of mathematics; ... in philosophers' and linguists' work on the syntactic structures of natural as well as artificial languages; in Georges Seurat's, Marcel Duchamps's and others' attempts to develop a pictorial syntax; and so on. (Herman, 1994, p. 473)

Herman here reinforces his underlying argument that modernisms of all kinds are strongly shaped by the constant of syntax. Though the Greek-Latin term *syntaxis* ('the orderly arrangement of elements') is not restricted to language, it indicates – via its modern European forms – a dimension of structure most associated with sentence formation. Herman also establishes here perhaps the most striking assertion of his thesis: that this syntactic principle becomes key in the early twentieth century not only in musical and literary aesthetics, but in mathematics, logic, and the plastic arts, as well as in the search to identify a so-called “universal grammar” (Herman, 1994, p. 476).

We saw in Chapter 1B what a modern *philosophy of listening* might offer to analytic, and potentially anti-normative, readings of *Finnegans Wake*. Pierre Schaeffer's mode of listening “*comprendre*” in particular indicates a kind of audition aimed at extracting denotations from lingual propositions, but able to be repurposed to the comprehension of other – including musical – syntactic and rhetorical constructions. Divergence from homogenising notions of ill form as incomprehensible, and comprehension as a process of isolating “good” form, are crucial to this thesis. Without either endorsing or challenging such conservative understandings, Kane adduces as an example of the mode *comprendre* the teaching of tonal theory students to “identify ... a *well-formed* tonal sentence or period, one that demonstrates the requisite musical grammar.” (Kane, 2012, p. 440) (*my italics*). So it is with analytic dispassion, not with aggression toward the “ill-formed” body or artwork, that Herman, Kane, and others deploy the term “well-formed”. Nonetheless, this deployment has the potential to be ableist and anti-radical, and challenging its predominance can be productive in textual and broader cultural analyses.

2. “well-formed sequences or strings”

Schoenberg’s transformation through serialism of the parameters of Western harmony, and Joyce’s *trans-functionalisation* in “Sirens” of paradigms of classical counterpoint, appear to offer radical new freedoms from traditional linear aesthetics and semantics. These freedoms are, however, undermined by the attachment of many listeners and readers to the ostensibly “natural” articulation (and articulacy) of the old temporalities. This conservatism rests on an arbitrarily extrapolated telos (manifest in rhetorical progression, regular poetic and musical meter, lyricism, melody, and other such constructs) based in cyclical rhythmicities such as clock time and human respiration and circulation. But this linear temporal sense is also partly drawn from normative and functionalist divisions and arrangements of socio-cultural time. Such anti-linear understandings as those Freeman dubs “queer temporalities” (Freeman, 2010, p. 10) can be plainly observed in Joyce, sometimes linked to the queer, though not necessarily homo-, sexualities of among others Leopold and Molly Bloom, HCE, and Issy. These disarticulated temporalities and disrupted linearities emancipate not only sexually divergent, but many kinds of fictive and real pathologized and disqualified bodies. Think of the strong impact that the blind and mostly unspeaking piano tuner has on the spacetime of “Sirens” through a few taps of his cane and the leaving behind of his tuning fork. And as we will see, at the purely syntactic level, such divergent rhythmicities and temporalities can be heard in Schoenberg in a disjunctively recombinative treatment of “semantic” fragments.

Speaking of the syntactic turn that coincided with the emergence of modernism, and the epistemological complexity that it entailed for many artistic and other disciplines including music and literature, Herman notes that,

This more general set of issues centers on the discovery and formalization of rules for the (re)arrangement of elements — whatever their material constitution or denotative force — into well-formed sequences or strings. (Herman, 1994, p. 475)

A clear synergy can be identified between heterogenous reunderstandings of human spacetime (such as Martin’s and Freeman’s) and non-denotative combinatorial analyses of Joyce such as Herman’s.

The most interesting words in the above quotation from an anti(able)normative point of view are “whatever their material constitution or denotative force”. Music, though not itself materially constituted, has a material impact on its listener’s body, while literature is merely

denotative in its force. Literature is able to refer outside of itself (and so to engage in external discourse), while music is confined to the most indeterminate realms of expression.

Consequently, music relies on syntax (the arrangement of elements regardless of specific meaning) more than even the most formal rhetorical prose. One might even argue that music is an entirely syntactical medium. But while Herman suggests that the constitution of the elements governed by a combinatory system should not be foremost in conceiving of that system, from the point of view of an embodied reader, listener, or viewer, the question of whether that which is acting upon one is only material, only denotative, or both, demands consideration. Indeed, the central debate in disability studies today is whether disability and embodiment are themselves materially and/or denotatively constituted.

Here Herman narrows his frame of reference from structures in general and on the larger scale to “well-formed sequences or strings”. To elucidate the designation “strings”, Herman cites Ernst Nagel and James R. Newman’s definition of these units as, “finitely long sequences [...] of meaningless marks, constructed according to rules for combining the elementary signs of the system into larger wholes” (Herman, 1994, p. 480n27). Through a focus on such strings in both language and music, we find that it is syntax, and not meaning, that principally governs the formation of coherent structures. And significantly for this thesis, we see that it is largely due to this syntactic commonality between the two media that language can appear to behave polyphonically like music, and music denotatively like language. Overlooking the falsehood of this apparent behavioural intermediality, and compounding this discrepancy with an invocation of the visual-aesthetic, Paul Rosenfeld wrote in an early review of *Finnegans Wake* that,

...the essential qualities and movement of the words, their rhythmic and melodic sequences, and the emotional color of the page are the main representatives of the author’s thought and feeling. The accepted significations of the words are secondary. (Rosenfeld, 1939, p. 663)

But while language and music are similarly syntactically decoded, the semantic encoding of conventional language corresponds to predictable decodings whereas music is never strictly semantically decoded at all but re-encoded across an infinite number of possible listenings. I discuss notions that Wakean language might come close to behaving in this musical manner later in this chapter. But in general, as we will see in Chapter 3, such loose critical metaphorization can itself debilitate the differently-coherent texts it is intended to elucidate.

In Schoenberg's dodecaphony, short strings assume a new kind of individual importance. Before the recombinative serial game can begin to unfold syntagmatically, discrete sub-sets of notes are distinguished that will oppose (or, under the new aesthetic, complement) one another within the basic set of twelve notes and in extrapolated sequences. It is partly through this pre-division that prominent conventional harmonic relationships between two or more notes are precluded. Once all twelve notes of the chromatic series have been expressed (as part of one of these short strings), then each note can make its next entrance (as part of that string or in its "inverted", "retrograde", or "inverted-retrograde" form). Schoenberg writes:

In twelve-tone composition consonances (major and minor triads) and also the simpler dissonances (diminished triads and seventh chords) — in fact almost everything that used to make up the ebb and flow of harmony — are, as far as possible, avoided.
(Schoenberg, 1984c, p. 207)

That Schoenberg should himself characterise serialist structuration in opposition to the predictable "ebb and flow" of traditional Western harmony (equivalent perhaps to the "go-ahead plot" (Ellmann, 1982, p. 585) of conventional prose narrative) may point to a melancholy and incapacitated experience of this new music on his part. A general sense that serialism assailed Schoenberg, that he encountered it almost as an objective observer of an inevitable and alarming development, colours the tone of many of his writings on the subject. This sense is at odds with a common contemporary view of both Schoenberg's proto-serial works and Joyce's 'Work in Progress' as the victims of an authorially imposed disease and disfiguration. As illustrated in Chapter 1B, Wyndham Lewis perceived in works by Stein, Joyce, and others a "willed sickness" (Lewis, 1989, p. 346) and a "exploitation of madness, of ticks, blephorospasms, and eccentricities of the mechanism of the brain" (Lewis, 1989, p. 347). And Rosenfeld, with a similar mixture of acute comprehension and prejudice as he brought to his review of *Finnegans Wake*, had written two decades earlier of the "apparently wilful ugliness" of Schoenberg's immediately pre-serial works (then newly published). Rosenfeld had observed of "Those grotesque and menacing little works" (Rosenfeld, 2016, p. 85) that, "[f]or all their apparent freedom, they are full of the oldest musical procedures, abound in canonic imitations, in augmentations, and diminutions, in all sorts of grizzled contrapuntal manoeuvres" (Rosenfeld, 2016, p. 85). We find here (proto)serial counterpoint (with all its disarticulated semantic strings) characterised as "grizzled", while the author's favoured inter-war behemoth, Igor Stravinsky, is heard to enjoy "freedom" from such

(de)formative disruptions of “ebb and flow”. For “freedom” see perhaps spiritual ability, mobility, or facility. Rosenfeld senses the dead, gnarled hand of Johannes Brahms gripping the once ostensibly more Wagnerian Schoenberg, and an ugly, “Hebraic” (Rosenfeld, 2016, p. 84) systematism suffocating those aspects of convention that Rosenfeld favours, namely fluid diatonic melody and rhythmic mono-linearity. Can we also detect here a post-Nietzschean perception of spiritual infirmity?, of abnormality tainting the hyper-normality of the “übermensch”? Clearly modernist-musical beauty is – so to speak – *in the ear of the hearer*. Indeed, *the eye of the beholder* here is equally subjective (and phobic) in the judgement that,

Arnold Schoenberg of Vienna is the great troubling presence of modern music. His vast, sallow skull lowers over it like a sort of North Cape. For with him ... we seem to be entering the arctic zone of musical art. None of the old beacons, none of the old stars, can guide us longer in these frozen wastes. Strange, menacing forms surround us... (Rosenfeld, 2016, p. 83)

It is surely the conservative attitudes and hyperbolic language of divisive critics like Rosenfeld, Lewis, and Woolf, more than the “presence” of an artist such as Schoenberg, or Joyce, that are truly “troubling”, troubling for the heterogeneity both of artistic aesthetics and of the interrelated aesthetics of human bodily form.

On first examination, Schoenberg’s orderly model of (re)combination may seem closer to the sequence-and-string-based structuration of “Sirens” than to the more contingent, interwoven textuality of *Finnegans Wake*. However, to what the permutative possibilities of the serial row might best correspond in literary composition – a closed system of small discrete units as in “Sirens” or a more diverse tapestry like that of the *Wake* – is a complex question that leads down confounding metaphorical alleys. It is perhaps most useful to view “Sirens” and other episodes of *Ulysses*, and in different ways *Finnegans Wake*, as utilising diverse combinatory apparatuses toward particular ends (remembering that none of these mechanisms is aesthetically musical, but rather commensurable with a given musical model at the syntactic level). As Theodor Adorno explains, the twelve-tone technique – in common, I argue, with Wakean syntactics – shows its deformative workings to striking affect. The very fact that *Op. 23 no. 5 sounds* serialistic, and that *Finnegans Wake “sounds”* Wakean, may be perceived as the most enduring achievement of each artist’s labours and the best validation of

his syntactical methods. Conceiving of serialism from a listener's point of view, Adorno writes:

That the row uses no more than twelve tones is a result of the endeavour to give none of the notes, by means of greater frequency, any emphasis which might render it a "fundamental tone" and thereby evoke [conventional] tonal relationships. ... With every new pitch the choice of remaining pitches diminishes, and when the last one is reached there is no longer any choice at all. The force exerted by the process is unmistakable. (Adorno, 2006, p. 72-3)

The most important of these "conventional [homogenising] tonal relationships" is that between the tonic (or root note) and the dominant (the fifth note of a diatonic scale). Together with the third note of the given scale, be it major or minor, the tonic and dominant are the basis of traditional (normative) harmony. Played as an arpeggio, these three notes constitute the principal "string" within Western music. The fact that this string *is indeed principal*, and the tonic principle therein, is the ultimate divide between diatonic and dodecatonic music. In the latter, no harmonic relationship is elevated above any other. Here the dysgenic – or, as we might say, the *varigenic* (variably-formed) – asserts its equality with the *eugenic*.

Speaking of the "tonal problem" (Schoenberg's name for a note disturbing harmonic concentricity in a diatonic composition, and the ultimate historical origin of serialism), Joseph N. Straus takes a disablist point of musical attention. In this, he conceives of "pleasure and interest" for the listener, but "disruptive and potentially disabling events" for a work's tonic. From the tonic's "point of view" (Straus, 2011, p. 49), Straus understands all such "problems" in diatonic music as demanding containment and normalisation. Though conservative commentators in the mould of Rosenfeld will acknowledge the positive influence of tonal problems in diatonic composition, they often refuse to accept the potential for "pleasure and interest" in the advanced tonal problematics of dodecaphony. Critics following Rosenfeld's line of thinking might argue that the idea of a note/harmony having a "point of view" at all, let alone one as important as, or even more so than, that of a (lay) listener, demonstrates the absurd automatism of the serial method.

Joyce's "Wholesale Safety Pun Factory" (Ellmann, 1982, p. 590) is not as closed a system nor as functional an apparatus as serialism, but its results are as distinctive and as self-similar. Schoenbergian dodecaphonic music and Wakean language are each "unmistakeable" because the systems that produced them were precisely designed. While *Wake* language

might be crudely pastiched through a disregarding of its semantic complexity leaving only a dyslexical involution of common language, and Schoenbergian serialism can be similarly caricatured by overlooking its systematic and differently-expressive articulation, a brief analysis of the methods behind either style quickly reveals its coherence. Whether or not these methods produced – and could produce again consistently – “well-formed” outcomes can only be judged based on how closely those outcomes adhere to the given syntactic rules. Such adherence is easier to demonstrate in Schoenberg than in Joyce because Schoenberg’s “rules” are far simpler and more determinate than Joyce’s, and because Schoenberg declared and explained those rules for his listeners in a series of essays, while all we have from Joyce are his drafts, his notes, and his correspondence. Schoenberg explains clearly and concisely that, “[t]he construction of a basic set of twelve tones derives from the intention to postpone the repetition of every tone as long as possible” (Schoenberg, 1984b, p. 246). We can compare this rational explication to Joyce’s disordered conception of the future development of ‘Work in Progress’ in a 1927 letter to Harriet Shaw Weaver:

As regards that book itself and its future completion I have asked Miss Beach to get into closer relations with James Stephens. ... He is a poet and Dublin born. Of course he would never take a fraction of the time or pains I take but so much the better for him and me and possibly for the book itself. If he consented to maintain three or four points which I consider essential and I showed him the threads he could finish the design. (Ellmann, 1982, p. 591-2)

It is of course unfair to judge an excerpt from a private letter against one from a published academic text. But in exceeding “wideawake language, cutanddry grammar, and goahead plot” (Ellmann, 1982, p. 585), Joyce failed to leave a legible street map that would allow readers to retrace the course of the *Wake*’s blind nocturnal “stambuling” (33.36) into new realms of combinatory structuration. Some aspects of Joyce’s compositional approach resemble more the techniques of post-Schoenbergian composers than they do the hard-and-fast procedures of the so-called Second Viennese School. Innovators such as Karlheinz Stockhausen, György Ligeti, and Luciano Berio at once extended the twelve-tone method, and relaxed some of its strictures. As Jonathan W. Bernard writes:

Ligeti finds his particular compositional voice along that sometimes rather hazy boundary between freedom and stricture: freedom on the one hand to make up his own

rules, the obligation on the other to obey their constraints. (Bernard, 2011, p. 167).

Rosenfeld may have appreciated the – in his terms – “freedom” identified by Bernard in Ligeti’s methods, though the surface “ugliness” and “grotesque” qualities of this Hungarian Holocaust survivor’s mid-period works may have struck the former as excessive.

Such post-serialist experiments in hyper-deformative recombination could be the basis for a further study of avant-garde music’s kinship with Joyce’s prose. But here I will consider the most basic procedures of Schoenbergian serialism as they correspond along disablist lines with those underpinning *Finnegans Wake*. Even in this, however, we begin to see how, in the *Wake*, Joyce “finds his particular compositional voice along that ... hazy boundary between freedom and stricture”.

There is a risk, in comparing Wakean combinatorics to serialism, of viewing elements in Joyce’s prose as discrete that are in fact contingent. The phrase – or string – “floflo floreflorence” (360.2), for example, may be read purely visually as having a unitary and, for the *Wake*, typically stuttering structure. But, taking into equal account semantics, phonetics, and syntax, we can “seehear” (*U* 11.1002) in this fragment a highly integrated and anti-unitary formation. The normative eye may at first discern *flow-flow floor-flor-ence*. But with a heterogenising ear less subject to preimposed semantics, we can – in accord with the reading of the text-to-speech software Jaws – perceive something more like *flof-low floor-ef-lor-ence* (with stresses on *flof* and *ef*). In this anti-ocularcentric light, “floreflorence” takes on the quality of a verb-based noun such as *fluorescence* or *effluence*. This reading is perhaps supported by the phrase being preceded by an adjective (“partial”), albeit outside of the parentheses that hold “floflo floreflorence”. If we take the not incompatible perspective that this string is overwhelmingly dominated by the name Florence (as in Nightingale or “lightandgayle” (360.2)), we must then decide whether the visually distinct unit *flore* should sound as *floreh*, or *floor*. In other words, if we are to understand this as a double repetition (of *flo*, and *flore*), what is the nature of those elements? Where do they begin and end phonemically, and what are their sonic-syllabic profiles? When we say “Florence”, we tend to mute the first *e*: the *n* and *r* are drawn closer together. This understood, the *e* at the end of *flore* in this string should also be silent, giving us *floor*. So what is the function of the *e*? Is this a visuo-normative and auditively neutral gesture? Did he intend his readers to hear something like *flow-flow Flora-Florence* (emphasising the floral denotation of this girl’s and city name)?

These questions cannot be answered conclusively. But the point stands, that the units that make up this string are not discrete, and so not strictly commensurable with tonal elements in serial – or conventional – musical composition. In this way, language may be conceived of as congenitally disabled, or, more strictly, *impaired*, in a way that music (before Schoenberg and to a large degree since) has not been historically. This said, it is important to acknowledge the differently-abled combinatory system that Joyce (partially) succeeded in achieving. Nagel and Newman’s definition of “strings” as “finitely long sequences ... of meaningless marks, constructed according to rules for combining the elementary signs of the system into larger wholes” can be applied to *Finnegans Wake* through a reading method (mirroring Joyce’s writing method) of suppressing denotation and emphasising internal-semantic interrelation.

Another artist who, like Joyce, sought to breach boundaries between music and literature, John Cage, demonstrated this non-unitary distribution of meaning in language in his 1974 written work for recital, *Empty Words*. In this neither strictly musical nor strictly lingual piece, Cage employed aleatory methods (chance operations) to dismantle the journals of Henry David Thoreau at a syllabic level, semantically disabling the original words. As Dawn Akemi Sueoka writes,

Cage’s process, in the way that it systematically divides and combines units of meaning, reminds us that words themselves are configurations of interchangeable parts, assembled according to phonetic conventions. (Sueoka, 2012, np)

We have seen that this interchangeability generally applies only when phonetics, semantics, and syntax are disentangled from one another. But it is clear from Sueoka’s overall thesis that she views/hears Cage’s dismembering of Thoreau’s words as serving to bypass this law.

An example of a non-Wakeanism to which the “floflo floreflorence” principle applies is *barbarian/barbaric/barbarous*. The words in this group (derived from the Classical Greek *barbaros*, meaning ‘not Greek’ and so ‘not civilised’) scan visually as containing a repetition of *bar*. But there are, etymologically speaking, only two meaningful Anglophone components to each form, neither of which is repeated. There is the root, *barbar*, and its inflection. Moreover, across the three forms we can find up to four different pronunciations of the syllable *bar*: *bar*, *bare*, *bh*, and *bahr*; and the word is often pronounced without the second *bar* as *barbrous*. In the *Wake* Joyce gives us: “Barebarean” (71.30), “*Barbarassa*” (280.102), and (perhaps with Ham, a brother of the historical Shem, in mind) “barbarihams” (518.28). It

is speculated that *barbar* expresses the perceived stuttering nature of foreign speech from a Greek, or earlier Sanskrit, perspective. This is, however, not backed up by modern lexicographical/etymological sources. This term of “human disqualification” (Mitchell and Snyder, 2000, p. 3), in all its deformativity and dysfunctionality, shows us that nothing in language, at the micro, mid, or macro level, is truly “well-formed” or well-functioning. Such unitary mutation and malfunction was removed from Western classical music by the introduction of “functional harmony”, an artificial correction of irregularities between the various idiosyncratic scales and keys of medieval polyphony. The English language has undergone no such rationalisation or homogenisation. On the contrary, the consistency and utility of Old English grammar have “degenerated” into a modern heterogeneity and dysfunctionality.

The anti-unitary nature of (modern English) grammatical procedures is key to their limited usefulness in musical readings of written language (music itself being a system of unitary elements arranged and rearranged axiomatically). It would be simplistic to conceive of non-axiomatic language systems such as English as more “disabled” than predominantly axiomatic ones such as Italian (whose syntax allows small and larger elements always to behave in the same way). But ungainly and unruly deformativity such as that of the above permutations of *barbar*- words show English to be an ambivalent and inconsistent combinative system; and *Wake* language, try as it might to transcend this ambivalence and inconsistency, inherits these traits from English.

In the music of – broadly speaking – the *medieval* period, different keys had different “temperaments”. This meant that the “A” in one scale differed slightly in pitch from the “A” in another: there were, essentially, more than twelve notes. The “equalisation” of temperament that occurred around the time of J. S. Bach regularised “A” and indeed all of the twelve notes and, by extension, all of the intervals, chords, and scales that these notes could be combined to produce. Bach’s composition “The Well-Tempered Klavier” consists of a prelude and a fugue in each of the twenty-four keys (major and minor) of what we now know as conventional harmony. The – in subjective terms – “well-tempered” keyboard instruments for which Bach wrote these works were tuned in a way that compromised between the differing nuances of pitch in the old keys. All works, in all keys, could now be played on instruments of a single standardised temperament. Despite this, discrete seven-note keys-scales survived, often being deemed to possess unique quasi-semantic characteristics (melancholy, passion, nobility) associated with their earlier “ill-tempered” incarnations. It was partly to dissolve these “residues of past subjectivity” that the twelve-tone (serial)

method was developed, and from this development that the strange “morphemes”, “phonemes”, “phrases”, “sentences”, and “narratives” of Schoenberg and his disciples emerged.

The disordered morphology of English – amplified in *Wake* language – extends beyond the phoneme to the smallest element of language, the individual letter. Jennie Wang notes that,

In the English language, as a consequence of linguistic “miscegenations” as Joyce frequently alludes to its historical formation, the pronunciation system is highly irregular. Joyce is not only aware of such an irregularity, but he turns it [in *Finnegans Wake*] into a great advantage for his experiment. Ironically, he finds in its very irregularity an excuse for not spelling the word right; so he argues: “...If reams stood to reason and his lankalivline lasted he would wipe alley english spooker, multaphoniaksically spuking, off the face of the erse” (178[.5-7]). ... He implies that the receptivity of the ear cannot be logically explained, just as the pronunciation of the English language does not follow fixed rules (as do other languages such as the French and the Russian). (Wang, 1991, p. 215)

And viewing this augmentation of lingual disharmony even more positively, Wang writes:

Creating a text of irregular spellings, Joyce seems to assert the notion that the meaning of a written word correctly spelled is always limited because it is determined by its function within a certain linguistic hierarchy, grammatical structure, or the arbitrary assumptions of conventional meaning. A defamiliarized letter, then, may open infinite possibilities of meaning by freeing itself from the fixed rules of that hierarchy or structure or assumptions. (Wang, 1991, p. 215)

There are in the *Wake*, of course, plenty of words that are spelled “correctly” (in accordance with irregular but not “*infinite*” Anglograph morphology). Joyce’s defamiliarization of language is carried out through means other than irregular spellings: for instance ambiguous syntax and obscure semantics. But, if, as Wang suggests, “the meaning of a written word correctly spelled” is limited “by its function within a certain linguistic hierarchy”, and Joyce’s methods for exceeding this limitation give rise to “inharmonious creations” (109.23) of sound, symbol, and meaning, then we find here a similar relationship between dysfunction

and disharmony as in serialism's anti-tonic/dominant formation. Though the conventions of so-called "functional harmony" (explored below) are not as arbitrary as those of functional linguistics, and Schoenberg's strings of tones not as irregular as Joyce's spellings, both artists employ cypher-like combinatory systems in order to preclude or defer the occurrence of normative forms. Though a letter cannot in itself behave like a note (because it has no relative value akin to the values of pitches), letters may be seen to (mal)function within both conventional and Wakean syntaxes somewhat like notes within the syntaxes of diatonic and dodecaphonic musics. A variously defamiliarized given letter may, then, indeed "open infinite possibilities of meaning" just as a variously defamiliarised note – a "tonal problem" – breaches the finite limits of conventional diatonic semantics.

The Barthesian, hyper-subjective, even entropic reading that Wang offers perhaps unduly elevates infinite abstract meaning above finite concrete effect, given that it refers to a work generally built on the principle of form over content. But meaning is, as Wang's thesis correctly presumes, at best only ever deferred in language, never, as (sometimes) in music, entirely dissolved. We might see in Wakean prose, and in read language more generally, a Merleau-Pontian "intertwining" (Merleau-Ponty, 1968, p. 130) or synaesthesia – from which music is comparatively free – that precludes the possibility of strict, neat combinatorial composition or analysis.

It would be difficult to accuse Schoenberg of indulging in the musical equivalent of what Harriet Weaver perceived as Joyce's "deliberately-entangled language systems" (Ellmann, 1982, p. 590). Arguably, no compositional system in the history of art has been less entangled than serialism. How entangled or otherwise Wakean combinatorics really are is, as I have stated, made difficult to determine by the lack of a set of procedures (even as vague as "threads" or a "design") that might be followed to demonstrate the orderliness of those combinatorics. All that can be done to show the "good functioning" of Joyce's methods is to test instances of their "well" or otherwise "formed" outcomes against one another.

The "serialist" combinatorics of *FW I.2* are among the simplest and most regular of the book. Elements and strings in this chapter often behave in a semi-unitary manner akin to that of elements and strings in "Sirens", "Wandering Rocks", "Circe", and other syntactically driven episodes of *Ulysses*. The strings "nation wide hotel" (36.22) and "a nation wants a gaze" (43.21-2) in *FW I.2* resemble both visually and sonically the song title and refrain 'A Nation Once Again'. The permutation "our maypole once more" (44.4) is lexically, phonetically, and syntactically more deformed than both of these. Of the original words, only the adverb "once" here remains. But this allusion's third place in the sequence of three aids

its functionality. Whether one knows the song or not, the presence of “nation” in the first two iterations remotely confers onto “maypole” a signification regarding early twentieth-century Irish Republicanism. This signification, plus any sense that these – if not “meaningless”, then at least meaning-impaired – strings resemble other lyrical material, may then be carried forward to the third iteration.

In its transformational combinatorics this technique of Joyce’s resembles the phrasal transformations – by means of mirroring, inversion, transposition, and other procedures – that are fundamental to serialism. All such artistic procedures share a syntactic genealogy with mathematical processes such as the simultaneous equation and of course the combinatory apparatus. More directly, these methods equate to antecedent-consequential structuration in Baroque-Classical music and metrical verse, though their outcomes are often erroneously identified as diverging on a syntactic and more broadly formal level from such modes.

“[A] nation once again” is, in the original song, part of the two-line passage:

And Ireland, long a province, be
A Nation once again!

If we take the end of 36.21 and the beginning of 36.22, we find:

I have won straight. Hence my
Nonation wide hotel...
(36.21-2)

Serialism’s dysfunctionalisation of harmonic syntax rests on its deformative methods of permutation. These differ from the variations of Classical-Romantic composition, which are designed to recall a theme and to recall and/or foreshadow one another, while serial permutations are predicated on the opposite intention. This is (in most cases) not an absolute distinction however. With some technical understanding and/or repeated listening, the serial row and permutation can be heard to behave somewhat like the Classical theme and variation, developing on original material in a progressive and narrativistic manner. This ambivalence means that it is often a combination of objective understanding and subjective apprehension that leads to the keenest appreciation of this music.

I believe that Joyce's phrasal permutations operate in a similar way, both exploiting and deliberately undermining their own recognisability. In both cases the syntagm (such as it is) appears and disappears, at once emerging from, creating, and disrupting its own context.

If we perceive that, in the above excerpt, "[—] I have" bears a syntactic commensurability with "And Ireland", "won" with "long", and "Hence" with the second syllable of "province", then "Nonation wide hotel" and its relationship with "A nation once again" may find their external semantic disjuncture softened by a degree of subjective-objective syntactic rationalisation.

As regards the second permutation, the pattern of the song's two-line refrain can be found in: "wararrow went round, so it did, (a nation wants a gaze)" (43.21-2). And lastly, the "And Ireland long a province be" rhythm is supplied in the third iteration by "*silentium in curia!*" (44.4).

In the song, the lingual string "a nation once again" is set to at least three different strings of tones. These musical phrases are diatonic and not serial, and applied arbitrarily (by Thomas Osbourne Davis) to the words. But Joyce's lingual mutations (regardless of the associated melody) bear more resemblance to the permutations of subsets of a basic set than they do to variants on phrases within a scale-derived melody. The three, four, or six notes within a serial subset may be mutually incompatible (by functional-harmonic criteria), deriving a conditional affinity only from their opposition-complementarity to the remaining nine, eight or six notes in the row, which are themselves grouped into threes, fours, or one equal and opposite six. Disregarding the original 'A Nation Once Again' melody (which is not directly represented in the text), the group of lingual strings that constitute the initial altered lyric (36.21-2) could be seen to equate to a basic set in serialism. Such quasi-serialism is, admittedly, compromised by readers' prior knowledge of the original lyric; and Joyce appears deliberately to undermine the coherence of his permutations. But a similar regulated permutation of strings – or sub-sets – applies.

We may read these permutations as follows:

and Ireland long ... a province be ... a nation ... once again.

— I have won ... straight — hence my ... nonation ... wide hotel

wararrow went ... round so it did ... a nation ... wants a gaze

silentium ... in curia! ... our maypole ... once — more

It is for the very dysfunctionality of this example that I have chosen it. Just as the convolutions of serialism can render listeners insensible to the details of its intended “narrative” structures and, conversely, subjectively sensible to “narrative” turns not intended by its composer, so Joyce both complicates structuration and licences extreme subjectivity.

While the ‘A Nation Once Again’ motif appears in I.2 on three occasions and on just one other occasion (in IV.1: “Innition wons agane” (614.17)), other such song-title-derived motifs appear multiple times throughout the text. Permutations of the titular refrain from ‘The Rocky Road to Dublin’, for example, are found at least thirteen times throughout all four books of the *Wake*, including: “the quaggy waag for stumbling” (197.25-6); “royal road to Puddlin” (287.5); “the snarsty weg for Publin” (315.23-4); and “her wattle way for cubblin” (328.3). But, while some of these allusions sit within a wider phraseology suggestive of the song’s various lines ending “...the rocky road to Dublin” (for example “playing Delandy is cartage on the raglar rock to Dulynd” (64.3)), they mostly stand alone, remote from each other and from broader invocation of the song.

Joyce works on the basis of “a nation once again” and other motifs to produce, through phonemic substitutions, inter-phrasal relationships governed not by arbitrary semantic attribution, but by syntactic articulation. Many illustrations of the functionality and validity of Joyce’s uncodified combinatorial rules could be adduced. In this sense he is in the *Wake* working “per canonem” (‘to rule’). But in the present musical disablism thesis, it seems apt to draw examples of “well-formed sequences or strings” from the descriptively, allusively, and performatively sonic-aesthetic language of the radio announcement sequence of II.3. Extending the Surrealist description and enactment in *Ulysses* of key phenomena that form the sonic universe through which Leopold Bloom and Stephen Dedalus move, this sequence weaves acoustical and musical references in with lingual concretisations of phenomena analysed by those disciplines. The functionality and validity of Joyce’s method speak clearly here in the “unmistakeable” Wakeanism of the disfigured words, phrases, and, crucially, larger-scale syntax he uses to describe and enact sounds and sonic experience:

Attention! Stand at!! Ease!!! We are now diffusing among our lovers of this sequence (to you! to you!) the dewfolded song of the naughtingels (Alys! Alysaloe!) from their sheltered positions, in rosescentery haydyng, on the heather side of waldalure, Mount

Saint John's, Jinnyland, whither our allies winged by duskfoil from Mooreparque, swift sanctuary seeking, after Sunsink gang (Oiboe! Hitherzither! Almost dotty! I must dash!) to pour their peace in partial (floflo floreflorence), sweetishsad lightandgayle, twittwin twosingwoolow. (359.30-360.3)

Before considering the syntactic procedures at play in this passage, I will first briefly address some of its individual semantic ambiguities to save doing this as I go. Below is a list of constructions from the passage with each entry followed by what I perceive as its dominant meaning(s). This is, of course, subjective, and problematic given the deliberate undermining of primary denotation that is essential to the *Wake*'s overall structure.

“naughtingels”: nightingales, naughty girls

“Alys! Alysaloe!”: Alice Delysia (1930s singer and stage actress); ‘Alice, Alice, allo!’

“in rosescenery haydyng”: hiding in rose scenery; (Gioachino) Rossini, (Joseph) Haydn;

“Hey ding”, ‘It Was a Lover and His Lass’, William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, Act 5, Scene 3:

It was a lover and his lass,
With a hey and a ho and a hey nonny no,
That o'er the green corn field did pass
In the spring time,
The only pretty ring time,
When birds do sing,
Hey ding a ding ding;
Sweet lovers love the spring.

“waldalure”: woodland allure; [*Die*] *Walküre* (Wagner opera) – *The Valkuries*

“Jinnyland”: Jenny Lind (examined below)

“Oiboe! Hitherzither!”: Oboe; this zither here, hither and thither

“sweetishsad lightandgayle”: sweet, sad, light, gay Swedish Nightingale (examined below)

“twosingwoolow”: Italian *usignolo*, ‘nightingale’ (examined below)

Both the syntactic and the semantic discreteness of this passage (a complete sentence) are compromised by elements of the preceding sentence. This ends “atantivy we go!” (359.29). The defunct adjective “atantivy” is a declension of *tantivy*, meaning ‘at full gallop’. In another poetic context, *atantivy*’s alliterative and rhythmic similarity to “Attention!” might be attributed to arbitrary aesthetic figuration. But within *Wake* language, the proximal disfigurative impact of the antecedent on the consequential construction raises both grammatical and significative questions. If we take Joyce’s hint here that as well as entering a state of listening, we should also proceed at full tilt (perhaps leaving behind primary denotation), and that these two syntactic/semantic modes are not mutually exclusive, then we might hear the units *a*, and *tant/tent*, as combinators of absolute value.

Though the initial command of the sentence is, for characters and readers alike, to pay, and/or stand to, *attention*, perhaps employing Schaeffer’s mode of listening “*écouter*”, wherein sounds are heard as “indices” of “events in the world” (Kane, 2012, p. 440), it may be the mode “*entendre*” that primarily pertains here. As discussed in Chapter 1B, *entendre* is the mode of listening whereby we concentrate on sounds themselves rather than on associated significations. This is Schaeffer’s “*écouter réduite*” (reduced listening). In this mode the sound itself is “*intended*” as the object of listening: a signification may be present, but it is secondary to the intrinsic nature of the sound. There is, of course, always “a tension” between these two modes in even the most abstracted language.

The strings “dewfolded song” and “twosingwoolow” are combinatively formed in parallel from some shared key elements. These are *two/dew/deux*, *sing/song*, and the owl-like *woo/oo*. The two strings also share a connotation of crepuscular hush via *dew-folded*, and *woo low*, which link is reinforced by the *oo/oh* vowel sounds in each instance. There are clear semantic differences (the former is adjectival, while the latter includes the verb to *low* as well as those to *sing* and to *woo*), but as dyslexical sound-objects the two may be seen – in a sense – as one. This lexical involution, convolution, and devolution is carried out based on coherent combinatory techniques that can be tested against other similar mechanisms in the surrounding text. The “basic set” made up of these and other key sound-meanings is, though dysfunctional compared to the well-functioning Schoenbergian tone row, differently-abled, displaying a level of combinatory involution to which Western classical music would not aspire until the innovations of Stockhausen, Berio, Ligeti, and others in the 1960s. Composers of this generation were weaned on the twelve-tone method, and the majority retained elements of it at least in their early modes of composition. But while the “integral serialists” – led by Pierre Boulez (see Chapter 3) – added methods for the combination of

timbres, durations, dynamics, and instrumentations of notes to the original methods governing pitch, others adopted less predeterminate – though still highly systematic – approaches. These allowed for instinctive reinterpretations of serial principles and gave rise to musics that sound – and arguably are intrinsically – at once tonal and atonal, or somehow neither one nor the other.

The radio announcement episode’s short strings of dyslexical material render usually abstract (arbitrarily constituted) significations concrete (artificially constituted). Through this they initiate a potential process of musicalisation that may or may not be completed by readers. Herman’s conjunction of “well-formed” with “sequences or strings” and the “elements” that make them up – “whatever their material constitution or denotative force” – emphasises the radically syntax-led formative nature of both Schoenbergian dodecaphony and the “Sirens” episode of *Ulysses*. This highly artificial (non-arbitrary) conception of a phrase, a sentence, a chord, or a melody as, not the spontaneous result of artistic inspiration or impulse, but a unique ramification of a system, disables the often unquestioned link between aesthetic validity and “euphony”, semantic coherence and “intelligibility”.

3. “the well-formed atonal musical phrase”

The order of the [basic set] determines compositional logic by proscribing the repetition of specific tones over too short a stretch or sequence of tones. Thus the *well-formed* atonal musical phrase is marked, essentially, by its resistance to traditional procedures for paraphrasing series of tones into bars, measures, passages, and so on. (Herman, 1994, p. 480) (*my italics*)

For many, “*musical phrase*” + “*atonal*” = “*well-formed*” remains (a century on from Schoenberg’s *Opus 23*) a challenging semantic equation. How can a music designed and designated in opposition to the concordant or consonant be thought of as other than “ill-” or “mal-formed”? There is still a widespread preconception in Western culture that non-diatonic, *differently-tonal* form in music is no form. The concept of a *well-formed dyslexical literary phrase* (as realised in *Finnegans Wake*) may be easier to grasp, since most of us are more confident as linguists than as musicians, and can mentally arrange and rearrange elements of language more proficiently than we could the twelve tones of the chromatic series. Atonal – or differently-tonal – composition is often perceived as a deliberate

disfiguring of something beloved, or as an abortive attempt at creating a well-formed entity from defective genetic material.

The notion – and it *is* arguably merely a *notion* – that any work of music can be truly “atonal” did not begin in the twentieth century. A certain atonality is clearly intended in the opening of W. A. Mozart’s *String Quartet K465* (“*Dissonance*”) and at the start of Joseph Haydn’s oratorio *The Creation* (with its wandering key signature representative of primeval chaos). And Franz Liszt’s *Mephisto Waltz S216a* carries the subtitle “*Bagatelle without tonality*”. But none of these works truly disables tonality, or, to give it a more specific name, key. There is in each case a viable key signature at play, however suspended or convoluted it may be.

In *Modernism and Music...* Daniel Albright cites an oft invoked, variously attributed review of Schoenberg’s early great work *Verklärte Nacht* (*Transfigured Night*), asserting that it sounded “as if someone had smeared the score of [*Tristan and Isolde*] while it was still wet”. Albright hears this as “a clever description” of the “*art nouveau* way in which Schoenberg’s melodies seem to curl themselves in continuous tendrils, instead of pausing on harmonically significant notes” (Albright, 2004, p. 7). But it is hard to dismiss the normative trope of cultural disfiguration that lies behind the cited remark. Only forty years on from Wagner’s *Tristan and Isolde*, the young Schoenberg was perceived in some quarters as having bastardised a tonal “language” that was itself still heard as radical and as pushing the bounds of intelligibility. At this point Schoenberg, a devotee of Richard Strauss and a fervent admirer of both Wagner and Brahms, had yet to break away from his beloved Romanticism. Though highly chromatic, *Verklärte Nacht* preceded “atonalism” by several years, and dodecaphony by a quarter of a century.

While all of this suggests that aesthetic (un)intelligibility is largely a function of historical context, this does not require that *Finnegans Wake*, *Verklärte Nacht*, *Ulysses*, or the *Opus 23* be universally appreciated as “good” art. But from a detached, retrospective point of view, each should, I argue, be understood as compositionally coherent and structurally harmonious.

It is telling that tonic-dominant, seven-note harmony has traditionally been designated as “functional harmony”. The Western classical understanding that artful manifestations of this homogenising set of principles must be heard as intrinsically both “well-formed” and “well-functioning” has clear able-normative implications. The “malformed”, “malfunctioning” artwork can be held meta-textually to represent the dysgenic, dysfunctional body. This representation can be performative as in cases (cited by Joseph Straus) of composers who

have enacted bodily impairment in their works through programmatic means. It can also be imposed upon compositions through critical assessments that deem them incoherent or disharmonious, as seen in Rosenfeld above.

Principles of good musical form based on a functional-harmonic understanding were led in the Classical-Romantic period by a linear, melodic, horizontal view of musical aesthetics. During the Renaissance, normative musical beauty had been defined primarily on contrapuntal, polyphonic, vertical grounds. Composers employing the then fairly new diatonic harmony – which, despite Schoenberg’s efforts, still dominates Western musical aesthetics today – sought “something comparable with the laws of perspective in visual art” (Griffiths, 2004, p. 660). By the time diatonicism was fully established, melody had begun to emerge as primary in what would retrospectively be conceived of as “classical music”. This shift can be traced through the development of the concerto and the sonata. The Baroque concerto grosso and trio sonata – notably those by Arcangelo Corelli – upheld the primacy of ensemble writing and the prominent role of melody/counter-melody interaction. The increasing preference in subsequent generations for sonatas for keyboard plus one solo instrument is epitomised by J. S. Bach’s sonatas for harpsichord plus viola da gamba, cello, or violin. An equivalent tendency can be identified in the same composer’s concertos for solo instrument and orchestra. By the mid eighteenth century the violin in particular, but also the cello and some wind instruments, had begun to stand – in the sonata and concerto – as though apart from the accompaniment and outside of the orchestra, guiding the formal unfolding of the piece with a single, articulated, linear voice. Despite a revival of instrumental polyphony with the development of the string quartet during the enlightenment period, this melodic hegemony increased and reached its apogee with the violin concertos of Mendelssohn, Bruch, Elgar, and others in the nineteenth century.

In the first half of the twentieth century, we find in twelve-tone composition and the dense harmonic textures of jazz a radical, and some might feel *regressive*, reassertion of the vertical in tonal aesthetics. This was augmented by a displacement of conventional tonal centres – principally the tonic and dominant – which had rendered other compositional fundamentals secondary or peripheral. As Julian Johnson conceives, modernist musics “reformulate the idea of musical space and challenge the orderings of classical syntax and form that defined a normative sense of musical space for well over two centuries” (Johnson, 2015, p. 8).

This vertical (re)turn is often perceived as having begun with – or occurred in response to – Richard Wagner’s highly chromatic leitmotivic writing and the harmonically ambiguous

dramatic effects he employed it to achieve. In his later operas Wagner intended that the leitmotif should fully encompass a character or narrative theme to intensely emotionally stimulating affect. “[C]oined by Hans von Wolzogen for specific application to the music of Wagner” (Hart, 1962, p. 164), the term *leitmotif* (‘leading motif’) describes a musical device with its roots in earlier Romantic opera: such as works by Carl Maria von Weber and Hector Berlioz, earlier operas by G. F. Handel, Jean-Philippe Rameau and others, and as far back as the earliest true operas by Claudio Monteverdi. Moreover, as Clive Hart observes,

... Homeric epithets and formulae, the refrains and burdens in folk poetry and prayer are direct ancestors of the leitmoti[f].... The quasi-ritualistic repetition of key-phrases in narrative goes back even further, beyond the origins of writing. (Hart, 1962, p. 164)

While it might seem more logical to situate Joyce in this literary tradition rather than in the musical one, a clear link of influence can – as Timothy Martin and others have outlined – be shown from Wagner to Joyce.

Raymond Furness conceives of the Wagnerian leitmotif as capable “of compressing into a few bars the most profound emotional and psychological experience” (Furness, 1982, p. 7). I would go further and point out that many Wagnerian leitmotifs – such as Siegfried’s horn call of one bar’s length in the *Ring* cycle, or the so-called “Tristan chord” in *Tristan and Isolde*, which at points sounds for only one beat – have durations far shorter than a few bars, the phrasal elements in this second case sounding as though stacked up one on top of the other. A testament to this last example’s crucial influence on modernism is found in Joyce’s contemporary Alban Berg’s quoting of the Tristan cadence in his early dodecaphonic composition the *Lyric Suite*. In this work’s sixth and final movement (*Largo Desolato*) Berg lifts Wagner’s strange anti-cadential cadence almost verbatim from the opera, deftly weaving it into the string quartet’s serial texture. The *arrested development* of the Tristan motif, and of the vast work of which it is part, would be taken to the nth degree by Berg’s colleague Anton Webern in his highly condensed serial miniatures.

One of many Joycean equivalents to such (post)Wagnerian condensations is found in “Sirens” in the various intercombinations of the elements “Bronze” and “Gold” to signify two bartenders, one with “bronze” and one with “gold” hair, which see their identities intermingled with those of other characters, objects, events, phenomena, and stimuli. The Christian names of these two figures may suggest their quasi-harmonic values within the silent soundworld of “Sirens”. “Bronzelydia by Minagold” (*U* 11.48) might equate the bronzy

persona of Lydia Douce with the Lydian mode, and the golden character of Mina Kennedy with the minor – or Aeolian – mode. A combination of these two modes played in the same key would create a highly chromatic eleven-tone row (twelve including the octave) with both a major and a minor third, both a regular and an augmented fourth, both a major and a minor sixth, and both a major and a minor seventh. In this (a)tonal landscape, majorness and minorness would be highly entangled, creating either tonal chaos or a serialist order built upon the jagged topography of a hendecaphonic basic set. Alternatively, if Miss Kennedy’s Aeolian was in A, but Miss Douce’s Lydian was in F, the two sets of tones – over several octaves – would be the same: the white keys of a piano played with an A root note and an F root note respectively.

Otto Luening states in his autobiography that,

At that time [1919] I was just beginning to be interested in acoustic relationships, the relationship of a fundamental tone to its partials. This too interested Joyce a great deal, particularly when I pointed out that the third partial of the note C was G and the fifth partial was E and that I saw no reason why polytonal passages in which the music was played in C major, G major, and E major at the same time were not only logical but were rooted in natural relationships in the harmonic series. (Luening, 1980, p. 197)

As Jonathan McCreedy notes,

Luening hypothesises that if he wrote a poly-tonal musical work in the three simultaneous keys, C major, G major, and E major, the structure of the piece would be built on natural harmonic relationships. It is clear from Luening’s statement that Joyce fully understood the ... specific music theory, and that it intrigued him a great deal. (McCreedy, 2008, p. 23)

The “natural” *nature* of these relationships has been compromised historically by various moves to artificially regulate the interrelation of the twelve notes of the chromatic series. The so-called “well-tempered” keyboard instruments that emerged in the decades leading up to Bach’s composition of his “Well-tempered Klavier” set an artificial and prospectively normative standard that still abides today. Setting aside Luening’s implied conception that this subjectively “tempered” modern rationalisation of the naturally distempered harmonic series is itself somehow *natural*, he is correct: there is indeed no sonic-aesthetic reason not to

compose in two or more *well-tempered* keys at once (this would not have worked under older but no less valid paradigms such as “mean tone”). Indeed, this practice is found in both classical music and jazz throughout the twentieth century. A potential (conservative) musico-cultural reason not to compose in two or more keys at once might be that the resulting musics could be experienced by unprepared listeners as incoherent or illegible. The (in)comprehensibility of particular kinds of artworks, and of certain kinds of persons, is, as proposed in Chapter 1B (McRuer, 2006), largely constructed based on normative cultural paradigms.

The fracturing of aesthetic, identity-based, and moral certainties enabled within Wagner’s late narratives is strongly reflected in those of *Ulysses* and the *Wake*. Zack Bowen conceives of Joyce’s literary *transfunctionalisations* of the Wagnerian leitmotif as “repeated metonymical phrases” (Bowen, 1975, p. 248). These paranomental strings stand in for characters in the initial paradigm of “Sirens”, their significations then undergoing a series of mutations in the unfolding syntagm of the episode.

In “Bronze by gold heard the hoofirons, steelyringing” (*U* 11.1), the metals bronze and gold morph into the conjoined metonym of two young women. “Sparkling bronze azure eyed Blazure’s skyblue bow and eyes” (*U* 11.394) recalls the differently-aesthetic Hellenic impression of the clear sunny sky as bronze-like rather than blue. Blazes Boylan usurps Miss Douce’s half of the bronze-gold motif in a conflation of bronze and azure as a descriptor of his brilliant eyes. This sort of intertwined double-pairing (here of shining bronze and blue, shining hair and eyes) is a specific, if defective, combinatory apparatus conceived for “Sirens” and developed throughout *Finnegans Wake*. In “deep bronze laughter” (*U* 11.147) “bronze” becomes synonymous with the sonicity of Lydia Douce. And with “they urged each each to peal after peal, ringing in changes, bronzegold, goldbronze” (*U* 11.175), Joyce perhaps hints (through an invocation of campanological counterpoint) at something of the uncanny quasi-musical nature of his combinative permutations. In bell ringing, tones sound together, but are never struck together. This may be an analogy for Joyce’s counterpositioning of words/sounds/ideas that might then ring together in the minds of readers.

Far more compacted and “verticalized” intercombinations of primary with secondary and tertiary meanings can be heard in *Finnegans Wake*. Indeed, what might be thought of as peripheral denotative “overtones” (akin to remote partials of the harmonic series) often ring jarringly true. Both “naughtingels” and “lightandgayle” (discussed in the previous section of this chapter) may seem at first to be dominated by the metrically and poetically arresting but

normative ‘nightingale’; but the deformative adjectives ‘naughty’, ‘light’, and ‘gay’, and the semantically dissonant nouns ‘girls/angels’, and ‘gael’, together offer a complementary but opposing signification. The final syllable of *nightingale* is etymologically intriguing. The English word *gale* is related to the Norwegian *galen* meaning ‘bad’ or ‘bewitching’ (applied to winds), which is in turn derived from the Old Norse verb *gala*, ‘to sing, bewitch, enchant’. Also, in ancient Greek, we find *galena* meaning ‘a calm condition of wind and waves’ or ‘calmness’ more generally. The disfunctional sense in this etymology that a song may be either calming, arousing, or both, has evident significance throughout Joyce’s canon (not least in *the Sirens’ song*) and is a crucial notion in *Finnegans Wake*. The Old English origin of *nightingale* is *nihtegala*, and this is related to the German *nachtigall* (‘night’ plus ‘song/sing’). Ideas of *night*, *nought*, *nothingness*, *naughtiness*, etc. are pre-combined in the first part of “naughtingels”, and those of *enchantment*, *arousal*, *Gaelicness*, *singing*, come together in the second.

In the Anna Livia Plurabelle sequence of I.8 we see “fingalls and dotthergills” (215.14). These two (im)proper nouns closely resemble the surnames Fingal and (slightly less so) Fothergil. This (de)formation – proximate in the text to “Who were Shem and Shaun the living sons or daughters of?” (216.1-2) – uses combinatorial techniques to impute meaning where the “denotative force” of individual elements is weak(ened). Corresponding to the *naughting-* of “naughtingels”, *dotther-* approximates the Germanic *dochter* and Swedish *dotter* (‘daughter’). It is affixed to *-gills* (girls) and paired with “Fingalls”, which is formed of the boys’ name *Finn* and yet another variant of *gayles*, *gales* etc. We also have the surname Fingal, and the River Fingel appears (in this slightly altered form) as part of the river cluster in this sequence. *Gall* and *Gael* are Old Norse for ‘foreigner’ and Irish for ‘native’ respectively, and *gall* carries the meanings ‘bitter substance’ and ‘to offend’. In Scots dialect a *gill* is a ‘glen’ or a ‘brook’, the latter aligning it with “bach” (213.17) (German ‘brook’) and with all of the invocations of rivers in this passage. Last but not least, “fingalls” bears more than a passing resemblance to “Finnegans”, casting an interesting light on the many plural, often dactylic, forms with a last syllable beginning with *g* here, in II.3, and in the text as a whole. We may see here that the *Wake* might, in fact, as much draw attention to the congenital disability and dysmorphia of (the English) language as it exacerbates it. We go here, analogously speaking, beyond Herman’s “atonality” and Luening’s “polytonality”, to the post-serial realm of microtonality, in all its shimmering semantic saturation and obscurity.

In mathematical combinatorics, a *combinator* (a distinct but in itself meaningless unit) only acquires meaning through combination with other units. In the *Wake* – and in language generally (unlike in its better-functioning cousin music) – combinators often come pre-burdened with (multiguous) meaning. I am here concerned primarily with what I will call *first order denotation*, as opposed to *second order denotation* (or connotation), which depends on specific subtextual or geno-textual preknowledge. It should be noted nonetheless that the conjunction of ‘singing’ with ‘naughty girl’ occurs first in Joyce’s oeuvre in *Dubliners*. Witen notes that,

in “The Boarding House,” music transforms the home from boarding to bawdy house on Sunday nights: “The musichall artistes would oblige; and Sheridan played waltzes and polkas and vamped accompaniments. Polly Mooney, the Madam’s daughter, would also sing I’m a naughty girl”. (*D* 57) (Witen, 2018, p. 93)

The perceived social and moral risks for women in public singing, the sense that the singing woman is “naughty” or deviant by type (one who mixes too much with men and has too much freedom), blends here with an allusion to the “morally corrupted” young female figure in late-nineteenth/early-twentieth-century opera. Witen writes: “Polly is singing about being a “naughty girl,” foreshadowing her later naughty behavior when she unwittingly reenacts the candle-lighting scene from *La Bohème* and reveals similar bohemian morals.” (Witen, 2018, p. 99).

The act that the “naughtingels” are engaged in is perhaps “naughty” and “a song” in dyslexical synaesthetic ways not obvious from the immediate context. We may reasonably associate these weird hybrid creatures with “Stella” and “Vanessa” (7.4). On this basis, their song may be spied upon audio-visually as a very bodily sort of outdoor atonal “chamber music ... Tinkling ... Diddleiddle addleaddle ooddleooddle” (*U* 11.979-985). Speaking of HCE’s alleged peccadillo (shared with Leopold Bloom) for watching / listening to female urination, Alan Shockley observes that,

...the two young girls seem to be Earwicker’s own daughter, replicated mirror-fashion, just as her brothers reflect each other (and just as each son presents half of the image of his father). (Shockley, 2009, p. 102)

Taking into account the three soldiers who watch HCE watching the two girls, William Tindall adopts a slightly different perspective:

These girls and soldiers, who reappear throughout the *Wake*, seem to be Earwicker's family, Anna, Isabel, Shem, Shaun, and Earwicker himself (271.5-6 encourages this hypothesis). The soldiers ("upjock and hockums," [7.35], or Up Guards, and at 'em), lurking in the "ombushes" at the "bagsides of the fort," are farting ("tarabom"), but the girls are making water. A pretty picture — like something by Renoir: "the charming waterloose country and two quitewhite villagettes who hear show of themselves so gigglesomes minxt [*mingo* is Latin for piss] the follyages, the prettilees" (8.2-4). (Tindall, 1969, p. 36)

The Wakean contraction "minxt", with its past-tense sound, is closer to *minxit* ('she urinated') than to the root *mingo*. Tindall, in noting the "pretty picture" the five made, is inattentive to the musical-theatrical ensemble piece ("hear show") they were performing. "[O]mbushes" suggests – as well as 'ambushers' – the urethral and anal *embouchures* (so to speak) of the young women and the soldiers respectively as they pipe their little tunes. This recalls Leopold Bloom's "all of a soft sudden wee little wee little pipy wind. / Pwee! A wee little wind piped eeee. In Bloom's little wee." (*U* 11.1201-3). The "waterloose" *glissandi* produced by Stella and Vanessa are perhaps interchangeable with the song of Issy (and Anna Livia, or another).

Such intertextualities abound in *Finnegans Wake*, and could be drawn out from dyslexical, verticalised words and phrases on almost every page of the text. But I will here concentrate on the first order denotations of the radio announcement sequence.

Though Issy "sings" in a dual mode ("dewfolded song"), dividing herself in two and then subdividing again and again to re-conjoin in rational but irrational-seeming compound-mirrorings ("multimirror" (582.20)), her singular, or "-singwoolow", core is maintained. Shem and Shaun's duality, meanwhile, is verbal and written, a unity of dialogic disjuncture. The indicators "Shem" and "Shaun", which are intertwined with one another throughout the narrative, also, in an epitome of Wakean leitmotivic syntaxis, occupy the same point in the syntagm as a series of other sound-meanings. The below quotation from II.3 (another complete sentence) both describes and enacts Wakean musical and combinatorial principles. It continues from where my last quotation left off:

Let everie sound of a pitch keep still in resonance, jemcrow, jackdaw, prime and secund
with their terce that whoe betwides them, now full theorbe, now dulcifairst, and when we
press of pedal (sof!) pick out and vowelise your name. (360.3-6)

It is clear that “sound[s] of a pitch” (pitched sounds, tones) are central both to Joyce’s body of work and to this thesis. The radio announcer’s attempt to summon in the abstract all pitched sounds (neither he/she nor the author has the power to do so concretely) is inverted in the suggestion of a piano (a material object for producing tones) being made to emit phonemic timbres (“pick out and vowelize your name”). As regards pitch, and (a)tonal phraseology, the concepts of “prime”, “secund”, and “terce” suggest many second order denotations. They could represent the three notes of the major/minor triad (root, third, and fifth) or the tonic, dominant, and subdominant on which functional harmony, and by extension classical linear melodic, are based. Taken as a pair, the phrases “everie sound” and “keep still” express the sonic-self-analytic nature of this excerpt. In particular, “everie” enacts its own meaning by speaking its syllables one at a time through a divergent spelling.

The hyper-abled idea of absolute audition of some kind is also found in I.8 in “To hear it all, aviary word” (206.20). Notions of some sort of musico-lingual totality – a post-Wagnerian total sonic-semantic art – are reflected in Joyce criticism. Anthony Burgess spoke of Joyce playing “the phonemic inventory” (Burgess, 1983, p. 135); and Ernst R. Curtius stated that, “[i]n order to really understand *Ulysses*, we would have to be conscious of every sentence in the work — a task which is almost impossible” (Curtius, 1929, p. 469). Even “almost impossible” feels like an underestimation of such a superhuman act of reading. It is a key argument of this thesis that parts of *Ulysses* and most of *Finnegans Wake* disable all of us as their readers. These texts are, in a real sense, “impossible” to read, or can be read only in a disablist (differently-literate) way.

The *Wake* is certainly an allusive and representational “aviary”: akin in this regard to the composer Olivier Messiaen’s avian masterworks *Catalogue d’Oiseaux* (1956-8) and *Réveil des oiseaux* (1953). These literally *extra-ordinary* works take representational music to an anti-musical extreme, transcribing the atonal phrases of birds into differently-tonal arrangements of the twelve notes of the chromatic series. Where Messiaen pushes – and arguably breaches – the bounds of music, Joyce places “aviary word” under disabling extra-lingual stress.

The suggestion that sounds, words, or meanings might ever “keep still” in *Finnegans Wake* might be a joke with the reader on the understanding that the book’s words are at once

fixed on its pages, and constantly made to resonate and oscillate by their irregular temperament and tonal desiccation (akin to those of gramophone or wireless reproduction). The con/dissonance between the phrases “sound of a pitch” and *son of a bitch* forms a strong instance in the *Wake* of denotative simultaneity approximating sonic simultaneity. The dynamic between *sound* (a phenomenon) and *pitch* (a principle), and *son* (a male offspring) and *bitch* (a misogynistic notion of woman/motherhood), helps to make the former ring, or buzz, not only with the latter’s meaning, but with its sounds. And with “everie” rendering the former – and by association the latter – plural, we have more than one *son/sound* belonging to a single *mother/pitch*. Shem and Shaun and Anna Livia (perhaps) are to each other as partials are to the fundamental note (as in Luening’s conception of polytonality).

Finally, we find here two of the multitude of magically transfigured musical instruments that populate *Finnegans Wake* (see Chapter 4). These are cousins of the theorbo (“full theorbe”) and the dulcimer (“dulcifair”). The theorbo is a plucked stringed instrument of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that generally provided a continuo line in vocal and chamber music and coloured the lighter, sparser orchestral textures of the time. It is deformed – but highly functional – in having two necks, one with low bass strings allowing it to produce a wide range of tones and timbres. *Théorbe* is the French source of “theorbo” from Italian *Téorbe* (meaning unknown). The Orbe (the ‘filthy Orbe’ perhaps) is a river in France, part of a cluster of rivers alluded to in I.8 (214.6). The dulcimer is a hammer-struck stringed instrument (related to the cymbalon and the zither) that is associated with central European folk music. The “zither” appears in the same sequence: “whither our allies winged by duskfoil ... Oiboe! Hitherzither! ... to pour their peace in partial (floflo floreflorence)”. The phrase “full theorbe” recalls “Full tup. Full throb” (*U* 11.25) from “Sirens”. “[T]hrob” also appears with “Tup” (alongside “flow”, “music”, and “pour”) in that episode:

Flood of warm jamjam lickitup secretness flowed to flow in music out, in desire, dark to lick flow invading. Tipping her tepping her tapping her topping her. Tup. Pores to dilate dilating. Tup. The joy the feel the warm the. Tup. To pour o’er sluices pouring gushes. Flood, gush, flow, joygush, tupthrob. Now! Language of love. (*U* 11.705-9)

Like these examples of orderly Wakean dissonance, the “well-formed atonal musical phrase” employs the recombination of (musical) fundamentals to create extraordinary new sounds that nonetheless speak of their own systematic arrangement. With their serialist innovations, Schoenberg and Webern took the compression of linear material into vertical structures to

what are often heard as extreme (destructive) extents. But close listening to their most important works (produced between Schoenberg's introduction of the tone row in 1923 and the start of the Second World War) finds them in sympathy with the more distilled moments in Wagner's later operas. Similarly, Joyce's roughly contemporaneous localised compressions of sound and meaning in 'Work in Progress', while often showing the mark of their involvement in a greater narrative whole, frequently display a chamber-musical sonic poetics of well-formed dyslexical literary phrases. What might be thought of as the *Wake*'s grand tutti – such as its long self-confounding sentences and the ten “thunder words” – are contrasted with intimate passages including within the radio announcement sequence. Bearing in mind Herman's acknowledgement of “the well-formed atonal musical phrase”, we find in both Schoenbergian/Weberian serialism and Joycean combinatorics a desire – perhaps particular to the inter-War period – to condense (and contort) the grand and the operatic into small individual phrases and gestures. Again apparently perceiving in Schoenberg a move away from outdoorsy Wagnerian vigour and eugeny, Rosenfeld wrote in 1920 that, “[l]ike so much of Brahms, this music comes out of the silence of the study”. And then – in an essay strangely peppered with moments of Jewish self-ambivalence – he qualifies, “...though the study in this case is the chamber of a Jewish scholar more than that of a German” (Rosenfeld, 2016, pp. 84-5). Although the “music in” *Finnegans Wake* begins in earnest in the open air, rowdy and public with the “whackfolthediddlers” (42.1), it often subsequently resounds within four homely or communitarian walls, singing and instrumental voices seeping out of domestic or small community spaces in which amateur music making, gramophone and wireless listening, might take place. Hence in II.1 we hear “Mummmum” (259.10), in II.2 “hush! Bide in your hush, do!” (305.25), and in II.3 “Sooftly, anni slavey” (333.4-5) and “A mum” (360.7-13).

While Webern retreated from the often normative cultural space of the concert hall early in the century to focus on introverted groupings of instrumental and singing voices, neither Schoenberg nor Joyce ever lost the compulsion toward Wagnerian gigantism. While Schoenberg's early twelve-tone chamber music and Joyce's early poems published under the title *Chamber Music* are (a)tonally and phrasally focussed, owing something to Brahms and Yeats respectively, Schoenberg's mega-serialist operas and Joyce's late grandiose prose works are Wagnerian and Homeric in their epic scale and scope.

Schoenberg expanded his initially localised search for the “well-formed atonal musical phrase” to works for full orchestral (and vocal) forces. These included two operas post-1923, the second of which (*Moses and Aaron*) was on a vast scale with – again following Wagner –

a self-penned libretto. But the differently-tonal phrase was first and foremost a creature of small interior spaces. In Webern's case, it seems as though the studio, the study, and the drawing-room were the only settings restrictive enough to contain the composer's starkly intimate, minimally scored, and brief formal distillations, some full works having a duration of well under five minutes with each movement lasting as little as twenty seconds. These movements may be heard as in themselves little more than phrases or motifs. Whether this concision causes them to be heard as exquisitely "well-formed", as stunted or stillborn, or both, is a subjective matter. That they are "atonal" appears undoubted. Precisely what "atonal" means – beyond 'not like the traditionally tonal' – is, as Herman's self correction "differently tonal" indicates, and as shown by the Mozart, Haydn, and Liszt examples above, less clear cut.

A disablist appropriation of "well-formed" and "atonal" might solve this problem. In this, we may say that a musical or literary phrase can be at once well-formed and deformed, atonal and tonal, lexical and dyslexical. The melancholic incomplete-complete state in which Webern's works of restricted growth are born is in distinct contrast to the elephantine overall condition of the *Wake*. Where Webern's works may be heard as half-formed and aesthetically incapacitated, Joyce's appear as hyperthyroidic, over-capacious, and over-capable. But *Finnegans Wake* can be read as made up of a galaxy of tiny chamber moments: "It darkles, (tinct, tint) all this our funnaminal world" (244.13). In this, little sonic-semantic vignettes, virtuosic studies of individual words and ideas, make the incomplete complete or express the incompleteness of the apparently complete. The close of the ALP section of I.8, for instance, has a relatively sparse, enervated, melancholic texture and a less turbulent flow than other passages, seeming to offer a pause – or, at least, a moment to breathe – between its meticulous thematic condensations. Its disjunctive iambic measures are like mirrored and inverted sections of a dismantled melody:

I feel as old as yonder elm. A tale told of Shaun or Shem? All Livia's daughtersons. Dark hawks hear us. Night! Night! My ho head halls. I feel as heavy as yonder stone. Tell me of John or Shaun? Who were Shem and Shaun the living sons or daughters of? Night now! Tell me, tell me, tell me, elm! Night night! Telmetale of stem or stone. Beside the rivering waters of, hitherandthithering waters of. Night! (215.34-216.5)

Though in II.3 (as throughout the *Wake*) many duologic character motifs emerge, the principal identity dialogues remain those involving – or conducted through the personas of –

Shem and Shaun. In the radio announcement sequence, the twins appear as “jemcrow, jackdaw: prime and secund with their terce”. Here *Shem* borrows the *j* from its relative *James* to become *jem-* (an Anglicisation of the Turkish Cem), and *Shaun* morphs with a variant of its alternative form *John* to become *jack-*.

Again, while my interest here is in text more than subtext, indication over association, the behavioural traits that we attribute anthropocentrically to the cousins known as crow and jackdaw are impossible to ignore. Corvids are viewed as darkly gregarious, gathering in parliaments, convening sinister meetings at which they do not sing, but talk. This tuneless, atonally phrasal talk is also meaningless in the wild, but jackdaws in particular can be tamed and taught to “speak” human language. In “Circe” Joyce employs the word “jackdaw” to designate a hack journalist, a person who hears and repeats – and perhaps distorts – language and ideas rather than necessarily generating them, or even understanding them: “this bally pressman johnny, this jackdaw of Rheims, who has not even been to a university” (*U* 15.837-9). Shaun the Post is perhaps a “jackdaw of Rheims” (or reams): a circulator of truths, lies and halftruths that jar like tonal problems, a stoker of gossip, an untutored but shrewd transferor of subverted knowledge and prejudice. In I.8, the washerwoman entreats: “Dark hawks hear us ... Tell me of John or Shaun?” (215.36-216.1). The partial concordance of “Dark hawks” with “jackdaw” invokes here perhaps a dual form of Shaun, or Shaun-and-Shem dominated by Shaun. The “Dark hawks” are asked to “tell”, or tell tails, because “every telling has a taling” (213.12).

The construction “jemcrow, jackdaw” is a sort of dual narrative leitmotif, indicating but, typically for Wakean meta-nominativity, not directly signifying, Shem and Shaun. Bearing in mind Herman’s suggestion of syntax as the key principle in the commensurability of literature and music, Joyce’s decision to write “jemcrow, jackdaw”, and not *jemcrow and jackdaw*, may be noteworthy. As with “bronze” and “gold” (which are also never directly linked – or divided – by the conjunction *and*), structuration and adherence to unstated combinatorial rules are here prioritised over received functional semantics, thus generating a well-formed dyslexical literary phrase.

In the *Wake* there is a move away from the sort of strict unitary syntactic system we find in “Sirens” and elsewhere in *Ulysses*. The sheer repetition in “Sirens” of such combinatorials as *bronze, gold, Pat, Tap, jingle, clock, f/Flower, rose* (*U* 11.1, 1, 30, 50, 15, 16, 103, 8) ensures that, when these are combined and recombined (even in slightly modified forms to accommodate one another), their (dys)function remains the same or similar. In “Sirens”, such a move as the omission of a conjunction where one would usually be might be dictated by a

preconceived paradigm or predetermined technique. In *Finnegans Wake*, we find a more improvisatory “vertical” composition, although, as I have shown, we also see many set pieces (divergent from their own underlying structure though they may be).

The questioning/answering pair of chord-like significative structures constituted of *crow*, *Jim Crow*, and *Shem, Jack, jackdaw*, and *Shaun*, forms a cadential phrase akin to both the Wagnerian double leitmotif and its serialist condensation. In “jemcrow, jackdaw”, a linked pair of characters, or characteristic themes, is iterated – but also coloured – through the interposition of several proximate, and so mutually dissonant, secondary meanings. In a distillation of this avian articulation, the phrasal *toowit, toowoo* of male-female owl communication is twice invoked in this sequence: in “to you! to you!” and “twittwin”. Typically for the *Wake*, “twittwin” is lexically compromised by its context. The following construction, “twosingwoolow” (associated with Issy), borrows *twittwin*’s ‘to wit, to win’ metamorphology to create the feminine ‘to woo’ (*double o* is associated in the *Wake* with female genitalia). The consequence of this familial cross-fertilisation is both a double duality (Shem and Shaun plus the dual Issy) and a twofold threeness (*twit twin two* and *sing woo low*).

As a duo of individuals seeming to speak with one voice, the male and female owl fit well into the *Wake*’s poetics of opposition-complementarity. The combinatorics Joyce employs to distribute the twins throughout the narrative, but also to obscure, deform, and leitmotificise their identity/ies, echo the unifying/bifurcating techniques applied to the dysfunctional nocturnal lovers Tristan and Isolde in Wagner’s opera, or to Pelléas and Mélisande in Claude Debussy’s psychoactive psychodrama of the night.

The above-cited “dewfolded song of the naughtingels” disintegrates along similar lines. This “song” is both *enfolded in dew* (nocturnal) and *twofold* (a duet). Just as “naughtingels” is prefigured in “The Boarding House”, “dewfolded” has a pre-echo in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*:

He listened to their cries: like the squeak of mice behind the wainscot: a shrill twofold note. But the notes were long and shrill and whirring, unlike the cry of vermin, falling a third or a fourth and trilled as the flying beaks clove the air. (*P* 216)

Issy – who is perhaps the “terce” to Shem and Shaun’s “prime and secund” – is associated with the Isolde of medieval myth and of Wagner’s opera. The permutation of her name/character and its conjoinment and co-dependency with other words/subjects help to

make her more than singular or individual. She is in herself as manifold as is the pairing of Shem and Shaun. Through the nightingale, Issy is able in this sequence to draw Jenny Lind (the nineteenth-century soprano known as the Swedish Nightingale) into her plural personality. Issy is, via a remote connection between “naughtingels” and “sweetishsad lightandgayle”, at once sweet, Swedish, and sad, light, Gaelic, and gay. Here we find a further pairing focussed on Issy but drawing in other characters and real individuals. Jenny and Alice are both singers like the singers who provide the “dewfolded” song of Stella and Vanessa, or of the dual Issy. Such leitmotivic play with metaphor, character, tone, and timbre within individual words may constitute a vertical compositional technique defiant of the impossibility of vertical reading.

It is worth noting that while the nightingale’s call tends to be heard as highly melodic and lyrical, it is in fact both atonal and rhythmically irregular. The prolonged calls of songbirds are, nevertheless, “formed” (progressively and exponentially constituted in time and space). Whether they are “well” formed is, just as in the cases of the well-formed atonal and Wakean phrase, a subjective judgement. This said, atonalism and Wakeanism are artistic categories incommensurate with scientific classifications of animal vocalisation. I draw this comparison, not to equate *Wake* language or dodecaphony with bird song, but simply to emphasise the difficulty of identifying “good form” in modernisms both musical and literary.

4. “well-formed musical structures in general”

Staying with the question of artistic competence (exhibited in human music but absent from animal vocalisation), Joyce’s competence as an author has sometimes been drawn into question. This may be due in part, in the case of the *Wake*, to the highly combinatorial, anti-teleological nature of his prose. Since, in *Finnegans Wake*, combinatorics exert an unusually great influence over the syntagm (the signification of individual words being subordinated to principles of rearrangement), it is reasonable to conduct an analysis of the book’s form on this basis. It is, however, important to take into account the various conventional stylistic modes – or, as it were, echoes of those modes – that Joyce incorporates into the combinative whole, and the “general” sense of overall well-formedness this helps to sustain.

Herman’s fourth use of “well-formed” comes in “well-formed musical structures in general” (Herman, 1994, p. 482). Joyce’s structures in *Finnegans Wake*, dyslexical though they are, can be shown to be “well-formed” in a “general” sense, defying charges of artistic incompetence. The sort of deep analysis of *Finnegans Wake* that might reveal it as coherently

conceived would involve codifying the method underlying its superficial disorder. Herman writes of serialism:

Since deviation from the rules of the twelve-tone system may be defined precisely as conformity to the rules for traditional (or “tonal”) methods of composition, competence in modern music presupposes mastery of both sets of rules. By contrast, traditional music suppressed reflection on its rules for construction just to the extent that its forms suppressed or occluded the atonal, or rather differently tonal, systems against which such traditional music defined itself. (Herman, 1994, p. 482)

There is a flaw in Herman’s premise, namely that a composer or performer might intentionally or incidentally deviate from the rules of Schoenbergian serialism while also deliberately bending the rules of traditional composition (see micropolyphony or free jazz). In raising “traditional” music’s reluctance to reflect on “its rules for construction” Herman risks appearing to speak of superficial style when it is to deep structuration that his analysis applies. Classical music has periodically reflected on its “rules for construction” to the limited extent that discrete aspects of tonality, timbre, and meter have been reprioritised. Where serialism is unique is in its reassessment, not merely of principles governing surface affect, but of the rules that underpin the basic formation of works. “Traditional” music does not (by definition) reflect on its own essential constitution: as soon as it does so, it becomes radical and so non-traditional. But such reflectors on basic rules as J. S. Bach in the Baroque era, and Robert Schumann in the Romantic, have tended to be – at least temporarily – historically occluded by less technically radical composers who happen to capture the *Zeitgeist* (see the Bach sons in the first instance, and Brahms and Wagner in the second).

Mark Berry cites two composers, each less structurally revolutionary than Schoenberg, who have nevertheless blazed more brightly in collective popular and higher-brow imaginations. Berry suggests that, while a pre-Romanticist movement (figureheaded by Stravinsky) styled itself “neo-Classical”, it was in fact Schoenberg who was the true defender and radical reviver of Classical, Baroque, and earlier sonic-aesthetic principles:

Stravinsky and the neoclassical movement ... [were] aping the style of Bach, or rather the style of a false Bach who had never existed. Schoenberg wished to honour his Idea. Such mere fashion, such changing of clothes, was as absurd, as trivial, as pernicious, as

petulant as the abrupt turning away from Romanticism, above all from Wagner... (Berry, 2019, p. 118)

And comparing Claude Debussy's expressionistic use of the whole-tone scale to its generation through serial methods in Schoenberg's *Opus 26 Quintet*, Berry writes:

The effect is quite unlike that of Debussy (listen to the opening of his Piano *Prelude* 'Voiles' for an example), where the scale will often speak of a wondrously constructed ambiguity. Here, by contrast, ... new possibilities are presented with knife-edge precision. (Berry, 2019, p. 124)

The not particularly "wondrously constructed ambiguity" draped around disabled persons may, in its unintegrated relationship with the internal mechanics of disabled experience, equate to Debussy's (brilliantly imaginative) dressing of functional-harmonic fundamentals in a veil of aesthetic exoticism. A happier external-internal synecdoche for disability might be found in the Schoenbergian generation of external alterity from a "reflection" on both normate and abnormate fundamentals.

Schoenberg's structurative revolution is unparalleled in the history of scored composed music since the emergence of diatonicism. That stylistic principles evolve and shift is clear, but certain modernisms are defined by their discarding of a complete set of established rules, a disjuncture unprecedented up to that time in both music and literature. To put it in more disablist terms via a paraphrase of Herman: while traditional literatures had *suppressed or occluded the dyslexical – or rather differently lexical – systems against which it defined itself*, the *Wake* allowed traditional lexicality and narrative form a role within structurations that were based upon deviation from those paradigms. The *well-deformed* tonal and lexical structures discussed in the last section of this chapter may be seen – precisely through their subversion of key principles of the older structures – to have lent renewed integrity to what was retained in them of those older structures. For Schoenberg, doctrines of valid musical structure "in general" had to be taken into account before specific subversions of those doctrines could meaningfully take place. For Joyce, a similar self-discipline seems to have applied. Herman's definition of "competence in modern music" continues:

Generally, then, competence in modern music may be identified as the capacity to reconstruct the system or systems according to which permissible combinations of tones

are ordered and regulated. A given composition, a specific performance, diachronically unfolds as a unique search for the rules that, from a synchronic standpoint, can be said to determine what constitutes well- formed musical structures in general. The modern musical project, to this extent, is essentially syntactic in nature. (Herman, 1994, p. 482)

When Schoenberg and Joyce each began to “reconstruct the system or systems” that governed his own specific mode of composition, each was working within general rules and general formal frameworks that ensured a deconstruction, rather than a complete destruction, of established paradigms. “[A] specific performance” of the *Opus 23*, or a specific reading of *Finnegans Wake*, emerges in time, in all its strangeness and dissonance, according in part to meta-textual parameters that have long “determine[d] what constitutes well-formed aesthetic structures”.

There has emerged in this chapter’s analysis of Joycean deformativity a particular distortive symbiosis between Wakean syntax and the discussion/portrayal/enactment of musico-acoustical concepts, occurrences, and phenomena. Joyce’s interest in many musical forms and styles, as well as in the manner of their realisation and dissemination, is expressed throughout *Finnegans Wake*, but perhaps most explicitly in chapters I.2 and II.3. Below is an excerpt from II.3 leading on directly from that quoted in the previous section of this chapter. This is followed by a translation of the excerpt replacing Wakeanisms with what I judge to be their primary denotation(s) then an explication of the musical references contained in the excerpt.

A mum. You pere Golazy, you mere Bare and you Bill Heeny, and you Smirky Dainty and, more beethoken, you wheckfoolthenairyans with all your badchthumpered peanas! We are gluckglucky in our being so far fortunate that, bark and bay duol with Man Goodfox inchimings having ceased to the moment, so allow the clinkars of our nocturnefield, night’s sweetmoztheart, their Carmen Sylvae, my quest, my queen.
(360.7-13)

Hush – amen. You *lazy master of Pergolesi*, you *meagre mistress of Meyerbeer* and you *low-class Belini interpreter*, and you *indifferent renderer of Mercadante* and, *Beethovenian more by token than vocation*, you *foolish casual Wagnerians* with all your *bad (ill-tempered) Bach piano-thumping penile paeans!* We are *lucky drunken Glück-clucky listeners* in our being so far fortunate that, *sad Baching dog and baying Fox*

Goodman duo with chimings on the Magnavox having ceased for the moment, to allow the (Glinka-like) vowels of our Irish Fieldian nocturnal soundscape, night's sweetest Mozartian heart, their Carmen Sylvas, my quest, my queen.

Giovanni Pergolesi: late-Baroque Italian composer known for his liturgical works;

Giacomo Meyerbeer: German Romantic composer whose works were popular at the Paris Opera throughout the mid nineteenth century;

Vincenzo Bellini: early-Romantic Italian opera composer;

Saverio Mercadante: Italian composer, contemporary of Bellini;

Cristoph Willibald Gluck: late-Baroque/early-Classical Bohemian composer, long considered the founder of modern opera; the German word *glückliche* ('happy, lucky') appears in *Die glückliche Hand* (The Knack), the title of a drama with music by Schoenberg (1924);

Fox Goodman: a famous bell-ringer;

Magnavox: a popular brand of radio-phonograph;

John Field: the Irish originator of the piano nocturne, later adopted by Chopin;

Carmen Sylva: pen name of Queen Elizabeth Louisa of Rumania;

Questa o quella: 'This girl or that girl' (an aria from Giuseppe Verdi's opera *Rigoletto*).

Setting aside the possibility that Joyce is here criticising neo-Classical stylistic expropriations (the latest of Stravinsky's Paris ballets in the year Joyce moved to that city was *Pulcinella*, a piece based around reworkings of music by Pergolesi), a simple yet crucial point to note is the sheer economy of his data processing in this passage. If I had inserted disaggregations of all of the compound denotations contained in this single sentence, my version would have run on for several more lines. A complement sometimes paid to a musical composer or performer is that he or she is able to express a great deal through only a few gestures. This can certainly be said of Joyce here. That he was, in composing *Finnegans Wake*, attempting to produce "well-formed ... structures in general" is attested to by the consistency of both his apparent methods and their manifestations.

As mentioned in Chapter 1A, Daniel Ferrer suggests that the technique behind the "Sirens" episode *should* be reconceived as "peristaltic" (Ferrer, 1986, p. 70) or computational. Ferrer writes:

At the beginning of the episode, a mass of material (“the overture”) is fed into the text like data into a computer, or like highly concentrated nutriment into a digestive system. Then, through a long and thorough process of transformation, this inert matter is assimilated. ... At the other end of the tract, expulsion takes place: the chapter actually finishes with an anal evacuation. Bloom’s fart. (Ferrer, 1986, p. 70)

As Herman notes in citing Ferrer’s reading, the analogy of automated data processing for Joyce’s treatment of lingual material in “Sirens” aligns with a combinatorial understanding of the episode. Early twentieth-century work with combinatorics led eventually to the development of the modern computer.

In this short passage Ferrer offers two ways of imagining the basic stuff fed by Joyce into the difference engine of “Sirens”: as nutriment and as computer code. I find both of these metaphors both fanciful and also restrictive. If either analogy is extended and applied to specific sections of either text (or any other work of art), clear problems arise with comparisons to such specified and homogenised material. The strength of Herman’s combinatorial interpretation is his notion of “rules for the (re)arrangement of elements — whatever their material constitution or denotative force”. Ferrer’s reading is limited to a comparison to, on one hand elements that can be reduced to raw data and processed on that basis, and on the other to the — compared to artistic constructs — relatively simple constitution of a human or animal diet. Herman’s more abstract, “general” understanding allows Joyce’s compositional elements to define their own nature (or to have an uncertain nature) while working within a coherent system.

Another aspect of Herman’s thesis is his argument that the generalness of syntax as a structurator extends beyond more obviously grammatical systems such as mathematics, music, and literature, to the ostensibly less unitary or granular systems of the visual arts. The idea that Schoenberg’s, Joyce’s, and other modernist artists’ structures are not a-, but rather differently-, tonal, lexical, syntactical, is further expounded in Herman’s broader study of universal grammar in the modern arts (1995).

A medium besides music whose analysis employs the terms “tone” and “chromatic” in ways unambiguous compared to their application to literature is painting, in particular abstract painting. Indeed, “expressionist” artists such as Paul Klee and Vasily Kandinsky may be seen — comparably to Schoenberg — not merely to have reinvented tonality and chromaticism in their discipline, but to have returned to a direct consideration of these

principles where genre, representation, and “the residues of past subjectivity” had rendered them secondary concerns.

Schoenberg’s own “expressionist” period (as it has retrospectively been defined) may, also with the benefit of hindsight, be held to align with his “free atonal” period of around 1908-21. The border between this phase and his “serialist” phase, which lasted for the rest of his life, is, however, quite blurred. For instance, the *Three Piano Pieces Opus 11* (1909) inhabit a soundworld overlapping with that of the *Five Piano Pieces Opus 23* (1923), within which the “twelve-tone” method was introduced, but did not yet dominate.

As Antonio Baldassarre (2004) – among many others – has explained, Schoenberg received a letter from Kandinsky in 1911 that began a concerted period of artistic interaction that lasted until about 1914. Schoenberg was himself a painter: his self-portrait entitled ‘Red Gaze’ is familiar from CD covers. Kandinsky, in turn, considered painting to equate closely with music. Many of his *Blaue Reiter* (‘Blue Rider’) works, which introduced “total” abstraction, included in their titles the terms “composition” and “improvisation”. His publication *Der Blaue Reiter* included articles by Schoenberg on several occasions.

For “structures in general” to be “well-formed” they must, some modernists determined, be addressed head-on, as should the systems designed to form them. The sense that high modernism prioritised specificity and novelty over all else can be deceptive when in fact, the artists involved often had general and broad aims of improving the quality of works in their respective disciplines and the systems that produced them. Joyce was part of a renewal within literature and poetry of direct interest in the latent tonalities, timbres, and other crypto-acoustical qualities of written language. Similarly, the Second Viennese School forced listeners to think explicitly about individual tones and harmonic structures in ways that the ubiquity and familiarity of linear diatonicism had de-necessitated. But, as Herman shows, what different modernisms had in common, as well as their discourse with tradition at the level of representation and mimesis, is, not tonality or atonality, but structuration and a focus on syntax. In *Universal Grammar and Narrative Form*, Herman relates Marcel Duchamp’s “efforts to establish a pictorial syntax” as described by Thierry de Duve:

Duve argues that, in general, Duchamp attempted, “not to make color speak in its immanence ... but to establish a code of colors that would make each hue correspond to a particular grammatical relation”. (Herman, 1995, p. 70n42)

Herman's argument for a commensurability between the combinatorial techniques employed in music, prose writing, painting, mathematics, and other disciplines may at first appear to draw into doubt my conception in Chapter 1A that literature could never meaningfully base its form on musical structures. Herman's questioning of this divisive understanding, which he ascribes to Ernst Curtius among others, is subtle and not without caveats, and does not, finally, contradict a foundational assertion of the present thesis: that literature is fundamentally a-musical, and music entirely a-literate. As regards song (in which sound and words appear to intercombine, and with which Joyce had a particular fascination), I contend that the words of a song are para-textual, lying outside the body of the musical work. Conversely, where musical referents such as allusions to song melodies through titles or lyrics (such as 'A Nation Once Again') are included in literary works, the music is not intrinsically interrelated with the lyric, but is extrinsically evoked through syntax (a device that music borrows from language).

5. "larger, well-formed sequences and structures"

Herman views such understandings as resting on a mistaken assumption, namely,

that since narratives are by definition representational artifacts, and since ... music by (modern) definition cannot designate or represent states of affairs without *ipso facto* ceasing to be music, ... any narrative that tries to model itself upon musical form will inevitably devolve into a paradoxical or semi-realized possibility, an abortive entity, a grotesque Caliban of cultural production. But this diagnosis of "Sirens" as a merely monstrous music assumes ... that narrative is ...*exhausted* by its representational or designative functions. ... [H]owever, narrative is also characterized by its ... syntactic dimension, comprising rules by which the basic elements of the narrative are recombined into larger, well-formed sequences and structures. To this extent, a given narrative could very well model its own syntactic structures ... upon the combinatorial mechanisms of music. (Herman, 1994, pp. 486-7)

I agree with Herman that it is incorrect to conceive of musicality in "Sirens" as "a semi-realized possibility". My rationale differs from his, however, in that I hold the proposition of either a complete or a partial realisation of literary narrative through the "mechanisms of music" to be oxymoronic and therefore not representative of a "possibility". We can say that

a piece of literature is *based on fugue* in that it is inspired by meditation on the principles of that musical form (such as subject and countersubject). But these are not the “mechanisms” of fugue (its dynamic, structurative elements), but its para- or pre-textual principles. Because the novel is, as it were, a soundless vacuum (as opposed to the noisy, airy spaces of music), we can view any intention to make or approximate music within it, not as an experiment that happened – or was bound – to fail either partially or completely, but as a hypothetical precursor to the silent action of narrative composition. Joyce’s acute eye and ear for lingual syntax, and his keen interest in music, make it seem unlikely that he mistook the one-way syntactic influence of language upon music for a reciprocal aesthetic relationship.

The judgement of Ernst Curtius (as well as of Leon Edel (1939), Anthony Burgess, Alan Shockley, and others) that certain works of Joyce’s are akin to musical scores and require performance in order to be fully understood is, as I have stated, misplaced. But the metaphor of organic partial development that Herman pursues in rejecting such analyses supposes that “Sirens” was on some level musically complete at its publication, possessed of a music not “semi-” but fully “realised”. As much as I disagree with critics who view “Sirens” as a failed musical experiment (in that I believe that Joyce must have known that the episode could never contain or become music), I do not interpret this non-failure as a witting or unwitting success. With the possible exception of “abortive”, none of the able-normative terms Herman employs as antitheses of the truth as he sees it strikes me as a damnation of “Sirens”. The success of the episode lies perhaps most in its conciliation of “grotesque” or “monstrous” narrative entanglement with tonal, rhythmic, and dynamic ingenuity. Herman’s objection to a view (supposedly held by others) that narrative could be “exhausted by its representational or designative functions” appears to be a straw man. I do not accept that any critic or reader views literature as only representational or designative to the exclusion of the syntactic-aesthetic dimension; but neither do I believe that this syntactic aesthetic must be heard in any instance as truly musical.

In a crucial way we are, with regard to “Larger, well-formed sequences and structures”, on safer ground in studying *Finnegans Wake* as a combinatorial text than approaching “Sirens” on that basis. This said, it is through Herman’s fugal myth busting regarding “Sirens” that we are able to consider in serial terms the structural dynamics of the *Wake*. This syntactic analysis is in turn aided by Witen’s (2018) historical and philosophical contextualisation of the “music of” “Sirens”. Witen’s book corrects key misconceptions and fills in geno-textual gaps in prior fugal readings of the episode, giving the first

comprehensive explication of all the musical principles Joyce can presently be shown to have considered in writing it.

Readers of “Sirens” may well, ironically, find themselves disabled by the very integrity and unity of form underlying the episode. There appears in *Ulysses* as a whole, unlike in specific episodes, to be no master mechanism controlling the production and arrangement of its constitutive elements. In the *Wake*, by contrast, a meta-textual unity is provided by the consistent Wakeanism (admittedly a broad structurative classification) of the book’s smaller, “well-formed” elements. We may see *Finnegans Wake* less as a great structural edifice (“Sirens” writ large) than as a structure-producing mechanism, and its combinatory syntax less as a system than as a mechanics for generating systems. Rabaté conceives that, “*Finnegans Wake* appears ... as a machine containing matrixes of matrixes of stories, capable of narrating everything, and thus never really narrating one story” (Rabaté, 1986a, p. 145). I speak here of nothing so metaphysical as Derrida’s “hypermnesic machine capable of storing in a giant epic work, with the memory of the West and virtually all the languages of the world, the very traces of the future” (Derrida, 2013, p. 60), as he conceived of *Ulysses*. Rather, I am describing an, as it were, *amnesic mechanics*: a quasi algorithmic master apparatus governing elements, “whatever their ... denotative force”, in a way that tends to elevate the interpositioning of signifiers above outward signification itself. As with Adorno’s observation that in serialism “the force exerted by the process is unmistakable”, the systematics – if not the specific processes – of the *Wake*’s composition do not simply leave their mark as in *Ulysses*, but remain present, the means of production becoming the product.

Joyce’s clusterings or fractured taxonomies of items, names, sounds, and images (such as of food stuffs, political figures, Dublin locations, and natural phenomena) in *Ulysses* reflect the stream of association that flows from Joyce, through Bloom and Dedalus, to we readers. They imitate by means of an advanced Realist/naturalist linear narrative technique the behaviour of real thoughts as they vie for attention in the human mind and form irregular chains of connection. In *Finnegans Wake* there is far less articulation and sequentiality for readers to latch on to. One cannot so syntagmatically connect the dots between the items in the cluster. One has, as it were, to associate the scattered dots, to analyse the context and distribution of each and all of the elements of the cluster. And there are often in the *Wake* two or more clusters superimposed upon a single passage, which tend to overlap along categorical lines, so that musical instruments and musicians, song allusions and character epithets, blur together in their signification.

The partial dichotomy of semantic association and categorical differentiation brought about by these juxtapositions resembles the creatively destructive and deformative fragmentation, mirroring, and inversion that are essential to serialism. For example, in Webern's *Opus 23* songs for voice and piano, different permutations and fragmentations of the tone row are employed structurally to create highly lyrical aesthetic affects. The initial order of the row, or set, is (as in all serial works) inverted, reversed, and broken up into sections, all of these new elements then being interspersed and interposed with one another. What we may hear as the singular euphonious melodic line of the vocal part is in fact a (dys)function of the overall dysphonious contrapuntal texture. Just as we cannot in *FW II.3* read *nightingales* as one discrete strand and *naughty girls* as another, in the Webern songs solo line and accompaniment are to a degree inextricable one from the other. Since, as in *II.3*, the basic building blocks of the *Opus 23* set are new and unique to the individual composition, we cannot rely on convention to identify what is melody and what is underlying harmony as we might with a diatonic tune and its chordal accompaniment. Indeed these categories are partially dissolved. Just as in *Finnegans Wake* Joyce's opposed-complementary clusters at times appear slightly more, and at others slightly less entangled, so the convolution of the intertwinement of row permutations in Webern's *Opus 23*s ebbs and flows. As Kathryn Bailey observes, "Rows intersect with great frequency in the first song, less often in the second, and only twice, in the final two bars, in the third" (Bailey, 2006, p. 51). Thus in the first song, the vocal and piano parts often swap basic material in midflow, the singer concluding a melody begun in the piano, or vice versa. This happens less in the second song, and such row disarticulation occurs hardly at all in the third song.

In the radio announcement episode (a "larger, well-formed sequence"), variously linguistically mutated common English and continental European names for birds, together with more oblique allusions to the same, morph with significations, representations, and imitations of uncanny dysauditive acoustical phenomena. While Joyce ensures that the signified *nightingale*, for example, figures at several points in the text, he prosthetises the lexical form *nightingale*, transfiguring it as "lightandgayle", "naughtingels", etc.

It is not in its unlovely coagulation of theme, subject, and event that Wakean semantics most resemble those of serialism, but in the principle of delaying the recurrence of elementary and phrasal forms by presenting them in an inexhaustible series of deformations and recombinations. Thus in both serial and Wakean composition a latent temporality is encoded into the text, not through superficial repetition or patternation, but with a system designed to devolve such repetition and patternation. Joyce repeatedly generates new sets of

significant elements as a means of regulating the suppression of pattern. Both of these methods for constructing that divergent human body that is the modern artwork keenly resemble the differently-regulated formation of the disabled corporeal human body.

Classical musical composition has always been, to some extent, the art of creating self-similarity. It is also, to a large degree, the art of ensuring and sustaining self-difference. In much early Baroque, and later Classical-Romantic composition, we hear similarity coloured with difference through the explicit or underlying use of theme and variation. In the most sophisticated fugal writing of the late Baroque period, there emerges a refinement and extension of similarity and difference that renders these two poles at times difficult for listeners to set apart. Mirror structures mean that opposites are often equal, and retrograde patterns allow for apparently jarring aesthetic moments to resolve as pre-echoes over the duration of the work. This ambiguity between similarity and difference is a key classical principle that Schoenberg sought to revive and extend in his dodecaphony; and an equivalent interest in the convolution of homogeneity and heterogeneity is evident in both *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*.

Throughout this chapter I have sought to explicate in non-technical terms some of the very basics of the serial compositional method. But it is clear that some terms are elusive, particularly in their applicability – or otherwise – to Joyce. The terms “tone row” and “basic set” in particular can defy comprehension. These entities that are so like, and yet so unlike, scales, keys, arpeggios, can invoke a similar sense of the uncanny or *unheimlich* to that which is often invoked by disabled corporealities. We saw in Chapter 1A how critics including Fischer, Lawrence, Rabaté, and Topia have imagined Joycean combinatorics as more “rhetorical” than strictly musical. But through his command of rhetorical meta-syntax, Joyce often arrives at similar formal endpoints as Schoenberg reaches via his sonic-aesthetic methodologies.

Joyce’s clusters (his “larger, well-formed sequences and structures”) may not have been plotted out in advance in a serial way (as basic paradigms from which the syntagm of the prose was unitarily constructed); but they influence the spacetime of the language systematically through the thematization and variation of their elements. For example, bird names and other avian indicators occur intercombined with one another through a matrix of inversions and transpositions. In “Ihirondella, jaunty Ihirondella” (359.28) Joyce employs a rhythmic and phonetic allusion to the song lyric “*Alouette, gentil alouette*” to counterpose the names and the supposed characteristics of the swallow (French, *l’hirondelle*) and the sky-lark (French, *alouette*). Here we find a dissonance created by one pair of sound-meanings (‘jaunty

swallow’) being superimposed upon a proximate pair (‘kind/gentle sky-lark’) that is defined both by its association with the first pair and its differentiation from it. This is broadly analogous with the effect produced in serialism by a melodic phrase formed of the – say four – notes of one division of the row/set being juxtaposed with a chord formed of the – four – notes of another division. Such subsets of notes are complementary (in that they are equal and balanced within the basic set) and yet opposed (in that they share no conventional harmonic relationship). This double coupling of an articulated dyadic string (‘jaunty swallow’) with an unarticulated dyadic string (‘kind/gentle sky-lark’) takes its place in the cluster or set, intersecting semantically with “twosingwoolow” and “tirra lirra rondinelles” (359.28-9) at ‘swallow’. ‘Swallow’ may be heard in the last two syllables of “twosingwoolow”, and *rondinelle* is Italian for ‘little swallow’. Such dyadic and double-dyadic features of the broader cluster serve both to delineate the cluster itself, and as focal points for its influence on the even “larger, ... sequences and structures” that it punctuates. I speak of dyads here, not in a simply tonal sense, but in a broader structural sense. In serial composition, where such functionally harmonic constructs as the major or minor triad have been dissolved, the boundaries of tonality, harmony, and rhythm are even more ambiguous than in the most complex fugue. This is particularly noticeable when – as in Webern’s *Opus 23* songs – musical structures exist in interchange with the structures of verse. Melanie Kronick writes of Webern’s musical-poetic structuration:

We may consider dyad as a musical embodiment of a poetic foot, not limited, however, simply to the iambic value ... but as a meta-figure involving the opposites short/long, light/heavy, accented/unaccented, and abrupt/smooth and delivered over variable but perceptible segments of musical time: dyad in this sense, then, means a pair of musical objects. (Kronick, 1992, p. 49)

Kronick’s conception of dyads – akin to Schaeffer’s of sounds more broadly – as “objects” is useful but problematic. While “object” is an affective image for these expressions of intervallic/metric/timbral/dynamic contraposition, locating dyads as units rather than conceptualising them as junctures of relationality risks concretising Webern’s articulations of an abstract principle. Johnson writes:

In place of the experiential centricity of tonality, Webern’s twelve-tone music creates a more abstract kind of spatial order. ... The guiding principle of that order is not the tone

as such, but the interval (not itself a sound, but the abstract gap between two sounds); the tone row, as an abstract order, thus controls the musical work as an invisible and inaudible centre – as an ‘absent presence’, to borrow a later idea from Pierre Boulez. (Johnson, 2015, p. 8)

It is through the perpetual creation and dissolution of bespoke lingual “basic sets” in the *Wake* that Joyce creates “larger, well-formed sequences and structures” that display neither the patternation of verse form nor the quasi verbal heterogeneity of Realist prose. But he also locates these coherent structures within still larger networks of sound-meaning wherein more typically arbitrary lingual rules apply.

* * *

Post-modernist readers and music listeners share with their pre-Classical counterparts modes of artistic engagement at odds with the Classical-Romantic modes invoked by Witkin’s “congealed residues of past subjectivity”. A Classical-Romantic point of musical attention may be conceived as one that is static and presumes a linear-horizontal unfolding of tonal material focussed around a melody. Johnson writes that, “[t]onality ... is to music what linear perspective is to painting – it organizes time towards a central point of perception within the listener and invests time with spatial dimensions” (Johnson, 2015, p. 8). This point of attention may be experienced as natural and neutral, and the unfolding syntagm as organic and self-sufficient. The listener point of attention invited by modernist composition is a shifting one. In giving up their static relationship to ostensibly motoric syntagmatic material, (post)modernist listeners are asked constantly to shift their point of attention in relation to a paradigmatic aesthesis that they may experience as possessing no linear-motoric energy of its own. The perceived lack of mobility of modernist musics, and the discomfort this can engender in listeners, equate to similar perceptions and feelings of discomfort in encounters with bodies of different-mobility. Here again we find an able-compulsory incomprehension or disqualification of some artistic bodies analogous with treatments of certain corporeal bodies. Of course, neither the Classical-Romantic nor the modernist aesthesis has its own inherent motoric energy or capacity: this is generated in sympathy with listeners. And modernist music can be listened to in the “normal” way: from a static point of attention whereby the material is experienced sequentially. But it is perhaps this way of engaging with modernist music that generates the apparent chaos experienced by casual listeners.

Leopold Bloom listens to Simon Dedalus's melodic music-making in the Ormond bar as a real musical modernist. He perceives that music per se demands of listeners not merely the passive reception of familiar elements, but an active processing of meaningless sounds into (apparently) meaningful syntagms. Bloom explains it to himself thus: "Want to listen sharp. Hard. Begin all right: then hear chords a bit off: feel lost a bit. In and out of sacks, over barrels, through wirefences, obstacle race." (*U* 11.839-41). The word "sharp" leaps out here: he seems primarily to mean 'acutely', but could equally intend 'slightly too high in pitch' and so 'with a *dysfunctional* ear'.

From this three-dimensional, interactive point of attention, the noun "form" begins to seem inadequate, indicating a finite entity rather than a dynamic process. "Formed" might be better, as it can suggest an ongoing procedure rather than merely a solid state. Employing the term "well-formed", as Herman does, risks invoking the spectre of *perfect form*. From a post-modern, a disablist, or simply a contemporary humanistic standpoint, this appears unsustainable. The hubristic, eugenic/eugenious pursuit of such immaculate artistic entities has – beginning at a time before the emergence of modernism –receded to the position of an outlying aspiration. The deformative and malfunctional structuration of modernist literatures, serial music, improvisatory jazz, action painting, and other employments of combinatory, aleatory and otherwise anti-traditional generative apparatuses have permanently – if only partially – disrupted the old linearities and unclotted the "residues of past subjectivity".

Despite a peak in this process during the 1910s and 20s, the exactly contrived and in many ways conventionally "well-formed" *Ulysses* was received in some quarters in 1922 with a combination of disdain and phobic aversion. Critical accusations that it was in fact "ill-formed", or without form altogether (save for that of an artless composite of elements), may have stirred in Joyce a perverse desire to create a work truly and blatantly "*monstrous*" in form, leading to the production of *Finnegans Wake*. If this is so, the apparatus he contrived to assemble this defective product appears in itself to have been, in common with that used to manufacture serialism, a well-functioning one. But this qualitative comparison, and the quantitative commensurability of Wakean and serial combinatory syntaxes, do not draw the *Wake* closer to musical compositions on any but this – admittedly crucial – meta-textual level. The "well-formed sequences or strings" of II.3's radio announcement episode are, as I have stressed throughout this chapter, lingual, literary, lexical, grammatical components, and not musical ones.

Joyce's conformity to deviation, his mastery of both normative and deformative rules, and his compositorial structurative technique allow *Finnegans Wake* to throw off the restraints put on "Sirens" by the "fuga per canonem", while benefitting from that experiment's findings as to recombination as a structurative device. Joyce retains the employment of chiasmic form in the later text as well as the idea of reflecting a work's modelling and genesis in its finished state. His self-demonstrative use of the delayed recurrence of elements aligns him with Schoenberg on a small scale. On a larger scale, we may perceive his use of this method as closer to post-serialist techniques of micropolyphony, polytonality, and polyrhythmicity. Where I think that Herman's radical invocation of Schoenbergian dodecaphony is more viable than potential post-serialist comparators, however, is in its identification of Joyce's and Schoenberg's common foregrounding of syntax as a generative paradigm. In the next chapter we will see how Pierre Boulez's more advanced, less determinate, "integral" serialism took inspiration from *Finnegans Wake* as it drew closer to the entropic post-serialist soundworlds of the 1950s while crucially retaining the regulated syntaxis of Schoenberg.

CHAPTER 3. Boulez and the Disabling of *Finnegans Wake* II.2

My sonata ... may be called a kind of ‘work in progress’, to echo Joyce. ... I have a marked preference for large structural groups centred on a cluster of determinate possibilities (Joyce’s influence again).

Pierre Boulez, ‘*Sonate, que me veux-tu?*’ (Boulez, 1990b, p. 148)

This chapter sets out some clear disablist alignments between *Finnegans Wake* II.2 and Pierre Boulez’s *Third Sonata* for piano, identifying kindred deformativities and dysfunctionalities in the two texts. Boulez has written about how the form(ation) of the *Third Sonata* was inspired – and indeed substantively influenced – by his reading of the “Night Lessons” chapter. Scott W. Klein notes that,

[Boulez] had read *Ulysses* in French, and in a letter to John Cage in 1950 he thanks the American composer for his gift of a copy of *Finnegans Wake*, calling it “almost a totem” Boulez thought of Joyce as a key figure for the way in which avant-gardism in literature tended [as he believed] to precede avant-gardism in music. In his essay *Recherches Maintenant* in 1954 he asked for “a new poetics, a different way of listening,” noting “Neither the Mallarmé of the *Coup de dés* nor Joyce was paralleled by anything in the music of his own time.” (Klein, 2004, np)

While Mallarmé’s *Coup de dés* may be seen to have had a more direct influence on the extrinsic form of the *Third Sonata* than *FW* II.2, there is a Wakean entropic or self-destructive mode to the *Sonata*’s intrinsic formation that expresses its profound affinity with Joyce’s tenth chapter. The subversion of old – and not so old – compositional modes, the finding of one’s artistic way by instinct as well as acumen, a burning of the bridges by which one travelled to one’s radical creative destination, all unite these two compositions and composers. The children in the chapter, much like Boulez, combine prodigious intellect with an anti-intellectual playfulness in order to learn lessons and reach conclusions.

II.2 basically describes: the children’s route back to the tavern (their home) in Chapelizod where the “night lessons” take place; the trio going up to their study-room; Issy thinking about grammar and about her grandma’s advice on womanhood; Shem and Shaun’s history studies and Issy’s indifference thereto; a rehearsal of their family story; the learning of songs and rhymes and other aspects of music; Issy writing a highly indeterminate,

conditional, open letter; arithmetic and algebra; one brother helping the other with a geometry problem concerning a triangle; the twins analysis of their mother's (triangular) genitalia; a lesson between the brothers on writing; a list of fifty-two potential essay titles; and finally, before bed, the children writing a letter to their parents.

All of this auto/mutual-didacticism is set out in an appropriately emancipatory, autonomous format, that of an annotated school book, the wise, irreverent, subversive, naïve, profound thoughts of the children responding (in marginalia and footnotes) to those of their parents. As we will see, the precocious Boulez of the *Third Sonata* scrawls his new ideas upon the founding text of serialism (written by Schoenberg) in quite a similar way.

In the study of II.2, comparisons to other literary texts (including the chapter's own earlier drafts) may be less instructive than parallel readings with similarly radically combinatorial works of modernist music. The quasi-musical meta-syntax of dislocated but interrelated central and outer material (main text, footnotes, and marginalia) enables this chapter as a "graphic score", but disables it as *literature* (at least in the conventional sense). But I argue that, while this text is dysfunctional, it is not irrational, while it is deformed, it is not incoherent. This contrasts with some philological readings of the chapter that take a firm view of it as irrational and incoherent.

The similarities I demonstrate between II.2 and the third sonata are principally syntactic in nature. But an analysis at this "grammatical" level also reveals aesthetic and semantic commensurabilities between the two texts. The inherent distinction between – in crude terms – the *Wake*'s outwardly referential semantics *and* the *Sonata*'s reflexively inward semantics divides the lingual from the sonic artwork in many ways. But if we subordinate these concerns of signification (which apply to any comparative reading of a literary and a musical work) to those of structuration, we find that the two projects share profound *deformalist* and *dysfunctionalist* aims, methods, and outcomes. As we will see, however, the differentiation of "content" from "form" can be elusive. In his essay simply entitled 'Form', Boulez cites Claude Levi-Strauss's argument that, "[f]orm and content are of the same nature and amenable to the same analysis" (Boulez, 1990a, p. 90). For present purposes we might reconceive this as: *the form of language derives from its content, and the content of music derives from its form, so the syntactic analysis of language is equal and opposite to the semantic analysis of music.*

While such an abstract formulation is helpful to an extent, it remains to be established what will be the form and content of the analysis itself. In the previous chapter I extended David Herman's serialist conception of the form of "Sirens" to encompass a dysgenic

syntactical parallel reading of Wakean prose and Schoenbergian/Weberian dodecaphony. But while Schoenberg and Webern limited their focus on form over content largely to the arrangement of tones, Boulez's "integral serialism" took the elevation of the structural over the significative to an extreme level, disrupting all but the most self-referential elements of musical semantics. The result was a music that – like first-generation free jazz, with which integral serialism was broadly contemporaneous – can sound randomly produced and deliberately and cacophonously antimusical. As William G. Harbinson writes,

With the advent of integral serialism in the early 1950s, register, dynamics, articulation, and eventually form fell under the control of the series; yet the aural result of integral serialism was a fluid and kaleidoscopic effect that as easily might have been derived by chance. In search of large-scale musical forms that were structurally (and philosophically) accordant to the smaller components of their compositions, composers experimented with a variety of procedures that led to less predictable forms. (Harbinson, 1989, p. 16)

In this chapter I partially argue against the normative and functionalist precept that integral serialist music sounds as though it were "derived by chance". The point is nonetheless insightfully made here that Boulez's music in this period flirted with the limits of coherency, undermining its own recognisability as "music" by precluding many of the Romantic, Classical, and older commonplaces retained in Second Viennese School serialism. As a composer who, due to his French birth, may have felt comparatively free from the dominant Germanic compositional doctrines in which Schoenberg and Webern were so steeped, Boulez established himself as the ultimate aesthetic iconoclast of the mid twentieth century, calling for, and to some extent executing, a creative destruction of past modes and a permanent revolution in musical aesthetics. As I will show, there are certainly destructive (disabling) aspects to Joyce's aesthetic vision and compositional processes with which Boulez and other musical ultra-modernists could sympathise. It is, however, impossible – for the above-stated semantic reasons – to conceive of *Finnegans Wake* as a tabula rasa such as we might view Boulez's integral-serialist compositions. While the inward mechanics of musical meaning are infinitely reconfigurable (up to, including, and beyond the point of ostensible un-musicality), literary semantics can never aspire even to *surface* "illiteracy" while much of what was previously referred to and designated continues to require reference and designation. To this

extent at least – contrary to Boulez’s reading – music always has the capacity to run ahead of literature in avant-garde innovation.

Though the influence of *Finnegans Wake* on the *Third Sonata* is mentioned by Klein, and also by Peter O’Hagen (2016), the full depth of this relationship is explored in only one study, that of Robert Black (1982). Black’s essay is, consequently, referenced widely in this chapter. As he was both a professional pianist and performer of Boulez, and a musicologist and Joyce scholar, Black’s underlying authority is not in question. But the imposing presence of post-structuralist theory in his analysis, and the lack of focus caused by his parallel comparison of works by the composer Eliot Carter and the poet John Ashbery, can muddy the waters of the otherwise lucid account he gives of the sonata’s Joycean textuality. The present chapter seeks to more closely integrate the musical and literary analyses necessary to approach this complex subject, using the aesthetic-semantic prism of disability to illuminate the similar “genetic abnormalities” of the two texts.

1. Improviser, compositor, composer: The Wakean Boulez and the (dis)integral Joyce

In *Finnegans Wake* we find a three-personed Joyce: a (dis)harmonious hybrid of the bibliophile and exegete, the Jazz-like improviser, and the hypermodernist *auteur* cum compositorial craftsman. Luca Crispi conceives that,

His technique takes other writers’ “stale words,” making them his own (in notebooks). They are then sifted and sorted and only a fraction “woven” into new compositions, a process he describes ... as “[jazztfancy the novo takin place]” [292.20] (Crispi, 2007, p. 224)

Crispi then quotes a passage from an early draft of II.2 that in the published iteration reads:

and, an you could peep inside the cerebralised saucepan of this eer illwinded goodfornobody, you would see in his house of thoughtsam (was you, that is, decontaminated enough to look discarnate) what a jetsam litterage of convolvuli of times lost or strayed, of lands derelict and of tongues laggin too, longa yamsayore, not only that but, search lighting, beached, bashed and beaushelled *à la Mer* pharahead into faturity, your own convolvulis pickninnig capman would real to jazztfancy the novo

takin place of what stale words whilom were woven with and fitted fairly featly ...
(292.12-21)

Here Shem/Joyce is perhaps *too clever by half*, maybe pathologically so, possessed of a mind *good for no body*, a “cerebralised saucepan” that should only be looked upon “discarnate”, its flesh and blood twin being marred by conjunction to a “illwinded” brother.

As he looked far ahead into futurity (but not fatuity), Boulez’s chosen methods required him to borrow no “stale” materials from “other times” in realising his musical fancy. Though Joyce seems to allude in this passage to an improvisatory, jazz-like, *Shemish* dynamic in his own *Wake* writing process, we also hear here a *Shaunish* control-freakery somewhat akin to Boulez’s formalist approach in the sonata.

Before going into the particular malformations and malfunctions of these two works, however, I will first briefly consider what I believe are the general coherencies and capacities of literature and music per se. Music has a facility for compositional regeneration and rejuvenation (“the novo takin place”) to which literature can only aspire: an aspiration that, as we saw in Chapter 2, is certainly apparent in Joyce. Music also has the advantage – if such it is – that a radical work can be composed, published, then performed in public, all in very short order. So, while lacking an outward semantic facility, music possesses an inherent structural coherence and aesthetic immediacy unavailable to most written forms. On the other hand, contrary to the misnomer that “*music* is a universal language”, it is in fact literature that is able to speak to audiences *in their own language* (language itself), opening the author up to positive or hostile responses in that *lingua franca*. Unlike modernist musical composers, modernist literary authors were/are not required to present their works on any material public platform where they might receive instant negative feedback. But Joyce’s later prose writing (published in avant-garde journals such as *transition*) quickly received criticism for its “illegibility” (Ellmann 1982, p. 590) and “illitera[cy]” (Woolf, 1978, p. 189).

I argue in this chapter that just as Schoenbergian dodecaphony is not in fact “atonal”, but rather “differently[-]tonal” (Herman, 1994, p. 482), so Boulezian integral serialism is not *un-*, but *differently*-intelligible, and Wakean prose not “illiterate”, but differently- (and radically) literate. Through analogy with the seeming paradox of quasi-random effects being produced by systematic means in Boulez, I identify in *Finnegans Wake* a post- or hyper- Realist (anti)semantics that, while stretching the bounds of narrative sense, creates a non-arbitrary internal intelligibility that is lacking in non-modernist modern-era prose storytelling. That is to say, that where conventional narrative prose lacks internal coherence due to its reliance on

arbitrarily established connections between words and meanings, the *Wake* to a large extent takes control by partially disabling such connections. Some of these connections are merely associative (such as the signifier *dog* and its arbitrary signification of ‘a four-legged furry mammal’). In such cases *Wake* language enables Joyce to dis- and re-integrate these arbitrary signifier-signified pairings by artificially embroiling them with new denotations, undermining denotation’s primacy over connotation and sometimes incapacitating denotation altogether. In “in what niche of time is Shee or where in the rose world trysting” (290.1-2), the pronoun *she* has an *e* added to its end and its *s* is capitalised. The first of these graphic modifications confers the extra meaning ‘fairy’ from Anglo-Irish, and the second may (with an Irish pronunciation) invoke Kitty O’Shea (who married Charles Stewart Parnell). This proper noun also shares all but one letter with “Shem”, creating a gender-fluid syntactic connection to that figure in the narrative. Many other established connections in everyday language are more integral, transgressing boundaries of phonetics, semantics, and syntax (for example the verb *to dog*, with its multigenuous metaphorical and grammatical functionality). The fact that Joyce did not abandon conventional grammar in favour of a more “illiterate” modernistic musical syntax may place him at a disadvantage to Boulez in respect of radicalism. Boulez’s dissolution of old relationships between given tonalities, harmonies, and other elements of musical syntax makes plausible an argument that he dispensed, not merely with the eugenic surface aesthetics of conventional art music, but with its semantic functionalism and normative syntax.

A partial parallel may be drawn between Boulez’s increasing disenchantment with Schoenbergian dodecaphony and John Cage’s suggestion that, at the level of syntax, Joyce did not go far enough in disabling old paradigms. In 1952, Boulez wrote of Schoenberg that,

We can see why Schoenberg’s twelve-tone music was bound to come to a dead end. In the first place he explored the new technique in only one direction. Rhythm was neglected, [as were] even such questions as intensity, dynamics etc. (Peyser, 1980, p. 64)

And Scott Klein remarks that,

Although fascinated by Joyce’s innovations, Cage was dissatisfied with Joyce’s conventional grammar. He notes disapprovingly in his Diaries “*Finnegans Wake employs syntax./ Though Joyce’s subjects, verbs and/ objects are generally unconventional,/ their relationships are the ordinary/ ones.*” Harking to his friend Norman O. Brown’s

assertion that “syntax is the arrangement of the army” Cage set out [in *Writings Through Finnegans Wake*] to create a nonsyntactical language out of fragments of *Finnegans Wake*, a demilitarized version of Joyce’s global language. (Klein, 1999, p. 159)

One could ally a disablist thesis to Brown/Cage’s deregulatory thesis by replacing the term “demilitarized” here with the word “disabled”, the overweening order of the military industrial machine with the domineering health and utility of able-bodiedness. It seems, however, that along with the bath water of restrictive, regimented, schoolbook grammar, Cage often (both in his writings and in his music) threw out the baby of flexible but delimiting syntactic systematisation. Though Boulez respected Cage (at least at first), for the former, choice (between unimaginably many but not indeterminate permutative possibilities) was superior to chance (governed by human and cosmic caprice). In Boulez we find authorial self-disablement freeing the music from structural conformity, while in Cage we see an incidental poetic impairment unmitigated by disablist formal emancipation (see Chapter 4).

We can observe in the genetic history of *Finnegans Wake* Joyce choosing systematically between inconceivably but not indefinitely many compositional possibilities. In II.2 in particular, we see how the surface-structural complexity of the chapter belies a deep-syntactic rationality born of highly controlled operations. In his genetic study of II.2, Crispi seeks to dismantle and reconstitute the “non-arbitrary internal intelligibility” of the chapter. It may, in fact, be an inevitable result of genetic analysis that narrative deformities at times appear as the unfavourable result of compositional dysfunction. Crispi notes that,

Joyce crafted the first and second drafts with elements from the recycled materials in VI.A. As is generally the case, but to an even greater degree here, the lexical material in this notebook had been thoroughly decontextualized from its various sources. (Crispi, 2007, p. 227)

And he goes on to conceive that,

At this stage in Joyce’s elaboration of his work he was able to compose in a manner that is analogous to artisans who, for example, construct a visual image from shards of material as they come to hand, possibly with only a faint idea of the “final work” but with an adept reliance on the quality of the found objects, on the one hand, and on their

own ability to create constellations of artistic significance, on the other. (Crispi, 2007, p. 228)

Ideas of artists using “decontextualized” materials and thus having a limited idea of the “final work”, and also the term “constellations”, are important to this chapter. But I do not believe that the vernacular spontaneity that Crispi imputes reflects the systematic methods behind II.2, and nor indeed would such a simile do justice to the premeditated construction of the *Third Sonata*. Boulez wrote that,

[In order] to escape from the complete loss of any global sense of form, as well as to avoid falling into a kind of improvisation with no other imperative than free will ... one must have recourse to a new concept of development which would be essentially discontinuous, but in a way that is both foreseeable and foreseen ... (Boulez, 1991, p. 33)

Like the elephantine gestation of *Finnegans Wake*, that of integral serialism progressed slowly and discontinuously. If we view the latter as having its seeds in the high modernist advances of Anton Webern in the mid 1920s, but taking around two decades to approach maturity in Boulez’s *Second Sonata* for piano (1948) and Milton Babbitt’s *Composition for Twelve Instruments* (1948), then its early pre-natal development may be seen to have run in parallel with that of II.2. The notion of Joyce having at first had very little sense of how the final work would turn out is as problematic as it would be to suggest the same about the genesis of the *Third Sonata*. “Wakeism” and integral serialism each worked with the tension between established methods and the disintegration/reintegration of those methods. Often the most apparently spasmodic moves in modernist art stemmed from gradual processes of development. So while it might be said that with the *Wake* and the sonata Joyce and Boulez each abandoned some compositional control to auto-deformative mechanisms, meaning that each may have had only a schematic plan of what would finally be produced, the slow development of each project ensured its integrity, if not its functionality. Far from giving up authorial agency to a militaristic modernist doctrine, however, each composer subordinated “common sense” to rational determination, a decisive act of artistic self-assertion and self-construction.

Crispi’s identification of Joyce’s working methods as functionally disruptive and formally distortive, and his suggestion that there is an abandonment of authorial agency as well as a violence behind these procedures, chime with this chapter’s Boulezian analysis of

“Night Lessons” and Wakean analysis of the *Third Sonata*. Ironically, however, his negative pointing out of disabling decontextualisation in II.2 itself abstracts Joyce’s decisions from their real-world context of physical and mental disorder, and thus limits its own critical capacity. The systematised yet semi-indeterminate dynamic between Joyce’s top copy, his notebooks and drafts, and his day-to-day life at a time when his eye disease was causing him pain and sight loss and his daughter Lucia was increasingly mentally ill, creates a contiguous meta-narrative which it is important not to overlook. Finn Fordham sees in the compositional progress of II.2 a far more rational dysfunctionality and coherent deformativity than those perceived by Crispi. Citing John Gordon’s characterisation of this chapter as “the crossroads of *Finnegans Wake*” (Gordon, 1986, p. 183), Fordham integrates the fractured narrative of Joyce’s writing process with the comparably disjointed unfolding of events in his family life. This enables a reading of compositional (un)intentionality not available to the pure geneticist. In a remark that could as easily be applied to various of Boulez’s works of the late forties and early fifties, Fordham writes of II.2 that, “[i]t might perhaps be described as where the modern meets the postmodern”. He then adds that, “it is also where Lucia’s madness encounters the madness of the book, and it was written up after Joyce had been dealing with Lucia’s madness full on” (Fordham, 1997, p. 148). A degree of such analysis of Boulez’s life and historical context as they impacted his work is attempted by Ben Parsons (2003). I will not pursue this here, because, as we will see throughout this chapter, Boulez’s methods are far less opaque than Joyce’s, and thus far less amenable to such a treatment. However, I think that Boulez’s reflexive question “*Sonate, que me veux-tu?*” (Boulez, 1990b, p. 143) and the self-analytical essay to which he attaches it, suggest him as an artist living in a milieu infused with Freudian, Jungian, and proto-Lacanian ideas. Fordham continues:

The footnotes were formulated in Zurich, the crossroads of psychiatry, where the clinical methods at Burgholzi were meeting the analytic methods of Jung. During the writing of the chapter, Joyce moved Lucia from Geneva to Zurich and finally switched – after nearly three years of resistance – from psychiatry to psychoanalysis. (Fordham, 1997, p. 148)

He then focusses in on what Boulez might have conceived of as the “perpetual expansion” (Morrison, 2018, np) of sections of the chapter from jottings in notebooks and abandoned drafts. “The chapter was planned in 1926 as consisting of two episodes: the geometry lesson and Issy telling a story. By the time of Lucia’s breakdown only the geometry lesson had

been printed.” And in accord with Danis Rose he suggests that, “[p]robably soon after *transition 22* came out, in early 1933, [Joyce] turned to the sketch he had written”, adding that, “two years later, Joyce had written only 20 pages or so, yet he had made some of the most inspired creative choices in *Finnegans Wake*”. Then of the introduction (“scribbledehobbles”) he explains:

[It] grew over four or five stages ... and on the last page of these Joyce scribbled: “lead us seek, O jenny of eves the frivolest who fleest from the fan but wouldst attach thee to thy thick eschewer”. (Fordham, 1997, p. 148)

Fordham points out that Hayman had identified this as the seed for “Storiella as she is syung”; but while Hayman concentrates on the abandoned material that would become “scribbledehobbles”, Fordham picks up as more geno-textually interesting “the pruned sentence” that was the next fragment Joyce dealt with, and out of which “an entire section grew”. Finally he indicates the great structural upheaval to which the manipulation of such fragments appear to have led:

To this section ... Joyce appended the first footnotes and in it ... was responding to Lucia. ...A typed copy was made attaching the introductory sections (1 and 2) to its beginning, and a large margin was left on the left. In this space Joyce wrote letters which indicated where (Shem’s) additions would appear in a separate column, possibly by themselves. (Fordham, 1997, p. 148)

In his *Structures Livre II* for two pianos (1956-61), Boulez similarly abstracted scraps of earlier work and expanded them dramatically. As the musicologist, pianist, and Boulez interpreter Peter O’Hagen writes of the composition’s second “Chapter”,

The material for all three of the groups of insertions in the movement ... is drawn from eight bars of material borrowed from the first piece (*Chapitre I*) of *Structures, Deuxième livre*. This passage ... is one of two short sections in that movement where Boulez reverts to the linear writing of the three pieces of *Structures, Première livre* ..., and its use here, albeit in heavily disguised and elaborated form, helps to maintain a unity of style between two pieces separated in composition by half a decade. ... Boulez is able to

generate a remarkable quantity of material from these tiny fragments borrowed from *Chapitre I* (O'Hagan, 2016, pp. 189-90)

The story Fordham tells of (un)intentionality operating within a tangle of real-world concerns deploys the articulation of compositional with emotional and practical events to make sense of the ostensibly disintegral surface of II.2. The warm-blooded literary modernism this helps to reveal may be felt to contrast with the cooler meta-textual musical modernism of the *Third Sonata*. Since “Music has no ‘meaning’” in that “it does not make use of sounds which hover ambiguously, as words do, between objective sense and reflective significance” (Boulez, 1990b, p. 144), semantic relationships operate in music only within and among musical texts. This said, a musical work’s structural inter-textuality, not only with other musical, but also with literary texts (made possible by shared elements of syntax), can create a connecting matrix of second order denotations (connotations) that can help, for instance, to put (subjective) narrative flesh on the bones of Boulez’s sonata. But just as with Fordham’s particular integration of *ars* and *vita* (using fragments of each), here subjectivity is inevitable.

Boulez’s strong affinity with Webern and progressive alienation from Schoenberg, as well as the artistic tension between himself and his teacher Olivier Messiaen, can, with close reading and a touch of “jazztfancy”, be “read” from the text of the sonata; and such relationships are, for an artist, as personal and concrete as any others in his or her life. We have seen the vehemence of Boulez’s desire to move away from Schoenberg. Schoenberg can be held – as by Boulez – to have fathered the tone row only then to neglect it while Webern nurtured and advanced it almost beyond recognition. So the sense of unlimited expansion, of something heading toward a complexity or flexibility that might remove it from authorial control and finally assure its destruction, extends to the very theory and technique of (integral) serialism themselves. The austere face initially presented by serialism can be surprisingly revealing of the personalities and aspirations of its practitioners. Schoenberg can seem neurotic and conservative compared to the introverted but uncompromising Webern, and a portrait of the young Boulez shows him consumed by a will to turn Webern’s quiet revolution into a public immolation of old icons. Boulez’s assertion that Schoenberg’s – as the former viewed it – *narrow* twelve-tone project had been “bound to come to a dead end” continues:

Perhaps it would be better to dissociate Schoenberg’s work altogether from the phenomenon of the tone row. The two have been confused ... – sometimes with

unconcealed dishonesty – and a certain Webern has only been too easily forgotten. Perhaps we might convince ourselves that the tone row is a historical necessity. Perhaps, like Webern, we might succeed in writing works whose form arises inevitably from the given material. ... Let us, then, without any wish to provoke indignation, but also without shame or hypocrisy, or any melancholy sense of frustration, admit the fact that Schoenberg is dead. (Peysner, 1980, p. 64)

From a disablist perspective, we might say that if a work's "form arises inevitably from the given material", then it can take on a life emancipated from the eugenious, utilitarian prejudices of its author. It is perhaps not the flesh-and-blood Schoenberg that Boulez wants to bury, but the older composer's Romantic authorial voice and Nietzschean creative will, and the potential for these influences to restrict later modernisms from fulfilling their prodigious dysgenic destiny. Though there is no single earlier figure whose death Joyce felt a need to celebrate in this way (his internalised dialogue with Yeats for instance being far more amicable than Boulez's with Schoenberg), we find him grappling with forms whose intrinsic power he sees dwindling but of which even he cannot let go. The syntaxes of the ballad, the couplet, the well-turned multi-clausal sentence, the rhetorical tract, and many other old models remain, but are contorted, incapacitated, and dispossessed of their monolithic wholeness and oneness: that is, they are disabled.

Boulez's integral serialism shares with Joyce's Wakean expansionism an unprecedented employment of, and reliance on, pre-compositional resources of the artist's own formulation or compilation. I illustrated in the previous chapter how, while literature cannot be axiomatically regulated as music can, a text such as *Finnegans Wake*, or Calvino's explicitly combinatorial *Invisible Cities*, may be systematically arranged. The term *systematic* is distinct from words such as *methodical*. For a work to be viewed as systematically conceived, its formation must have been guided by meta-textual resources and/or principles of the composer's own devising or choice (which may have resulted in him or her proceeding "with only a faint idea of the "final work""). Later in this chapter I consider the systematic disintermediation in II.2 as a function of the broader "difficulty and disability" of Joyce's project.

2. Some night lessons from Boulez: The meta-structuration of II.2 and the *Third Sonata*

But I will first address the most prominent area of alignment between II.2 and Boulez's *Third Sonata*: the dynamic four-fold meta-structuration of each work. The two texts are, in different but comparable ways, each made up of four *subtexts*. These subtexts act at once separately, and in both oppositional and cooperative discourse.

It is essential, before embarking on a parallel analysis of these two works, to provide some basic information on the genesis and technical constitution of the *Sonata*. But this chapter remains centrally concerned with *Finnegans Wake*, the musicological summary I give here being intended simply as an aid to that literary analysis.

With his *Second Sonata* for piano, Boulez took Webern's lead in extending Schoenberg's serial technique to the ordering, not only of pitches, but also of elements including rhythm and dynamics. This led to his innovation of "perpetual expansion", a kind of open form whereby works could vary substantially with each performance and remained in a constant state of revision. These works aspired in part to the condition (or conditionality) of Stéphane Mallarmé's *Livre*, a free-form collection of poems begun in the early 1870s and left unfinished at the poet's death in 1898. But, as O'Hagen notes, "if Boulez is to be taken at his word, the Sonata had been completed at least in its initial form prior to the publication of Mallarmé's sketches for '*Le Livre*'" (O'Hagen, 1997, p. 59).

The *Third Sonata* was the first such open form composition. Worked on between 1955 and 1957 and revised in 1963, it was never completed in any conventional sense. The sonata is conceived of by Boulez as having five movement-like sections known as "*Formants*" (not to be confused with the term's standard denotation of a distinct timbral element). In the article '*Sonate, que me veux-tu?*', Boulez characterises his formants in bodily terms, conceiving that, "the physiognomy of any work is determined by its structural *formants*, i.e. by specific general characteristics capable of generating developments" (Boulez, 1990b, p. 148). The formants of the *Third Sonata* are titled *Antiphonie*, *Trope*, *Constellation* [*– Miroir*], *Strophe*, and *Séquence*; but only *Formant 2: Trope* and *Formant 3: Constellation* [*– Miroir*] have been published. The fragmentary Formants 1, 4, and 5 – and indeed the overall work – are regarded as "work[s] in progress" (Boulez, 1990b, p. 148). This said, Boulez himself performed his material for the unpublished formants as part of his 1958 recording of the sonata, and a few other interpreters have done so since.

In '*Sonate, que me veux-tu?*' ('Sonata, what do you want from me?') Boulez explicates the torturous formation and attenuated form of his sonata. *Formant 2: Trope* – which is

(notionally) structured as a circle, or an arc, and was published in the format of a spiral-bound booklet – is made up of four sections: *Parenthèse*, *Glose*, *Commentaire*, and *Texte* (‘Parenthesis, Gloss, Commentary, and Text’). I list these here in the order in which they are played in recordings by Paavali Jumppanen and Dimitri Vassilakis among others. My reading of the sonata draws most often from Jumppanen’s recording. When referring to this specific recording I indicate this with the code “PJ”. Below is some basic information on the sections – or “sub-formants” as I will refer to them – of *Formant 2: Trope*, the significance of which to II.2 I explore below. *Trope* is the formant that bears closest comparison to “Night Lessons” on a structural level, and is thus the main focus of my analysis.

Parenthèse. Nettement au-dessous de Lent, ‘clearly slower than *lento*’ – ♩ (crotchet) = 40 (beats per minute), PJ 2 mins 33.

Glose. Lent, ‘*lento*’ – ♩ = 44, PJ 1 min 26.

Commentaire. Nettement moins lent, ‘clearly less slow than *lento*’ – ♩ = 58 - 60, PJ 2 mins 20.

Texte. Presque lent, ‘slightly less slow than *lento*’ – ♩ = 50, PJ 1 min 21.

The sub-formants of *Trope* are played in one of eight different orders chosen between by the pianist from the variously configurable spiral score. Chris Morrison hears *Text* (“probably the simplest of the four sections”) as a logical first sub-formant, and *Commentary* (with its “dramatic chords (including a particularly long-held one at its end)”) as “most like a normal conclusion” (Morrison, 2018, np). These are the positions chosen by Marc Ponthus in his recording. Jumppanen places *Text* last and *Commentary* second to last, while Idil Biret ends with *Commentary* but places *Text* second. Most recordings give each section of *Formant 2: Trope* its own track and place *Trope* before *Formant 3: Constellation – Miroir*. Unusually, Dimitri Vassilakis’s recording presents all four sub-formants of *Trope* and all six of *Constellation – Miroir* as a single track. Moreover, if one is listening for the beginning of any of the sub-formants of *Trope* at the start of his rendering, one will be surprised to hear instead the start of *Constellation – Miroir* (with its sub-formants in their usual reverse order). Marc Ponthus’s version also runs *Formant 3 – Formant 2*, but affords each formant its own (single) track. Like Biret’s, Pi-hsien Chen’s recording runs *Formant 2 – Formant 3* with *Trope*’s sub-

formants (here starting with *Text* and ending with *Gloss*) on their own tracks but all of *Constellation – Miroir*'s on a single track. Remembering that there is no published “*Formant 1*”, it is usual to think of the start of *Formant 2* (the opening of one of its sub-formants) as the beginning of the work. But does this piece *have* a beginning? It has no first “movement” and no fixed opening phrase, so perhaps not. Add to this the fact that Boulez conceived *Trope* as circular, or arc-shaped (beginning and ending on the same plane), and one can begin to see strong resemblances to the dysmorphic superstructure of *Finnegans Wake*.

Morrison's use of the word “normal” here referring to the “conclusion” of a work of music is, as it were, the *normative* one. Unlike Joseph N. Straus's “restoration of normality” (Straus, 2011, p. 47) in the conventional novel plot, and “normal hearing” (Straus, 2011, p. 151) in music appreciation, Morrison's “normal” does not reflect on its own weight. Deriving from the Latin *norma* (denoting a sort of set square), the English “normal” would eventually take on an abstract mathematical meaning of ‘according to rules or a pattern’, but its broader sense of ‘standard’ or ‘usual’ did not emerge until the 19th century, and derogatory permutations including *abnormal* and *subnormal* came later still. What the *Third Sonata* and *Finnegans Wake* offer to disablism is an orderly abnormality that, while it is not “standard” or “usual”, does accord to “rules”.

As Morrison explains, the score of *Constellation – Miroir* is formed of nine large sheets presenting six “constellations”, which, again, function as sub-movements. Three of these constellations are headed “*Points*” (numbered 3, 2, and 1): these notate structures built on single notes and are printed in green. Two constellations are headed “*Blocks*” (numbered II and I): these notate structures built on chords and arpeggios and are printed in red. One constellation is headed “*Mélange*”: this notates a structure built on both single notes and chords. The *Constellation* formant is usually played in its *Miroir* (‘mirror’) sequence: *Mélange – Points 3 – Blocks II – Points 2 – Blocks I – Points 1*. This is contrary to an unpublished version that indicates the sub-formants as played in the opposite (ascending) numerical order. Within each of the formant's six sections, small elements can be arranged in a number of different ways. Boulez has compared the structure to a map of an unfamiliar city within which the performer-interpreter “must direct himself through a tight network of routes” (Morrison, 2018, np); and I think this can be extended to *Formant 2* also.

If, in accordance with Boulez himself, we hear/see the *Sonata* as a narrative work, then its street-map-like avant-garde textuality surely brings it very close to *Finnegans Wake*. The disablist qualities displayed by these disordered cartographical syntagms – underpinned by each work's genetic back story – chime somewhat with those of Jonathan Lethem's far more

mono-linear but nonetheless dysfunctionalist *Motherless Brooklyn* (as analysed by Bent Sørensen). As I discussed in Chapter 1B, Lethem's navigation of New York by way of the protagonist's Tourettic mentality allows for a "non-epistemological devolution" of the stuff of narrative. To quote Sørensen once again,

...the disorder infects the sequentiality and causality of events, and leads to order becoming contingent and at best temporary; ultimately, to the Tourette sufferer, the whole of New York ... resembles a Tourettic body, always in motion, never going anywhere with teleological certainty. (Sørensen, 2005, p. 5)

The music of *Formant 3* broadly alternates between sparse, fragile episodes and denser, more forceful ones. I return to how this formant's explicit "openness" relates to the less formalised indeterminacy of *Wake* reading later in this chapter.

But it is *Formant 2: Trope* that has the strongest structural affinity with *Finnegans Wake* II.2. Robert Black writes:

Both published formants of Boulez's Sonata are [in the vein of *FW* II.2] assembled from distinct strains of musical text. In Trope, the sub-sections "Parenthèse" and "Commentaire" each contain one obligatory strain of music, played in strict tempo, which is interrupted by a series of literally parenthetical insertions, in "free" tempo. These interpolations are theoretically optional — the performer, *like a reader with footnotes*, may omit them at will — but they are, in my opinion, as *functionally* indispensable to the essential cycles of the narrative as the analogous commentary in "Night Lessons" is to its central text. (Black, 1982, pp. 188-9) (*My italics*).

I have italicised "*functionally*" here in order to stress that it is as much to the *dysfunctioning as to the functioning* of this music that all elements may be thought "indispensable".

O'Hagen has criticised Black for his sometimes convoluted and often extra-musicological approach (not reflected in the above quotation), remarking that, "Robert Black opts for a philosophical rather than a musically analytical approach to the subject, and his commentary is accordingly couched in non-specific and at times impenetrable prose". He then quotes Black:

The performer's rejection of a single linear, temporal dimension may finally loom as a mostly private entertainment. But, if he can bestow upon these recondite strains of music the intensely defining characterizations of premonitory or retrospective reference, he may, through a relentless pursuance of this tactic of polyvalent transaction, elude a fixed temporal center and manage at least to suggest the provisional, indeterminate radiations of time which are mirrored in the work's syntactical strategies. (O'Hagen, 1997, p. 62)

Black's essay may be felt to encumber its readers unnecessarily with the extra baggage of Adornian and Derridean theory, and to "lead us" (266.27) astray with its parallel equation of works by Carter and Ashbery. But at its heart the study gives a revealing pianist - musicologist's perspective on the remote yet profound artistic kinship between II.2 and Boulez's sonata. Where Harbinson speaks of "performer indeterminacy" (Harbinson, 1989, p. 16), Black views the performer of the sonata as in part its "reader" (Black, 1982, p. 188). But there is no sense in either essay that the performer agency born of Boulez's devolution of structural choice to the pianist equates either to Barthesian authorial demotion or to Cagean "chance-operations". As Harbinson notes,

Boulez emphatically dismissed "chance" as a viable compositional technique in the article 'Alea' in 1964. What a performer meets in the Third Piano Sonata is "choice", not "chance": the former demands informed and carefully considered decisions (within controlled boundaries) and allows the performer to become more involved in the creative musical process. (Harbinson, 1989, p. 20)

Where in II.2 reader "improvisation" is limited by meta-level choices already made by the author, so in the sonata an interpreter always produces the same piece, but "reads" it in one of a number of different basic ways. Here music's "condition" of *conditionality* (as *aspired to* by some modernist literatures) is given radical (though circumscribed) formal expression even in advance of its performance. The *alterity* of Pater's "music" (its inherent ineffability compared to other arts) is pre-textually delimited here in order to validate its indeterminacy in performance. II.2's encouragement – or necessitation – of indeterminate reading arises from its radical meta-syntax. We see the same in the sonata, which constitutionally defies the expectations even of performers/listeners familiar with the Schoenbergian serial techniques on which it is ultimately based. Where in II.2 the page layout is nonlinear, demanding that the reader's eye dart from left to right to centre, from centre to bottom and back, the sonata

requires extraordinary alertness of its performer (who is asked to make structurative decisions on the fly) and of its listener (who may compare one performance to another, only to find them sharing merely the most dream-like resemblance).

We find in both works clear subversions of normative formal principles. The “score” of each – though fixed in its graphic state – demands its own disfiguration and dismemberment in realisation. Though each work’s – as it were – *genomic* underpinning is sound, its interpretive iterations dis-cohere from one another as multiple aberrations of their genetic origins.

A disablist engagement with II.2 exposes *congenital* – though not *pathological* – formative disintegrity in the chapter. Tobin Siebers directly equates the corporeal human body with the work of art, conceiving that “all bodies are not created equal when it comes to aesthetic response.” (Siebers, 2006, p. 63). It can clearly be seen in relation to human bodies both corporeal and artistic that ideas of *integrity* (as in ‘wholeness/oneness’) are frequently conflated with those of *integrity* (as in ‘wellness/goodness’). Contact with a *disintegrated* body or work of art can be feared as potentially detrimental to an – by arbitrary criteria – *integrated* body or reader/listener. In the case of music, while a “euphonious” melody is heard to possess intrinsic structural integrity, a tone row (with its four basic opposing incarnations and consequent anti-linearity) will often be perceived as broken or dismembered. That the row and its permutations in fact possess more inward coherency than do – for example – variations on a diatonic theme does not save serial music from this misapprehension. Such a *lack* of oneness or wholeness has also been construed in the composition of *Finnegans Wake* II.2, though not always as a negative factor. Writing of the making/make-up of “Night Lessons”, Fordham perceives that,

the footnotes create a continually bifurcating progress, a bifurcation (or rather tetrafurcation if we include the margin notes) which the reading eye follows. Joyce’s re-readings, re-writings and revisions are dramatised in this chapter; and the drama reminds us of the subversive potential, in relation to the “original” conception, in *all* Joyce’s revisions. (Fordham, 1997, p. 171)

The pressures that build up within such plurifurcated texts during their construction fundamentally stress, indeed explode, notions (queried by Fordham here) of “‘original’ conception”. The – in one sense – lack of structural unity of these works, or to view it differently, their unity of many rather than of one, presents, through the lens of “past

subjectivity”, an image of degeneration rather than generation, mutation rather than development.

Just as an encounter between a deformed or dysfunctional body and a normate body tends to produce, not an able-typical dynamic, but a disabled one, which in turn disables the normate body, so all readers of “Night Lessons” are, in this sense, disabled. But the engagement of readers with sensory or learning impairments with the chapter may provide the clearest illustration of this disabling dynamic. There is, for instance, no obvious way of fixing a reading sequence for the central and peripheral materials of II.2 in order to make an audiobook for blind or learning-impaired Wakeans. In his recording, Patrick Horgan recites the chapter’s opening right-hand marginal note – “UNDE ET UBI” (260.R01) (‘whence and where’) – before the paragraph with whose beginning it aligns. While this seems logical (since all subsequent right-hand notes align with the beginning of a paragraph), it runs against left-to-right reading convention. Horgan and others’ placing of the unruly *left*-hand notes is less determinate. McHugh and other commentators are forced to address the text schematically, avoiding questions of diachronic reader agency and textual simultaneity. Some sort of enhanced digital talking book might allow for dynamic flicking from the main text to Shem’s, Shaun’s, and Issy’s interventions. But this would itself be liable to render mono-linear and stable a reading process that Joyce may have intended to be multi-valent and disintegral. Robert Black’s feeling that the interpolated sections of *Trope* are merely “*theoretically*” optional extends to the footnotes of II.2, both being, in his opinion, “functionally indispensable to the essential cycles of the narrative” (*my italics*). He does not attribute this functional indispensability to the marginalia, seeming to view the footnotes’ displacement to the bottom of the page as implying an auxiliary status not implied by the left-right displacement of the margin notes. Perhaps, then, all three sets of “interpolations” are in fact nothing of the sort. As I have argued, however, while Issy’s, Shem’s, and Shaun’s contributions may be “indispensable”, they are not – as the parenthesised passages in *Trope* are not – truly integral. The interpolations in *Trope* can be omitted (even if in practice they are often not), and Issy’s footnotes in particular, but also the twins’ sidenotes, clearly invite their own potential excision – or at least transection – from the main text. But since Boulez’s own recording of the *Third Sonata*, its first commercial recording by Charles Rosen and supervised by Boulez, and most subsequent recordings retain all of the “optional” sections, we may well conclude that this “optionality” is in fact an ironic statement of the overall integrality of the sonata. We may similarly understand that nothing in the printed text of “Night Lessons” is *dispensable* – or even, in actual fact, auxiliary.

We can find a comparable dysfunctional tension between peripheral and central texts (though arising from very different intentions) in another almost eighteen-year project, namely George Chapman's translations of Homer. Colin Burrow notes that during this period Chapman "grew bored, ran short of time, changed his mind, changed his patron, had moments of inspiration and phases of weariness". "We know this", Burrow continues, "because he tells his readers that it is happening. Time features almost as another character in his translation, and is frequently alluded to in the marginal commentary" (Burrow, 2002, np). As Fordham shows, the spatio-textual con/destruction of II.2 impacts and comments on both the internal (fictional) and external (read) temporalities of the narrative. The fictive a priori addition of the marginalia and footnotes casts them into a pataphorical future inaccessible even to the real-life author. And at the level of reading, the pausing or interruptive action required to read both marginal- and foot-notes punctures the illusion of a narrative time apart from reading time. This (disablist) dislocation recalls Elizabeth Freeman's "queer temporalities". Burrow goes on to conceive – interestingly for present purposes – that,

The effort involved in importing Homer into English is registered and transmitted to its readers partly by means of Chapman's frequent use of mammoth portmanteau words ('hony-sweetnesse-giving-minds'; 'Fate-borne-Dogs-to-Barke'). These words force English to emulate Greek compound adjectives, and are often accompanied by marginal notes which fulminate against the feebleness of French and Latin translations that have lamely missed the point of the Homeric epithets that Chapman attempts to recreate. (Burrow, 2002, np)

Setting aside the resemblance of Chapman's multi-lexical pile-ups to Joyce's, the fact that Chapman's margin notes, like Joyce's, are sometimes in English (italicised), other times in Latin (un-italicised), and comment, sometimes wryly, other times austere, on the process of writing and the nature of narrative and poetics, is very striking. And if we feel that "Wakese" is *all Greek* to us, we find a literal equivalent to this in Chapman's marginal inclusion of Ionic Greek fragments, which the translator clearly felt spoke best for themselves. Chapman's frustration with the Latin and French renderings from which he in part worked, and his implied dissatisfaction with his own efforts, suggest complications in this just-short-of-two-decade-long gestation period and a malformation in its product. Such interjections as "A *metaphoricall Hyperbole, expressing the Winter's extremitie of sharpnesse*" (Chapman, 2000, p. 103) could as easily have been made (non-standard spelling and all) by Shem or Issy. And

the Greek-to-Latin translation “Per asperiora vitare laevia” (tagged onto the phrase “by the sharper ill / Shunning the smoothe”) (Chapman, 2000, p. 102) could be imagined sounding in Shaun’s voice.

As with II.2 and the *Third Sonata*, uncertainty as to what is “indispensable” in the text of Chapman’s Homer and what “optional” sets up a disintegrative (disabling) textual dynamic between translator-author and reader. Both Joyce’s and Boulez’s (and perhaps also Chapman’s) texts can, however, be seen to *able* – as much as to disable – reader-interpreters. As Crispi shows, in composing II.2, Joyce disabled his own draft material by distortively cramming it into the new semantically incommensurable environment of *Finnegans Wake*. But as I have argued in earlier chapters, textual disablement can give rise to reader *ablement* and interpretive *hyper-ablement*. Even in choosing a specific recording of *Trope*, listeners – wittingly or unwittingly – opt for a particular ordering of the formant’s larger, intermediate, and smaller structural elements. And in performance, a pianist interactively reconfigures the text at all of these levels, operating it like a complex machine for producing variants of Boulez’s initial conception. Harbinson explains that,

The parenthetical material may be performed or omitted, much as a medieval *trope* [a chant with interpolations of extra words with extra music] may or may not have been performed during a particular performance. (Harbinson, 1989, p. 17)

The understanding that, like choral tropes, the sub-formants of *Trope* may be omitted compounds the sense of the sonata as “ill-formed” and unstable. Other formant titles are equally self-explosive. Unlike “plainsong” or “the music of certain Central African tribes” (Boulez, 1990b, p. 149), a piece for one instrument cannot, as *Formant 1* aspires to, achieve “Antiphony”. And the incomplete *Formant 4* should, if it stands in for the strophe in a Greek choral ode, be placed first. These misdesignations are perhaps printed textual expressions of a work – and a composer – in crisis: a compositional process falling apart for want of a centre to hold it.

What counts as text, what as para-text, and what as meta-text in the cases of both *Trope* and “Night Lessons” is not clear. The present thesis conceives of musical works as texts just as literary works are texts. In this conception, the music itself is the text (equivalent to the printed page of a novel) and the score is pre-textual (in itself non-signifying like a sequence of computer code). Here an intermediary (a performer) is required for semantic-aesthetic comprehension to be enabled. But the *Third Sonata* comes with *text* (in the conventional

sense) attached. Above I gave Boulez's sub-formant sub-titles, his French language performance instructions and their English translations, and the durations of Jumppanen's recordings. *Trope* is not a trope, *Text* is not – in the commonly understood sense – a text, and to conceive of Boulez's musical writing here as “lento”, or “slightly faster or slower than lento”, is challenging. Of the five recordings to which I refer in this chapter, only one (Jumppanen's) gives the performance instructions. All give the pataphorical sub-titles, and all give durations (different in each instance but of broadly equivalent relative values). The heading *Gloss*, for instance, really tells us nothing (on its own) about the music we hear. *Lento* becomes a more meaningful designation with repeated listenings. The only actual data here are the track timings. *Finnegans Wake* does not centrally tell the story of a wake, no character called Finnegan figures prominently in the “narrative”, and the song ‘Finnegan's Wake’ undergoes such transformations that it hardly signifies in its own right at all. Though all the themes of the song (building, drunkenness, wakes, arguments, resurrection) are signified at various points, sometimes through direct allusion to the song, the deconstructive process takes us beyond appropriation, expropriating the material for such remote purposes as to entirely short-circuit the original musical and lingual poetics. In II.2, Shaun's titular paragraph headings are liminal to the main text as though emblazoned on its exterior. Shem's *graphiti* (as it were) equally feel a priori and para-semantic. Issy's footnotes meanwhile weave themselves intra-semantically into the aggregate material of the central text. The interpositioning of superscript numbers to indicate at what points in the main text Issy's sub-narrative should come into play resembles the numbering and optionality of the sub-sections of the sub-formants of *Trope*. In a given reading I might (at the point indicated) read: “Mater Mary Mercerycordial of the Dripping Nipples, milk's a queer arrangement” (260.F04-05); and in a given performance I might play (were I able) “C2” at the indicated moment in *Commentary*, or “P3” where indicated in *Parenthesis*. In another reading I might omit “Mater Mary...” and in another performance omit C2 or P3. These elements are thus either highly flexible, or highly dysfunctional. But at least Shem's, Shaun's, and Issy's contributions are always in the text (on the page) and always accessible. The “page” of the sonata (the audio surface encountered by listeners) sometimes lacks certain elements, though not, as mentioned, in either Boulez's or the first commercial recording. At the para- or pre-textual level, we may read several concert programs or CD booklets and never see the apparently important note “Lento”. Both formant and chapter may be viewed as constitutionally incomplete, in that each cannot be fully appreciated without specific external information. But with the *Wake* we do not face the uncertainty of textual inclusion/omission: it is our

choice to heed or disregard Issy or Shem, and neither the core narrative voice nor the three textual intermediaries can substantively influence this decision.

3. Score, page, and map: Navigating Boulez’s text and Joyce’s “classbook”

While, unlike in *Formant 2*, the sub-sections of *Formant 3: Constellation* [– *Miroir*] are usually played in the “mirrored” order favoured by Boulez, its smaller elements are likewise designed to be (re)arranged by their performer. Ending with a quotation from ‘*Sonate, que me veux-tu?*’, Black traces the origins of *Formant 3* back to *Finnegans Wake* II.2, writing:

Constellation – Miroir also comprises two discrete strains of musical material: Points, “structures based on pure isolated pitches” ... and Bloc[k]s, “structures based on everchanging resonant aggregates” In this formant, seen as another realization of the devices in “Night Lessons,” the performer’s task is rather one of navigation, as he must negotiate a path — chosen from many possible ones — through the different strains of text with the help of “street-maps.” (Black, 1982, p. 189)

Boulez wrote of his sonata that it

...comprises many directional possibilities, like a “street-map of a town: you don’t change the map, you perceive the town as it is, but there are different ways of going through it, different ways of visiting it

And he goes on:

...my idea is not to change the work at every turn nor to make it look like a complete novelty, but rather to change the viewpoints and perspectives from which it is seen while leaving its basic meaning unaltered. (Boulez, 1976, p. 82)

It takes little imagination to view the streets of Wakean Dublin as analogous with “strains” of Wakean meaning. While, like *Formant 3*, The infrastructure of II.2 is less flexible than that of *Formant 2*, the streets and strains of *Finnegans Wake* wind through its fixed wholeness in a *mélange* of indeterminate trajectories, connecting a constellation of points and aggregates that are divided, inverted, mirrored, and reversed from an array of character, narrative, and

reader perspectives. This said, it is helpful – and perhaps unavoidable – for individual readers to establish early on how they will interpret the format of the “street-map”. For example, does one perceive Shem’s and Shaun’s satellite texts as left and right? as contiguous? or as horizontally primary and tertiary? Is the text of II.2 one unfolded map, or two, three or four superimposed maps? Can one understand the centre without exploring the outer reaches?

Some tips might be sought here from a master interpreter, not of Joyce, but of Boulez. At a forum on the music of Boulez in Paris in 1974, the Boulez specialist Claude Helffer gave a self-effacing insight into his preparations for playing *Constellation – Miroir* that might indirectly suggest ways of reading II.2:

The first thing to do is to find the possible routes, whilst feeling one’s way; basically, it is necessary to work each sequence separately at first in order to join them together later. Little by little one is led to connect two or three sequences where you sense in a subjective manner that this connection is logical or that another does not please you. ... Before playing ‘Constellation – Miroir’, I have three routes in my head, prepared, which do not prevent me from sometimes being abruptly led, on stage, to take a route that I have not foreseen. (O’Hagan, 1997, pp. 51-2)

Helffer’s conception of the *Sonata* as requiring pianists to “work [through] each sequence separately” in preparation for when he or she will “join them together” recalls Herman’s reading of Joycean combinatorics in relation to Schoenberg as a “(re)arrangement of elements ... into well-formed sequences or strings” (Herman, 1994, p. 475). The compelling disablist idea of “feeling one’s way” through the graphic-sonic-tactile universe of this work may lead one to consider what the great pianist of *Ulysses*, the “blind stripling”, might have made of it. The disability imposed upon even a virtuoso like Helffer may be viewed as both formative and definitive of this work.

Such ambiguity as Helffer’s regarding whether, or to what degree, the sonata is aleatory (or “open”) in construction stems partly from the transitional music-historical period during which it was conceived. John Cage’s influence – as the more established figure – was at this point dominant over Boulez’s, and thus “improvisation” and “indeterminacy” were powerfully current concepts. In a complaint about Boulez’s apparent jumping onto the aleatory bandwagon of the late 1950s (retrospectively indicating last-minute performer reorderings of the sonata), O’Hagen writes:

At no point do the playing instructions stipulate that the choices have to be left to the moment of performance, and it has been my own practice in performing the piece to make the decisions in advance and order the sections accordingly. In his introduction to the 1970 Rosen performance, Boulez implicitly forbids this approach. "...you decide at the last moment how you are playing ... the movement is not written normally ... you must not read the page from top to bottom but you have the choice of succession to yourself. ...". Should one take Boulez at his word on this matter? The issue is a complex one, given the controversy surrounding the whole question of chance procedures and Boulez's attempts to distance himself from all but the most tightly controlled element of performer choice. (O'Hagan, 1997, pp. 49-50)

As though proposing the sort of *advance* reader self-orientation for II.2 that Helffer suggests for the sonata, Joyce gives us an "IMAGINABLE ITINERARY THROUGH THE PARTICULAR UNIVERSAL" (260.R3-8). It reads:

Whence. Quick lunch by our left, wheel, to where. Long Livius Lane, mid Mezzofanti Mall, diagonalising Lavatory Square, up Tycho Brache Crescent, shouldering Berkeley Alley, querfixing Gainsborough Carfax, under Guido d'Arezzo's Gadeway, by New Livius Lane till where we whiled while we withered. Old Vico Roundpoint. (260.8-15)

But while this Dublin is particular in its urban universality, our readings are universal only in their cognitive particularity. As we *quick march* on our way, *by our left* is Shem's cursive scrawl "*Menly about peebles*" (260.L5-6), a corruption of the nineteenth-century Irish periodical title *Mainly About People*. What we make of this is a matter of great subjectivity: it is, indeed, *mainly about people's* individual perspectives. The passage is also *about people* in that it alludes to seven famous men broadly associated with seven areas of study obliquely explored in the chapter. These are: Titus Livius (historian), Giuseppi Mezzofanti (linguist), Philip Lavater (physiognomist, poet, theologian), Tycho Brache (astronomer), George Berkeley (philosopher), Thomas Gainsborough (painter), and Guido d'Arezzo (composer, inventor of the tonic sol-fa).

As we round the curve of "Tycho Brache Crescent", we unavoidably collide with Issy's superscript "2", directing us to her footnote "Mater Mary Mercerycordial of the Dripping Nipples, milk's a queer arrangement". Here for only the second time we must consider whether Issy's lists of remarks are whole and largely independent from, or partial and entirely

dependent on, the main text: a running subtextual commentary, or a series of optional interstitial adjuncts.

Alongside the street itinerary, Shem has scribbled: “*Dont retch meat fat salt lard sinks down (and out)*” (260.L07-10). One wonders what Boulez might have felt on noting the encrypted presence of that talisman of diatonicism, the tonic sol-fa: *do-re-mi-fa-sol/so-la-si/ti-do + ut* (the original name for the tonic *do*). The closest reading might interpret this as instructing us that, as we reach each of these seven streets named after seven intellectual luminaries, we should hear them in the tones of an ascending major scale. Much later we hear the sol-fa in retrograde: “Does she lag soft fall means rest down?” (407.27-8). Shem’s weird mnemonic for the ascending sol-fa (reminiscent of “Every Good Boy Deserves Football” for the notes of the treble clef) has resonances elsewhere in II.2 in “sit and knit on solfa sofa” (268.13-14) and “∴ man, in shirt, is how he is più la gonna è mobile and ∴ they wonet do ut” (292.11-12). Along with *ut* (that earlier name for *do*) and *do* itself, we have in this second instance a word meaning ‘moveable’. The sol-fa is also known as “the moveable do”. *Do* (the tonic or “root note”) is the ground zero of the diatonicism that Boulez sought in his early career to blast into a million pieces. It is the home away from which Schoenberg’s comically misnamed *do*-decaphony led us. Despite himself, Joyce the arch-diatonicist also leads us away from home here, subsuming both the literal *do* of homocentric harmony and a metaphorical *do* of homocentric semantics in a confusion of sound-meanings each expelled from functional literary “harmony” in an explosion of irregular fragments. Joyce constructs a complicated semantic equation, employing actual mathematical syntax in the shape of the symbols for ‘because’ and ‘therefore’. The tonic sol-fa is a sort of awkward halfway house between abstract musical syntax and semanticised lingual syntax. As Maria (soon to be von Trapp) will tell you, the phonemes of the sol-fa in its English version each (with one exception) carry a non-musical denotation: ‘doe, ray, me, far, sow, (la), tea’, and doe again. ‘La’ is merely “a note to follow so”. In Italian *do* simply indicates the note C; but the rest of the sequence (in ascending order) denotes: ‘king, me, ago, sun, her, and you’, before we return to C. It is intended that this will help us to contextualise the notes the phonemes represent in an unfamiliar melody as we learn to “sight sing”: “when you know the words to sing, you can sing most anything”. Here semantics are used and abused in the service of syntax. As a teaching method that might be more impediment than pedagogy, the sol-fa fits nicely into the disordered didacticism of II.2. The *Wake* children’s internalised teacher (their Maria) leads them (“lead us seek” (266.27)) a merry dance through various academic disciplines, misleadingly entertaining and also perhaps psychologically scarring them.

Knowledge (of geometry, of music, of sex, of God) is a disruptive influence. As adults we partially escape this frightening realm of enforced knowledge acquisition: until, that is, we force ourselves to grapple with such difficult material as *Finnegans Wake* or the *Third Sonata*. In “la gonna è mobile” (‘the skirt is moveable’) we have an allusion to ‘La donna è mobile’ (‘Woman is fickle’) from Verdi’s *Rigoletto*: the supposed unknowability and changeability of women being a key trope of this chapter. Through all these interconnections a can of intellectual, epistemological, and semantic worms is opened, and its contents spilled all over the place, from the starting point of an innocent – indeed childish – learning game. By so defamiliarizing and re-semanticising the tonic sol-fa, Joyce brings it aesthetically – if not technically – closer to the Boulezian “basic set”. The “female deer” and “drink with jam and bread” of *The Sound of Music* are replaced with hilarious and disturbing anti-meanings that suggest internally sonic-semantic contortions akin to the inversions, retrogrades, retrograde inversions, and more integrated procedures of the *Third Sonata*.

We apparently find invoked here, as well as the seven notes of the diatonic scale, the seven disciplines of the Medieval *Trivium* and *Quadrivium*. The famous men after whom the seven streets are named seem to represent (though not in isolation or any particular order) the *Quadrivium*’s music, arithmetic, geometry, and astronomy, and the *Trivium*’s grammar, rhetoric, and logic. I concede that the denotation of principles such as *the geometrical* and *the logical* is a kind of outward representational faculty that music *does* possess. It has been shown by Iannis Xenakis and others that musical “figures” can “describe” geometric figures; and music can, through its own logical underpinning, indicate procedures such as induction and deduction. I think we can safely say, nonetheless, that music does not (in itself, in the real world) have the capacity to direct us through topographical space. In Wakean (il)logic, however, perhaps it does. Perhaps the street itinerary through which we are guided at this point in the text constitutes a differently-coherent music lesson. Both the von Trapps and the *Wake* children relate spatial bodily movement to movement through the sol-fa. The von Trapps render a flight of steps a sort of silent piano up and down which they jump to indicate tonal shifts. Issy, Shaun, and Shem move through the Dublin streets via seven key points coordinated with the seven diatonic tones.

But beyond such abstract spatial orientation must come, both with temporally unregulated novel and temporally regulated sonata, decisions as to the realtime navigation of the semantic-aesthetic spaces that the “maps” schematise. As I have outlined, in the case of *Trope* and *Constellation – Miroir*, and in a different way that of “Night Lessons”, some dynamic editing of the map is bound to take place. Some portions will be deemed (in Black’s

words) “optional”, and others “indispensable”. Using slightly different terms, Harbinson places this in historical context, writing that,

[in *Trope*, t]he performer must choose to include or omit the various optional passages. ... [O]ne either regards [them] as isolated developments that interrupt, yet comment on, the sequential discourse of the mandatory passages (as in the process of “troping”), or ... as forming a complete and continuous entity that exists parallel to the fixed progression of the movement. (Harbinson, 1989, p. 19)

The disharmonious three-fold chorus (in the Greek dramatic sense) of Issy, Shem, and Shaun is echoed in the “*Gloss*”, “*Parenthesis*”, and “*Commentary*” of *Trope*, but even more so in the title “*Trope*” itself. Though Boulez’s “*Trope*” invokes the modern musical chorus rather than the ancient dramatic one, it nonetheless places the work in a partial epistemological discourse with the *voices off* in II.2 as well as with the unpublished *Strophe*.

As the *Third Sonata* is claimed by its composer to be a sort of reading of the “Night Lessons” chapter, we may find encrypted in the work Boulez’s own interpretation of the “street-map” of II.2. The headings of the four sections of *Formant 2* have unmistakably literary denotations. From this we can read that Boulez sought some sort of narrative structure for the sonata, hearing it as highly syntagmatic as well as radically paradigmatic. Following this logic, his use of *parenthesis*, *commentary*, *gloss*, and *text* as structurative descriptors confirms, but also problematises, a sequential understanding of his reading both of “Night Lessons” and of his own sonata. “Parenthesis” certainly suggests interruptions of the flow of the main text, and “trope” similarly has – particularly in a musical context – interpositional denotations. But a commentary may be either interruptive of, or parallel to, the main text on which it comments; it may even be a separate text altogether.

Part of Fordham’s analysis of the role of Issy’s footnotes in II.2 may – in an analogy with Boulez’s *Gloss* – aid a differently-musical rereading of that sub-formant and of its role in the broader formant. Citing Issy’s footnotes “law of the jungerl” (47478-168v), “making it up as we goes along” (169v), “a question of pull” (168v), “understudy my understandings” (171v), “wipe your glosses with what you know” (474748-175v) and “As you say yourself” (172v)”, Fordham observes of the footnotes in general that,

[t]hey are not cryptically referential but, if anything, explanatory and written in an uncommonly lucid language. They are not mediated by other note-taking but written as

direct responses: they seem to be glosses to the central text as it is encountered during a re-reading which becomes its re-writing. (Fordham, 1997, p. 149)

While Issy's *speech* is certainly "direct", "The immediacy of what she says is balanced by the awareness that she does not inhabit linear time, but dwells in the cyclical and serial time of sequential rereadings" (Rabaté, 1991, p. 104). While Rabaté is not writing about serial music here, its indirect presence may be felt in his conception of anti-linear "reading"/permutation; and he can elsewhere be found contrasting different syntactic structures in *Finnegans Wake* as "diatonic" and "chromatic" (Rabaté, 1986, p. 142). Speaking in terms of *glosses*, and viewing the *Wake* in general as a highly legible text (as Fordham does), Rabaté takes the nonetheless dysfunctionalist stance that,

this lucid epic of disillusion exploits the pleasure we still take in expecting stories to be told to help us lose our knowledge, shed it gloss after gloss in the bottomless structure of perforated stories (Rabaté, 1986a, p. 145-6).

I have endeavoured in this thesis to restrict post-rationalisation of extant critical work as either disablist or ableist. But Rabaté's positive narrative of "disillusion"/dissolution, cognitive loss, and structural perforation presents a text in *Finnegans Wake* of "pleasure"-giving deformation, constructive dysfunction, and "lucid" incomprehension: all indicators of "disablist", rather than – or perhaps integrated with – "prodigious" and/or "normal" reading and writing.

Though Fordham's reading can obviously not be transferred directly to the *Gloss* sub-formant of *Trope*, it is useful – in light of the "Night Lessons" association – to consider quite what Boulez meant by his use of such literary terms, and what this might mean to the nature of the music. If Fordham is right to think of Issy's interventions as gloss-like, may we similarly read *Gloss* and the *Gloss*-like material throughout *Formant 2* as "explanatory" and "lucid"? Jumppanen places *Gloss* second, and Biret and Vassilakis place it first. My own foibles notwithstanding, we might feel it apt that a functioning gloss should come after at least *some* of the music has been played. But then again, the same might be said of *Parenthesis*. The positioning of *Commentary* and *Text* seems – based solely on their designations – less pre-indicated. The overall formant is both fractured and contiguous. For its sections and sub-sections to be moveable they must be able to

be isolated and to have an integrity of their own, but they must also hang together in a variety of different orderings. Fordham continues:

[These early footnotes] self-consciously explain the composition technique and its motivations, prompting ways of reading. Joyce was improvising, relying perhaps on chance, on accident, on those mistakes which are “the portals of discovery”: he was “making it up as he went along” ... observing, commenting on and authorising himself - “As you say yourself” - but through another, through the mind or the precepts (“the law”) of the *young girl* or the *Jung girl* (“the jungerl”). / And as we “wipe [our] glosses with what [we] know”, ... we can identify Lucia as this young girl, who had become Jung’s patient in exactly this period of the writing of the footnotes. (Fordham, 1997, pp. 149-50)

Boulez’s temporally deformative interpolatory passages can only be interruptive and disruptive (either by commission or omission). The relatively atemporal process of reading prose, among other factors, means that Joyce’s interpolatory adjuncts can be excluded or included without too much disruption to the reading experience. For example,

Now, (peel your eyes, my gins, and brush your saton hat, me elementator joyclid, son of a Butt! She’s mine, Jow low jure, be Skibbering’s eagles, sweet tart of Whiteknees Archway) watch him, having caught at the bifurking calamum in his bolsillos, the onelike underworp he had ever funnet without difficultads... (302.11-18)

can without much conscious thought become “Now ... watch him, having caught at the bifurking calamum in his bolsillos, the onelike underworp he had ever funnet without difficultads...”. The “bifurking calamum” (‘bifurcating pen’) here writes two sentences between which we may choose. We might also read here a ‘twice-fucking penis’ fathering two conjoined syntactical children.

Boulez’s use of what I might call *intratextual intersequentiality* was a fundamental part of the *Third Sonata*’s formation from the start. Indeed, a slightly earlier composition, *Le Marteau sans maître*, though not an open work, also incorporates “commentaries” (instrumental sequences connecting settings of the French surrealist poet René Char). This always integrated plurifurcation contrasts with II.2’s gradual textual pluralisation. Crispi writes:

The mimetic strategy of structuring the chapter as an example and parody of the children's own studies, with commentaries and asides, seems obvious once accomplished, but the genetic, textual evidence indicates that Joyce achieved it slowly and fortuitously. (Crispi, 2007, p. 235)

The genetic record does not, as far as I can see, show the classbook format's development to have been particularly slow by Wakean standards. The use of the term "fortuitously" also seems partial considering the boldness of this structurative device. My own reading of this process would be that, while such radical gestures in modernism depend on gradual accretion (while appearing sudden), the classbook structure's emergence is a logical extension of integral modes of construction found throughout the composition of *Finnegans Wake*. As Boulez took serialism beyond the arrangement of tones and harmonies, and even beyond that of dynamics, articulations, timbres, and durations, to the systematised arrangement of sub-movements and movements, so Joyce in II.2 radically systematised the arrangement of blocks of text.

The margin and footnotes are, as shown above, not the only parenthetical (prosthetic) elements of the chapter. Many smaller elements, either literally in parentheses, or otherwise interposed, were affixed and integrated at different stages in the composition process. This includes the five-and-a-half-page-long conditional passage beginning "(for — husk, hiss, a spirit spires...", and ending "...you must, how, in undivided reawliity draw the line somewhawre)" (287.18-292.32). As expeditious as jumping over difficult passages of the *Wake* or retrospectively questioning their functionality may be, it is counter-intuitive for readers of prose. In this respect, listenings to Boulez's sonata might inform differently-intuitive readings of "Night Lessons", and vice versa. Black proposes that,

The lessons of [II.2] suggest to the interpreter of the Sonata at least two possibilities for articulating a narrative mode. / The first hinges on the position that one strain of text functions as a defining elaboration of the other. Even in the "Texte" and "Glose" subsections of Trope, where a multi-semantic barrage of commentary is interwoven among principal strands of thematic material (not sequentially isolated from them, as in "Commentaire" and "Parenthèse"), an intimation that the thread of musical logic is constantly playing out "into lateral associations which in turn disappear into almost inaccessible tenuities of meaning" [Black, 1982, note 37] ... might be sustained. The second possibility posits the two strains of text as equivalent but opposing, portraying

parallel but contradictory worlds (“The Twofold Truth and the Conjunctive Appetites of Oppositional Orexes,” as Shaun pontificates). (Black, 1982, p. 189)

An inversion of this analysis enables a reading of *Finnegans Wake* that finds it so rich with quasi-musical intra-semantic configuration that it can inform performances of a musical work composed after Joyce’s death. If we select the second of Black’s two possibilities, then it is hard to imagine two other artworks so obsessively – even pathologically – concerned with the “equivalent but opposing” elements that form them. As well as being innumerable plural, the *Wake* is also often specifically dual (“Conjunctive” and “Oppositional”) in its “orexes” (plural of Latin *orexis*, ‘appetite’). “[T]he twofold truth” is constantly told, retold and overturned. And Black’s first possibility seems – in the case of reading the *Wake* at least – not incommensurate with his second. Joyce’s “twofold” truths exist within a field of “lateral associations” and “tenuities of meaning” that constitute the “polyphonic” texture of the whole.

4. *The sound of Wakean integral music*

As we have discovered, when it comes to engaging with the two texts analysed in this chapter, each of us is disabled, each of us a remedial reader. Through a model of “prodigious hearing, normal hearing, and disablist hearing” (Straus, 2011, pp. 150-1), Joseph Straus proposes a non-hierarchical paradigm of *the exceptional*, *the typical*, and *the disabled* in music appreciation while indicating the instability of these categories. We can detect even in the expert analyses of Black, O’Hagen, and Helffer an ordinariness, or even abjectness of understanding and interpretation with regard to Boulez’s sonata. Similarly, the most gifted philologists are humbled, and even hobbled, when it comes to reading *Finnegans Wake*. This (partial) leveling might be an encouragement to those readers among us who, when approaching certain modernist texts, count ourselves neither as prodigious, nor even as “normal”, but as disabled.

Black demonstrates that an informed lay understanding of the textual mechanics of Boulez’s *Sonata* can enhance the ear that hears it. But I propose that from a non-expert point of attention the full semantic complexity of the sonata is inaccessible, and that, moreover, close or deep readings of both *Sonata* and *Wake* need neither precede, nor be prioritised above, immediate aesthetic engagement.

While the text of *Finnegans Wake* is only aesthetically realised when recited aloud or declaimed inwardly in silent reading, inversely, only a textual-analytic listening to the *Third Sonata* (with its poly-valent narrative structure) enables a true semantic appreciation. This auricular-centric reading need not require great musicological expertise, and is to some extent subjective. But arguably what the great compositional involution of integral serialism achieves more than anything else is to make music mean something on its own terms, to speak directly in its own voice.

Within this uncanny, alien soundworld, crossings over from objective analytic listening (“high note, low note, loud, quiet”) into subjective active listening (“lively, sombre, thunderous, timid”) are likely to be frequent and spasmodic. I view this neither as an aesthetic problem, nor as a barrier to textual analysis. It might, however, be useful to consult again Pierre Schaeffer’s categorisation of different kinds of listening. After all, Boulez stated that, as well as “a new poetics”, he wanted “a different way of listening” (Klein, 2004, np), a specific, though perhaps hard to define, new method of “reading” music. Of Schaeffer’s four kinds of listening (*entendre, écouter, comprendre, and ouïr*), “*entendre*” seems most applicable. As cited in One B, Schaeffer explains that, “[f]or *entendre*, we retain the etymological sense, ‘to have an intention’. What I hear [*j’entends*], what is manifested to me, is a function of this intention [*intention*]” (Schaeffer, 1966, p. 104). In a powerful sense, sounds in the *Third Sonata* are no more than what we make of them. The notes have objective individual characteristics and relationships with one another, but Boulez’s arrangement of his “neologistic” phrases, chords, and other basic building blocks is so different from that in conventional composition as to be hard to assess based on past experience. Similarly,

the narrativity of *Finnegans Wake*, which cannot be denied, becomes exactly what we, as readers, make up in order to escape from the impasses of self-cancelling or mutually excluding alternatives (Rabaté, 1986a, p. 140)

Even setting aside Black’s “at least two possibilities for articulating a narrative mode” in *Trope* (which he draws from meta-textual sympathies with II.2), the basic building materials from which the plural wholes of II.2 and *Trope* are formed are already challenging both to enjoy subjectively and to analyse objectively. Below is the beginning of a textual-analytic reading I have made of the *Commentary* formant of *Trope* (see appendix for a complete reading of the sonata). This suggests one simple – musicologically non-expert – method of listening to the music in a closer, deeper way. This attemptedly dispassionate reading is, in

fact, both subjective and at points fanciful. But, as shown by Anthony Burgess and other divergent Joyceans, both of these “faults” often coincide with a sincere and authentic understanding. This subjectivity is compounded by the need to choose one particular performance/recording of the sonata (here that by Paavali Jumppanen) that is based on a unique map-reading of the text. My analytic reading begins:

series of strange opposing diads, triads and points, becoming increasingly playful,
peekaboo, plink plonk, *a little like Schoenberg Pierrot Lunaire*, Messiaen *Vingt Regards*
5, Watch of the Son over the Son
(rhythm and articulation more important than tonality, Messiaen’s influence)
ominous (or perhaps pompous) cadence
2 short steps, low mid D, mid G.
sparse scattering of various points and small aggregates, intimate 2/3-way discourse
4 descending tightly broken chords, a little like opening of Messiaen *Vingt Regards* 3,
Exchange, slipping into reverie or losing concentration
staccato stirring and arousal
descending steps in 4/5 pairs before scamper and 5 syllable knocking at door in mid bass
more 2/3-way discourse, longer than before, more agitated, halting and starting, perhaps
Shem and Shaun briefly interrupted by highpitched Issy
slightly boystrous outburst calming down to brief desultory exchange

...

A full appreciation of the *Third Sonata* requires repeated and sustained listening – or, really, “reading” – and an analytical approach not normally associated with music appreciation. One might well say that to attend a single performance unprepared would lead to a failure fully to engage with the work. In this way, the sonata is very much like *Finnegans Wake* (a text the encryption of whose surface demands that it be closely analysed if it is to be fully aesthetically appreciated). Then again, if – as seems certain – each of these pieces was intended to sound deformed and dysfunctional, it may be perverse to lessen its prodigious abnormative impact by trans-iterating the language in which it was written. Perhaps the Boulez loses some of its external brilliance as it is rendered more normal with each listening, and perhaps the surface of *Finnegans Wake* is stripped of some of its aesthetic lustre when its semantics are overexposed. I have asserted in previous chapters that language (including that of the *Wake*) never approximates music, but rather, music mimics language at the level of

syntax. Accordingly, we can see that the apparently chaotic surface of Wakean prose is not like serial music so much as serialism (integral serialism in particular) is, in common with Wakean language, a cryptographic system that disables many conventional markers of the aesthetic. A simple, but I believe revealing, question that can be asked of both the *Wake* and the sonata is that: if Joyce/Boulez had intended us to understand their texts, why did they not make them more understandable? ...

5. II.2, *que me veux-tu?*: Difficulty and disability

... We may perhaps begin to answer this question by returning to the dysgenic genetic history of II.2, before continuing to compare and contrast the formation of “Night Lessons” and the *Third Sonata* through the lens of their difficulty and disability. Crispi writes:

[W]hen Joyce began to add the marginalia, he did so only on the left side. Only later, on the subsequent level (the fair copy), did he also add marginalia on the right side. Finally, the extant fair copy was itself further revised to include the footnotes, the text of which were written as afterthoughts on the versos of the manuscript pages. (Crispi, 2007, p. 235)

Some material outside of the drafts themselves reveals Joyce’s anachronic methods for adding text to first left and then both left and right margins. He apparently began by compiling a list of short and disparate sentences on one sheet (common practice in *Wake* composition), seemingly at this stage not drawing from his notebooks. He then added the direction “Left side” in the top right-hand corner: the earliest sign that he planned to add marginalia (see Crispi, 2007, p. 235). He later (retrogressively) marked these sentences with the letters *a* to *y* in red pencil. Lastly, when he began to assign these fragments as prosthetic left-hand margin notes, he scored through the given sentence in blue pencil and wrote the corresponding letter in the margins of the typescript (again in blue pencil) to indicate where each was to be attached.

As we there are where are we are write it
 we here halt again. By recourse, of course, W¹
 reconnoitering from Town R. 1740 to Tector
 fronted at Linton. And how else do we
 look over like to find that point of
 with the best porter. place? Am that, says the
 and being from
 to follow a big guard.
 Whence.
 Quick lunch, try our left, wheel, swing with dinner
 to where - long L. vines lane, mid Hazzard's; through the park
 Hill, digonising Savatory Square, up Tycho Drake or
 Crescent, shouldering Berkeley's Alley, queefixing
 Gainsborough Carfax, under Guido's Presso,
 Indeway, by New L. vines lane Hill Vice's
 Roundpoint. But fah, be fear. The
 marriage of Mountain setting his
 Moll we know, as any enthrall's pass
 cackling a dogden, in her rumpsey,
 gipsylike chinkemix' pulshend'brag'nde

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left 512a

a) ~~2.0 for pepper there ino parady~~

b) ~~swing too, to Simon Barber~~

c) ~~depleat' - but then!~~

d) ~~3.0 with~~

e) ~~man in, poor buffet in~~

f) ~~firm over~~

g) ~~meat fat salt~~
~~hard sickly down~~

h) ~~the supper left~~
~~the problem - day in~~
~~the spot~~

i) ~~more of, with in the room~~
~~for them - Main study~~

j) ~~All the other, particular~~

k) ~~over the head - stuff in the get~~

l) ~~to see if, then - considerable~~
~~flute - helio' scope~~

MS BL 47478-154 JJA 52:049

These appendages appear not yet to have become integral to the text, but for the most part already display the juvenile tenor that characterises this strand of the published work. They are mocking, cynical, impertinent, and “irrelevant, that is, somewhat ‘Shemish’” (Crispi, 2007, p. 236). In my annotations of *Trope* (illustrated above) I have occasionally used analogies with Shem-Shaun-Issy discourse. The music that makes up *Trope* prominently includes material that I hear subjectively (*entendre*) as Shemish, Shaunish, and Issyish: that is, respectively, playful/childish, authoritative/portentous, and introverted/visionary. I view these categories as aligning broadly with Freud’s categories of ego, superego, and id. The latter fits with Laurent Milesi’s hearing of Issy as “sporting the alienating id-entity of a third-person singular in her enunciation (“I thinks”)” (Milesi, 1989, p. 570). *Trope*’s integral abstraction and consequent multiple interpretability makes attributions of character to the moveable sub-formants a subjective matter. However, I feel, as reflected in my annotations, that *Parenthesis* is predominantly Shaunish, *Gloss* more Shemish, *Commentary* the most varied (multivocal, perhaps standing in for the central column), and *Text* – despite its self-prioritising title – more Issy-like. I make no suggestion of intentionality in this matter on Boulez’s part, but the composer clearly had in mind a *main text* and three *interpolative texts* (all interacting), and must, one imagines, have been aware that the *Wake* chapter concerns three main characters, all children, responding to a father, God, or father/God-like “urtext”. My annotations to (the Issyish) *Text* begin:

(starts with dialogue – Issy and father/teacher/God figure)
 strange little triad ... plaintive, inquiring
 gently instructive reply in bass (point + broken interval)
 soft dyadic ping like light coming on, held
 ...

A judgement as to whether this manner of listening amounts – in a Strausian conception – to “prodigious hearing”, “normal hearing”, or “disablist hearing” is itself subjective. An apprehension of anti-teleological narratives in modernist music may be viewed as prodigious (a dynamic response to the absence of surface narrative), normal (also occurring in listening to conventional music), or disablist (a synaesthetic distortion of an orderly abstract textuality).

It seems unlikely that a piece so full of *character* (profundity, humour, sagacity, playfulness) was written with no sense of characterisation. If Boulez had intended the work

explicitly to communicate personality/ies he could have suggested this with a more anthropomorphic title such as that of his most famous work of this period, *Le marteau sans maître* ('the hammer without a master'). But knowing, as he must have, that music tends to evoke human traits, I suspect that characteristic qualities would have increasingly entered into his compositional thinking.

Crispi suggests that Joyce's list of projected adjuncts to II.2 may not initially have been compiled with the intention of one side's margin notes speaking in an unruly tone and the other in a scholarly tone. He argues that the manuscripts show the idea of setting the voices in an *antiphonal* relationship not yet to have been conceived. He observes that there were still only left-hand margin notes, and that Joyce had not yet formed his plan to have the voices swap sides at some point in the chapter. These structural innovations were, he asserts, introduced later and gradually. Another sheet records the "Night Lessons" format's second bodily mutation, namely the addition of the right-hand marginalia. Joyce divided the page into three horizontal sections and began to use the material in the middle section as a source of more left-hand margin notes, extending his list with the letters z to Ω . He then marked two other entries in the bottom section with the indications "L" and "R", confirming their intended adjunction as marginal comments on the left and right of the central text.

Crispi proposes that the austere Latin phrase "UNDE ET UBI" that Joyce attached as the first right-hand comment "may also be the first indication of ... the assigning of personalities or voices to the opposing margin notes" (Crispi, 2007, p. 236). These comments have a pedantic tenor characteristic of the right-hand marginalia in the published version. They trace the introduction of the more scholastic voice that was always characteristic of the right-hand notes, and gradually came to complement and oppose the irreverent voice on the left.

Fordham characterises this stage of composition thus:

[The newly added right-hand margin notes] read like the pompous annotations made to a text of Jung's or Eliot's "preausteric man and his pursuit of prehysteric woman", "Early notions of acquired rights and the influence of tradition upon the individual" (47478-155). They might be in the style of *transition* editor Eugene Jolas, a disciple of Jung, whose wife was persuading Joyce at this time to send Lucia to the "reverend Jung" as Joyce described him. ... / Joyce began to copy out the section, putting in Shem's notes, and in the space left naturally on the right, began to insert Shaun's notes beginning with Unde et Ubi (47478-157-159). (Fordham, 1997, p. 149)

Crispi's reading of the genesis of *the Shem-Shaun antiphony* focuses on the destructive way Joyce harvested fragments from an intended conventionally continuous section. Milesi's at times musically inflected study sees this phase of composition not as wantonly destructive, but on the contrary as an economical process of repurposing. He may have had in mind the employment, disposal, and recycling of material in musical composition. This is particularly suggested by his use of the term "retrograde". He writes:

Joyce's "retrograde" method of composition for II.2, from a final centrepiece back to prior developments building up to it, became truly regressive when, a unique fact in Wakean history, he decided to dismantle the complete "Scribbledehobble" section, painfully elaborated from notes but undramatic. ... Joyce began cannibalizing 4.5, crossing through as in a notebook and recasting only part of the abortive or deleted material as 5.0 ... into the central column or back into disjointed notes for §5, especially Issy's footnotes, which his dual concern for narrative, thematic balance in II.2 and for Lucia, her psychical counterpart in real life, must have brought about as a necessity. (Milesi, 1989, p. 179)

Using the word "abortive" (similarly deployed by Herman), Milesi takes the form-over-content perspective that integral composition often dictates the specific "painful" actions through which it is carried out: an ostensible authorial *decision* being necessitated by earlier meta-structurative *decisions*. This contrasts with Crispi's ableist notion of autonomous authorial decisions countermanding one another on a diachronic basis. While an author can revise his/her work as part of an ongoing process, unforeseen purposes can also assert themselves and demand the undoing of earlier work, thereby creating a feedback loop.

This is one of a series of systematic means by which Joyce (de)formed the texture of II.2 one draft at a time. Joyce wrote of his own text that,

The part of *F.W.* accepted as easiest is section pp. 104 et seq and the most difficult of all [illegible] pp. 260 et seq—yet the technique here is a reproduction of a schoolboy's (and schoolgirl's) old classbook complete with marginalia by the twins, who change sides at half time, footnotes by the girl – who doesn't), a Euclid diagram, funny drawings, etc. It was like that in *Ur of the Chaldees* too, I daresay. (LI: 405-6, end of July 1939).

As mentioned above, another high- or post-modernist work that underwent dramatic revision over a period of several years was Boulez's *Structures* for two pianos. Between the composition of the *Second* and *Third Sonatas*, Boulez had conceived a different sort of dramatization of musical space and time: expanding the performance area by 100%, doubling the number of fingers on the keys, and multiplying the quota of interpretive voices by two.

Structures (recomposed as *Structures Livre II*) is a work to be played by two pianists at separate pianos. Each pianist contributes to a unified construction derived from a single grid of serial rows governing pitch, dynamics, rhythm, duration, mode of attack, and other variables. In live performance and on recordings the two parts are distinctly situated to the right and to the left respectively. This allows the listener to mentally divide the material in two in real time, lending a degree of obvious formal order achievable with the *Third Sonata* only through highly expert listening.

Though, unlike the sonata, this work owes no explicit debt to *Finnegans Wake*, its (dis)figuration is so close to that of the sonata that many of the same parallels can be drawn. Moreover, its – this time truly – *antiphonal* arrangement gives it a dimensional affinity with “Night Lessons” lacking from the *Third Sonata*. A classic early recording features the brothers Alfons and Aloys Kontarsky; and one might feel that a closeness of understanding such as that between some siblings (perhaps twins like Shem and Shaun) is demanded for the faithful performance of such a piece.

In reconfiguring the Earwicker brothers as a pair of little boys, Joyce assigned them various different names. But even thus named, their identities are so conjoined and co-dependent that it is difficult to affix a consistent designation to either the corrupting brother or to he who is corrupted. In *Structures*, the complete decentering of tonic and dominant, and the resystematicisation of rhythm among other factors, dissolves all sense of which pianist is the instigator at a given moment, and which the respondent voice. In their intimate examination of their mother, the twins call out to each other (though not from the left and right of the text). Joyce gives only the most muddled suggestion of their individual identities: “Are you right there, Michael, are you right? ... Ay, I’m right here, Nickel” (296.13-17). In this relationship, the good and more suggestable brother, Michael, addresses the other as “Nickel.” Joyce does not name the evil, assertive brother explicitly, giving him instead a Wakean name for Lucifer, thus de-personalising one side of this familial binary and creating a sort of mutual parasitism: one aberrant dual entity replacing two independently viable ones. ... While it might be presumed that character actions will correspond to characteristic names, such determinacy would diverge from a structurative (or destructive) fundamental of the

Wake, whereby opposites-complementaries tend to acquire each other's characteristics, to morph into one, and/or to disintegrate.

As the combinative nomination, intra-nomination, and trans-nomination of the brothers and their many alter egos feed into an overall textual heterogenisation that may be seen, at a syntactic level, to afford them no particular individual or combined privilege, so the two instrumental parts of *Structures* are both separate and one, dual and multiple. Remembering that the brothers are also dis-and-re-integrated as “Jerry” and “Kevin”, the fraternal “meddled of muddlingisms” (303.20) here includes: “kerryjevin” (563.37) and “Jirrylimpaloo” (302.24-25).

Edward T. Cone writes of *Structures* that, “The connections are mechanistic rather than teleological: no event has any purpose — each is there only because it has to be there” (Cone, 1960, p. 176). This analysis can suggest an apotheosis of Classical proportionality in which everything is internally functional and outward semantics (impossible in music in any case) are precluded. Alternatively, it could point to a cultural dysfunctionality whereby the artwork's power of “speech” is impaired or impeded. Mazzola, Park, and Thalmann perceive that, “with this radical elimination of expressivity, still present in Webern's compositions, the composition finds its beauty in the opening of pure structures” (Mazzola et al, 2011, p. 283). If *Structures* leads us nowhere, and tells us nothing along the way, then what is its purpose? Merely to create beauty through the opening up of structures? Despite the presence of both *telos* and expressivity in *Finnegans Wake*, such a dysfunctional formalism can certainly be found here: syntax overpowers semantics, and form content. The two-ness (superimposed upon oneness and many-ness) of *Structures* is more regulated than that in either the *Third Sonata*'s text-interpolation discourse or II.2's left-right schematisation. But where Shem, Shaun, and Issy's “Night Lessons” do resemble Boulez's incestuous game for two (and indeed his later self-absorbing puzzle for one) is in the confounding of linearity through anti-authorial expansionary formation.

One thing we learn from the genetic history is that – in some ways like the *Third Sonata* – II.2 developed in a fungal or fractal manner, growing outwards in all directions from spores or nodes of initial material. This is likely to explain in part the difficulty of linear reading of the chapter. We are reading at cross purposes to the methods of the author: from left to right and from page to page rather than from the inside out. The difficulty of II.2 is microcosmic of the difficulty of the whole book. But what we mean by *difficult* is not as clear cut as it at first seems. This is partly a designation of the convoluted nature of the static text on both a small

and a large scale. But, as I have shown in previous chapters, *difficulty* (as opposed to *simplicity*) in literature and music is irresolvably tied up with *inability/incapacity*.

The whole of II.2 is about learning, knowledge, intellectual acumen, and education. The normative formality of education is mocked in the chapter, and, as Fordham notes, “[t]he preoccupation of the introduction ... is with education and whether it has any point” (Fordham, 1997, p. 147). Education presumes a kind of disability (where there is none) then tries to correct that disability, addressing the constructed lack of education through a doctrinaire process of normatisation. This ostensibly nurturing treatment of non-disabled individuals contrasts with the neglectful, and often systematically discouraging management of sensory and learning impaired students. Arguably, neither group comes off well.

This difficulty-disability entanglement operates in textuality both at the level of composition (the convolution of a text may indicate deficits or excesses in the writer’s method) and of reading (inability to read a text may indicate the inadequacy of a reader’s education or intellect). The superficial chaos presented by *Finnegans Wake*, and the similar surface randomness created by Boulez’s compositional methods, each intentionally or otherwise make a fool of their reader/listener. Very few readers are fully *able* to read the *Wake*, and perhaps fewer still really know how to listen to Boulez’s *Sonata* or his *Structures*. The prodigious ability required to play these pieces gives rise to an enactment of the texts’ outward disability. That is to say, the painful-looking contortions through which virtuosic Boulez interpreters must put themselves dramatize both the internal order and the external disorder of the music.

A pretended or exaggerated inability to interpret a given artwork has sometimes been adopted by hostile or reductive critics of the *Wake* and the *Third Sonata*. Such critiques often appear more concerned with the genesis of the work than with its finished condition. In remarks reminiscent of Stuart Gilbert’s complaint about “certain cultured concert-goers” (Gilbert, 1955, p. 252) seeming able to perceive something in fugue that Gilbert could not, an anonymous editorial in *Music and Letters* (1963) takes a faux-self-deprecating approach to the score of *Constellation – Miroir*:

Throughout the entire piece no instruction is given as to the order in which the fragments are to be played, what the arrows mean, or why the music is printed in two colours. ... I hope the more fiery members of the avant-garde will not hastily assume that I am expressing any judgment about the music. I am unable to do so, as I cannot read it. (O’Hagen, 1997, p. 45)

The author of this critique might feasibly have been unable to determine “the order in which the fragments are to be played” or precisely “what the arrows mean”, but in associating these two factors he/she perhaps betrays an understanding that one indicates the other: that is, the arrows indicate the various routes that can be taken from fragment to fragment. Admittedly, this ambiguity is exacerbated by the conflict set up by Boulez between performer choice and composer pre-determination. As O’Hagen writes, “despite the range of directional arrows, the possibilities remain tightly controlled by the composer” (O’Hagen, 2016, p. 186).

6. Formation, deformation, and reformation: mimesis, entropy, and paralysis

It can be read from the genetic history of *Finnegans Wake* that, in constructing Chapter II.2, Joyce deliberately disabled both himself as author (making his own task progressively more challenging and dysfunctional) and we as readers (obstructing and hobbling our usual methods of interpretation). Moreover, he can be seen to have disfigured and incapacitated the very body of the chapter. As Crispi has it, “Even for those accustomed to reading the work’s seemingly less “dense” parts, the narrative of the “central text” here is bewildering because something always seems to be deficient” (Crispi, 2007, p. 214). In analysing the composition of II.2, Crispi makes extensive use of metaphors of ability/disability and well/ill-formedness. A word like “deficient” is of course not applicable only to bodily disability. But its derogatory use in the same essay as such terms as “dismembering”, “amputating”, and “mutilating” (Crispi, 2007, p. 240) suggests a conservatism regarding artistic-corporeal deformity and dysfunction that can impair critical clarity. Crispi’s concerns about deformativity in II.2 centre around the compositional elevation of form above content. While I agree with him that such an elevation takes place in the chapter’s drafting process, I do not perceive this as detrimental. We may indeed say that the different (de)formalisms of “Night Lessons” and the *Third Sonata*, far from inviting ill form, prevent it through attention to formation itself. The methodological rationality of genetic criticism is belied by the qualitative judgements that it – like any other approach – will sometimes make in comparing “well-formed” drafts to “ill-formed” published texts. Crispi’s observation that –

...[II.2] would have been as obscure or as clear as most any other chapter in the *Wake* if the various transformations of the layout had not sacrificed narrative sense to a predominantly formal agenda (Crispi, 2007, p. 215)

– chimes with a pervasive cultural aversion (often expressed in artistic criticism) toward developmental deformation, deformed entities, and aesthetic deformativity. Joseph Straus identifies a commensurability between “good” form and function in narrative with the same in society, culture, and the body. He conceives that “[n]ovelistic plots usually involve the restoration of normality after a period of disruption, the reformation of a deformation, that is, the overcoming or cure of a disability” (Straus, 2011, p. 47). His advocacy of alternatives to this able-normative mode relies on a disablist understanding of disability as a narrative-aesthetic analogue, and of plot/narrative simply as a function of form(ation). As a disabled person, finding one’s socially constructed status (aberrant but redeemable) unthinkingly re-embodied in literary form can render all but the most nonrestorative, nonreformatory novel plot meta-tragical. Though Straus uses the word “plot”, he is primarily speaking of meta-syntactic form rather than of content. The “restoration of normality” to which he refers does not depend on fictive matters being resolved happily or neatly (or at all): it merely requires a trajectory from formal order or simplicity, through disorder or complexity, back to order and/or simplicity. Similarly, Lennard Davis conceives that,

Plot functions in the novel, especially during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, by temporarily deforming or disabling the fantasy of nation, social class, and gender behaviours that are constructed as norms. ... The novel as a form relies on cure as a narrative technique. (Davis, 2003, p. 542)

As with Straus, I interpret Davis as speaking of resolution or “cure” as a function not of narrative content, but of meta-syntax. The narrative “normality” to which we are restored at the end of a novel may be quite different from that in which we began it. In *Wake* and integral-serialist narratives there is – at least on the surface – little or no “normality” to begin with, so no dissolution and/or “restoration of normality” can take place. In II.2, periods of disruption and reformations of deformation consume one another and narrative disability is never finally “overcome” or “cure[d]”. What results is a matrix of obstructed trajectories through an environment with few legible way markers or street-signs. We / Issy, Shaun, and Shem seem from the very beginning to struggle in reading, and following, our “street-maps”.

The opening line at once announces the highly integrally-combinative nature of the chapter and expresses the disorientation this entails. The A-B-C, B-C-A, C-A-B morphology (if “there” and “where” are treated as the same) is syntactically far less tortuous than the row inversions and retrogrades of integral serialism. But the presence of outward semantics – a plural pronoun, a spatial adverb, and a present tense of the verb *to be* – takes the anti-semantic “serialism” here far beyond syntax to where music cannot follow, to subjective environmental embodiment.

As we there are where are we are we there UNDE ET UBI.
 from tomtittot to teetootomtotalitarian. Tea
 tea too oo.

With his broad Whom will comes over. Who to caps ever. SIC.
and hairy face,
to Ireland a
disgrace.
 (260.1-4)

The inarticulate threefold threeness here speaks of the instability both of Shaun’s, Issy’s, and Shem’s individual unities and of their unity as a trio. No one of them is a coherent unit of itself, but neither is any of them one third of a coherent interdependency. In meta-syntactic terms, the concatenation of their voices depends partly on random mutation, but mostly on authorial selection. “We there are, where are we, are we there” (*my capitalisation and punctuation*) begins with “we there are”, which displays either defunct, or simply dysfunctional, syntax (three words in no particular order). “We” (people), “t/where” (place), and “are” (being) are twice disoriented before the third permutation leads the words home. Motifs of the cyclical progress of civilisation and of eight-shaped infinity then follow, contorted with the Rumpelstiltskin-like *Tom Tit Tot*, and *teetotum* (a four-sided object spun in a game of chance). Perhaps *this* is how we know where to turn in the chapter’s disordered board game: we spin the teetotum, except that rather than having *T* on one face to indicate that we have won all (*totum*) of the stakes, the spinning top has on each side a sigla designating respectively Shem, Issy, Shaun, and the central text. But this cannot be so, because, as we have established, II.2 operates more on quasi-Boulezian disarticulation than on quasi-Cagean disaggregation (see Chapter 4). Also crammed in here are *teetotaller*, *totalitarian*, and *Tea for Two*. “Where are we?” Where indeed.

As Black writes (with the narratives of both the *Third Sonata* and *Finnegans Wake* in mind), “It is the function of the labyrinthian prose to lead the hearer astray, to reduce the issue at hand to confusion, to digress until the main point of the narrative is lost.” (Black, 1982, p. 191). This resonates with Rabaté’s conception that stories in the *Wake* are “told to help us lose our knowledge” (Rabaté, 1986a, p. 146). Disability as a creative mode can encompass (as well as meta-narratives of inaccessibility and disorientation) geno-textualities such as Joyce’s digressive drafting process and Boulez’s near impossible-to-follow performance instructions. In Straus’s view, musical and literary composition are themselves narratological processes that tend to be guided by ableist meta-narratives of social, political, and corporeal eugenics and utility that prohibit disablist modes of construction. On this basis, any genetic or other analysis of a text must beware wishing that that text had grown up straighter and stronger than is the reality. Such wishful thinking can lead to a fundamental misunderstanding of the work’s real life once it has been placed by its author into the hands of readers and performers.

We see in the Joyce of ‘Work in Progress’ and the Boulez of the *Third Sonata* an impulse to micro-engineer both meta- aesthetics and the small-scale dynamics of compositional procedure. While Boulez did this by creating in advance abstract systems for managing all elements of his art, Joyce often imposed his new models retrospectively, taking material composed in a relatively traditional style and reprocessing it through a new structural paradigm. Crispi writes:

‘Scribbledehobbles,’ “The Letter,” and ... Sections 4-5, 6 and 7 [275.3-282.4], after having been set aside for about four more years, were all dismembered and recombined in both violent and subtle ways to conform with the chapter’s new layout. As published, none of the constituent parts of the [“Night Lessons”] were left unscathed by the reformatting process; their original narrative impetus and rationale were sacrificed to another performative program. (Crispi, 2007, p. 215)

The term “sacrificed” has resonances of unjustly killing what is good and healthy in culture or society (a young fertile virgin perhaps) for the benefit of something that is failing, degenerate, or deficient (an ailing despotic regime, a weak harvest, etc.). And even accepting the figurative use of this word, I cannot agree that *all* of the “original narrative impetus and rationale” was sacrificed in this process. The glimpse that the genetic critic has into a parallel universe in which Joyce retained intact the “well-formed” early drafts of II.2, and in which

the material's development was more organic, its parenting less interventionist, presents an artwork other than *Finnegans Wake*. Though non-genetic critics may also have misgivings about the different-legibility of II.2, geneticists are at particular risk of notional reverse engineering to the point of total decomposition.

At the time of revising these sections, Joyce had health concerns of his own on top of worries about his daughter's psychiatric well-being. The *Wake* is performatively full of physical and mental stresses of all kinds. This often extends onto the syntactic level through enhanced onomatopoeic and other enactments of states not necessarily correspondent to those of individual characters. The clearest and most widespread example is the stuttering found throughout the text in such constructions as: "alcoh alcoho alcoherently" (40.5), "parparaparnelligoes" (303.11), "against the pupup publication of libel" (534.17), and "gugulp down of the nauseous forere brarkfarsts" (613.23). The degree to which Joyce and his family's real-life health (or otherwise) impacted the *Wake*'s composition and thus its structure is unclear. But in light of Joyce's worsening problems with his eyesight and his inevitable distress over Lucia's mental state at this time, we may see a disablist or "abject" element to his formative decision-making. The relationship between Joyce's own debilitated state (his painful and disabling eye condition) and that of his daughter, and the affects the latter may have had on the writing, are complex matters explored in depth by Fordham. He writes:

When Joyce arrived in Geneva ... [Lucia] had tried to escape – attempted suicide or so the hospital thought – and was occasionally violent, smashing crockery and starting fires. Yet he chose to interpret her in a way that would absolve her strangest behaviour. In Joyce's damaged eyes Lucia became a clairvoyant. / This belief seems to have lasted for about a year - during and after the period that "Storiella [as she is syung]" was written. ... It reached a peak with his categorical view that she was "a fantastic being speaking a curious abbreviated language of her own." (Fordham, 1997, p. 151)

Lucia's "abbreviated", pathologically introverted, but "fantastic" real-life speech may have been a model for the ultra-condensed language of Issy's footnotes. The first of these reads:

Rawmeash, quoshe with her girlic teangue. If old Herod with the Cormwell's eczema was to go for me like he does Snuffler whatever about his blue canaries I'd do nine months for his beaver beard. (260.F1)

Bearing in mind that Issy has only these brief notes in which to sum up her entire perspective on the sprawling main text, her numbered lists of remarks present an extreme version of the late (malfunctionally) condensed Joycean prose style. The co-dependency of father and daughter perhaps registers here as a mutually disabling factor in both life and art. Setting aside complex interaction with the main text, the line's most prominent denotations coalesce and unfold as:

foolish nonsense, brainless talk (Hiberno-English *rawmaish*, from Irish *ráiméis*); *raw meat*

quothe she

garlic, Gaelic, girlish

language, tongue (Irish *teanga*)

H...C...E (“Herod with the Cormwell’s eczema”); *Herod the Great’s gangrenous skin infection at the time of his death; Mark of Cornwall; Oliver Cromwell*

’Twas off the Blue Canaries (song).

Though integral-serialist works such as the *Third Sonata* are hardly themselves “abbreviated” in their overall construction, the method arises from a sort of arrested developmental process, borrowed from Anton Webern, with much in common with the composition of Issy/Lucia’s footnotes. The alien syntax and tonality of *Trope*— which, while highly convoluted, has no sub-formant over two-and-a-half minutes — leave it sounding contracted and compounded rather than distended and dissipated. Similarly, the peculiar but dense grammar of Issy’s commentary lends it a concision accordant with its gloss-like brevity. “Far from learning male laws of correct language required by society,” Milesi notes, “Issy is being taught how to perform disruptive, derivative operations on them for her own benefit” (Milesi, 1989, p. 576). The word “derivative” is apt for present purposes, since *derivation* is the name for one of the “operations” for constructing the twelve-tone row and the rhythmic, dynamic, and other paradigms of integral serialism. Though Milesi homes in on the “male” nature of the “laws” governing the central, left-, and right-hand texts, and views Issy’s syntactic operations (her “sintalks” (269.3)) as “her own” (belonging to the female), I think that these involuted derivations can be analysed on a more strictly syntactical basis.

Issy’s “abbreviated” gestures as viewed in her mirror (“*Mimosa multimimetica*” (267.2-3)) — those of her limbs, of her mouth, and/or of her pen — equate to broader bodily

movements indicative of disability or debilitation, of artistic eloquence, but also perhaps of enchantment or augury:

II.2, following on from the prayer of the previous chapter [259.2-10], comes to include not only a quest for the “meaning of meaning/ miming/may-moon”, but also a quest for a diagnosis which might include a favourable prognosis, and the right cure. The two of course are related since the meaning of the gestures in the mime in part provide the material for the diagnosis. ... Gestures, now as symptoms, might be diagnosed to reveal their unknown cause. As it is in or on the body where signs appear that can be interpreted to construct somatic medical meaning, it is also often the *movements* of the body, the silent inexplicable or violent gestures which can be interpreted to construct medical meanings of the mind. (Fordham, 1997, p. 158)

To watch certain piano pieces being played confirms this frequent relationship between audible or legible communication and its silent and hard-to-read gestural origins. Issy’s instrument of self-reflection, her mirror, is akin to Boulez’s piano, at which he (or his proxy) sits and performs “silent inexplicable or violent” bodily gestures in order to speak, sing, or inscribe phrases that possibly only he understands. The word “sintalks” could indicate ‘without speaking’ or ‘incapable of speech’; and syntax is in itself mute and illiterate. Notions that women and other oppressed subjects should be *seen and not heard*, and that femininity and other othernesses are abject, negative, or sinful, are proposed and subverted throughout the *Wake*.

Issy, Joyce, and Boulez are all in their way silent, all practitioners of sign languages. As shown in Chapter 1B, an intersection of gesture, kinaesthesia, and mute semantics characterises not only sign languages, but also some disablist performance art. We also find in sign language a sort of silent polyphony enabled by the two-handed, whole-bodied, and facial multi-dimensionality of its techniques. Like these gestural lingual systems, *Wake* language puts into question Saussure’s doctrine that sound is the only bond between signifier and signified. And the “semantic chordality” approximated by *Wake* reading also challenges the precept that this bond is necessarily arbitrary.

Issy’s gestures cannot be heard, only seen, Joyce’s sonic art is mute, or tone-dumb, and Boulez speaks, but in a way incomprehensible to others, and perhaps even – save in structural terms – to himself. Writing of *Constellation – Miroir*, O’Hagen suggests that,

Boulez's intention of providing the performer with what amounts to a musical mirror – an invitation to reveal the work's structure, and incidentally to reflect the pianist's own personality by interaction on a local level with the choices provided – is rooted in the formant's design. (O'Hagen, 2016, pp. 184-5)

Perhaps if we wish to join Boulez in his (partial) understanding of the sonata's cryptography, we must seek to decode, not only the sounds he makes, but also his – or his proxy's – bodily gestures at the piano.

Joyce's highly taxing endeavour (not least on his ailing eyes) of reformatting "Night Lessons" was indeed, as Crispi shows, destructive, but also productive. The sense of prodigious creation from destruction one gets from genetic accounts, and the (double-)binary nature of the new format, may raise questions as to the bi- or pluri-polarity of the author's health. It would be particularly invidious for a disablist thesis to seek to diagnose particular conditions, but the usual normative assumptions of optimal authorial health are equally unsafe. This considered, it may be better to employ disabled and abject terminology metaphorically (as Crispi and others do) than never to use it at all. In his exploration of the *Third Sonata*, Black writes:

If the heterocosm devised by Boulez has a mimetic focus at all, it may be located in that process of life which, according to Lionel Trilling, also made a special appeal to Joyce — entropy: "But if the devolution of energy to the point of 'paralysis' is, in a moral and social view, a condition to be deplored and reversed, it is also for Joyce a sacred and powerful state of existence." (Black, 1982, p. 189)

If indeed "the devolution of energy to the point of 'paralysis' is ... a condition to be deplored and reversed", then these disrupters of narrative motion, Joyce and Boulez, should be deplored for transgressing such moral and social doctrines. As it is, liberal culture and society increasingly try to accept and adapt to such states rather than necessarily to reverse or cure them. Crispi writes:

Joyce now set about dismembering the text of the "Scribbledehobbles" piece, amputating its constituent elements and mutilating its integral narrative structure. ... The narrative sense and artistic integrity of the piece as developed over the preceding seven drafts were irrevocably squandered as Joyce literally broke up this draft into pieces to compose a

radically deformed and much more delimited narrative piece. ... It is therefore one of the tasks of the genetic critic to salvage and reconstitute it as an alternative textual moment in the developmental history of this work in process. (Crispi, 2007, p. 240)

The critical narrative of aberrant and incomplete growth here places arbitrary value on an “artistic integrity” calculated on conservative models of storytelling. One might discern a *eugenious* genealogy behind a judgement that an artwork which has developed to a given state over several drafts, and is then truncated and deconstituted as per the author’s design, is more “delimited” (“deficient”) than if it had been formed in a single draft.

Marion Quirici speaks of “the attitude that modernism was an expression of sickness”, noting that, “Joyce’s critics ... used imagery of degeneracy and disease to describe what they saw as the immorality, incomprehensibility, and lowness of his writing” (Quirici, 2016, p. 84). O’Hagen’s study of critical responses to the *Third Sonata* reveals a propensity to deem the work ill-constructed or ill-conceived. Boulez’s decision to leave unfixed the arrangement of the small, medium, and larger elements of the sonata frustrates potential unthinkingly negative critiques of its form. Commentators are frequently reduced – in the face of Boulez’s rigorous methods – to concluding that they simply “don’t get it”. After praising Ronald Lumsden’s 1973 performance at the Purcell Room, Max Loppert conceived that, “[t]he music itself was to me, as ever, a mystery ... an alchemical delusion of self-regarding self-absorption” (O’Hagan, 1997, p. 53). Shades here again perhaps of Issy at her mirror. But while one of Loppert’s compound words is accurate (this work does indeed demand of the performer a uniquely “self-regarding” individual artistic vision), the inference of “self-absorption” ignores the absolute absorption in the text required from both player and composer.

The idea of integral serialism is that all elements (small, medium, and large) are governed by the same or similar principles. The integrality of II.2 lies in its very dismantling and reordering of traditional structural elements so that established ideas of “integral narrative structure” are replaced with more rigorous principles of *integrative narrative structuration*. As for “artistic integrity”, I would argue that the more integrative, combinatorial, and abstract Joyce’s methods became – from *Portrait*, through *Ulysses*, to the *Wake* – the more “artistic integrity” they had. The notion that critics should interpose themselves between the author and his readers, and “reconstitute” an early draft, misses the point that II.2 is in itself dynamically reconstitutive in its relationship with readers. The principle “whole” with which we must be concerned (flexibly interpretable as it is) is surely

the published edition. The “loss” (Crispi, 2007, p. 241) of narrative mobility in the process of drafting II.2 is compensated for by the gain in a differently-agile kind of structurativity. Like the *Third Sonata*, and typically for combinatorial modernist artworks, II.2 is indeed a composition of form over content, and so invites evaluation on that basis.

* * *

Boulez’s statement that “[n]either the Mallarmé of the *Coup de dés* nor Joyce was paralleled by anything in the music of his own time”, made when he was still only twenty-nine years old, is typical of the culturally revolutionary and historically revisionist tone of the young composer’s view of twentieth century music. His perspective on Schoenberg in particular is partial and guided by his own artistic agenda. His remark two years earlier that Schoenberg’s twelve-tone project had been “bound to come to a dead end” and that “[p]erhaps it would be better to dissociate Schoenberg ... from the phenomenon of the tone row” ignores the simple fact that Schoenberg invented the tone row as we know it and, moreover, planted the combinatorial seed in Webern without which there could have been no Boulez. And as the iconoclastic Boulez must – despite his rhetoric – well have known, nothing in the arts so radical or technically particular as the basic set can have been a “historical necessity”. To view it another way, everything, every event, including the development of integral serialism and that of integrative narrative structuration in II.2, may appear in retrospect as a historical inevitability.

It is hard to know precisely what Boulez meant by nothing in contemporaneous music having “paralleled” Mallarmé’s or Joyce’s artistry. But I would argue that the composers of *Un coup de dés* and *Ulysses* were paralleled in sheer innovation by their contemporaries Claude Debussy and the pre-serial Schoenberg respectively. If Boulez had in mind the *Wake* in particular, however, then perhaps he had a point. Though not published in its “complete” form until 1939, material destined to become *Finnegans Wake* emerged with many of the defining features of the mature text already in place several years earlier. Though in strictly formal terms Webern’s mid-1930s output is certainly as dysgenically radical as the *Wake* material published in *transition*, Joyce’s work in progress possibly has the edge in its violent lurch away from functional pre-modernist aesthetic norms. It perhaps took – as Boulez would clearly like us to feel – a few years more for that young post-Webernian to take music to the aesthetic-semantic heights – or depths – of “Night Lessons”.

This disalignment of deformative syntax and disfunctional aesthetics is the main difficulty in comparing a musical modernist with a literary modernist text. In addressing this finally, I would slightly qualify my characterisation of the *Third Sonata* and II.2 as – to different extents and in different ways – works of “form over content”. Though I stand by the conception that musical aesthetics are without content while literary aesthetics are inseparable therefrom, I would suggest that these dynamics (partly intrinsic to the given medium and partly imposed by individual artists) are not about a battle between form and content so much as a discourse between internal and external structuration.

The semi-arbitrary relationship between the deep structure of language and its surface contrasts with a far more systematised relationship in music. I have argued that all musical works (even the most quasi-representational or evocative ones) are essentially axiomatic in construction. What Schoenbergian, Webernian, and integral serialisms principally and increasingly achieved was to emphasise this systematic relationship and axiomatic construction. The only fundamental difference between the *Third Sonata* and – say – Beethoven’s “*Pastoral*” *Symphony* is that listeners have learnt to impose extrinsic meanings onto the latter, while the former generally defies such extra-musical post-rationalisation.

While the *Third Sonata* - “Night Lessons” comparison shows the necessity of syntax to both language and music, it also points to language’s additional entanglement with external semantics, music’s internalisation of which it cannot imitate. So when John Cage complained about Joyce’s retaining of syntax in the *Wake*, he was perhaps rejecting the wrong element. Cage’s is broadly an art of concretion (the physical alteration of the piano, the actualisation of silence, the harnessing of chance), while Boulez’s is an art of abstraction (a sublimation of technique, a syntacticisation of pauses, and an analysis of choice). Cage is interested in objects, absences, and events, while Boulez concerns himself with systems, conceits, and equations. I have argued in this thesis so far that the combinatorics and systematisation of *Finnegans Wake* place it broadly in a serialist rather than in anything like a Cagean actualising mould. This being so, Cage’s call (realised in his own lingual art) for “a demilitarised version of Joyce’s global language” reads against, or at cross purposes to, the actions of the author (a common tendency in Joycean criticism and post-Joycean art alike). However, we find in Cage’s *Wake*-inspired works a sensitivity to the sensory immediacy of *Finnegans Wake* more despite than through the latter’s regular syntax. The studies of onomatopoeia and other concretisations of language cited in Chapter 1A often chime with the Joycean Cage of *Roaratorio* or the much earlier *Tossed as it is Untroubled, Root of an*

Unfocus, and *The Unavailable Memory of* for prepared piano. This is the post-Joycean sonic-aesthetic territory into which we will travel in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4. *Roaratorio* and the Incomplete *Wake*

A work is never completed except by some accident such as weariness, satisfaction, the need to deliver or death: for, in relation to who or what is making it, it can only be one stage in a series of inner transformations.

Paul Valéry (Valéry, 1971, p. xvi-xvii)

In the previous chapter I took a disablist view of elements of “indeterminacy”, “improvisation”, “chance”, and “choice” in *Finnegans Wake* and the music of Pierre Boulez. In this chapter I proceed by focussing on manifestations of artistic and bodily “incompleteness” and “unfinishedness” in the *Wake* and in John Cage’s sonic artwork *Roaratorio*, while extending the themes of Chapter 3. As we will see, all of these terms tend, in parallel analyses both of Cage and Joyce, and of Cage and Boulez, to become intertwined. As we saw in “Murphy 1999” in Chapter 1A, the “two apparently contradictory impulses” of “the artist’s attempt to exert total control over the musical material, and the simultaneous interest in aleatory forms that required the active participation or choice of the performer” (Murphy, 1999, np) are not as straightforwardly at odds as they at first seem.

The chapter’s comparative analysis of the entropic “unfinishedness” of Cage’s *Roaratorio* and of *Finnegans Wake* is tempered by consideration of the more systematic “incompleteness” of Boulez’s *Third Sonata* for piano as it aligns with specific highly controlled elements in Wakean structuration. Beyond temporally linear initial questions as to which of Cage and Boulez is the more (post)Joycean sonic artist, the chapter considers Wakean musicality in Cagean (and Boulezian) terms, identifying in Joyce’s text retrograde echoes both of Cage’s sonic-poetics of absolute chance and Boulez’s integrated seriality.

After a basic comparison of the dysgenic composition of *Finnegans Wake* to that of *Roaratorio*, the chapter suggests some key ways in which *Roaratorio* reflects more faithfully than Boulez’s *Third Sonata* the “disabled body” of *Finnegans Wake*. There then follows an exploration of the dysfunctional soundworld of *The Ballad of Persse O’Reilly* in comparison to that of Cage’s “ear-play”, and an analysis of the musical instruments that are (de)constructed/denatured within *Finnegans Wake* and *Roaratorio*. The chapter’s last section then considers the similar deconstructive and denaturing, and also de-aestheticising and de-semanticising, song allusions within the two texts.

1. *Roaratorio* and *Finnegans Wake*: Incompleteness, unfinishedness, and abandonment.

Bearing in mind Valéry's conception that "a work is never completed except by some accident", and W. H. Auden's notion that "a [work] is never finished, it is only abandoned" (Auden, 1966, p. 16), I think that, of Cage and Boulez, while Cage flirts more with "accident", Boulez is the greater *abandoner*. Despite Cage's well-cultivated posture of casting his ideas to the winds, we can find in the actual works a tighter authorial grip than in the music Boulez produced during the two artists' period of greatest influence. If we view musical composition as a sort of "poetry" (giving an implicit impression of what in prose would be (more) explicitly expressed), Boulez's "poetry" and "poetics" ask a universe of questions and give almost no answers. By contrast, we can generally tell what Cage is saying, or getting at at least. Despite his use across his career of such methods as casting the I-Ching, disabling the tonal functionality of the piano, and allowing outside sounds to seep into the concert hall and define the aesthetic event, Cage is a creator-executor in the American frontier tradition of recognising and communicating the immediate and the earthly, forming structures out of the extant and the concrete. In *Empty Words* (mentioned in Chapter 2), Cage "cuts up" the journals of Henry David Thoreau, and reassembles the pieces in a form emptied of denotation but still – for those who know the source texts – possessed of some ineffable backwoodsmanly Thoreauness. Where Cage abandons a great deal of what we might call *technical* and *executive* control, his control over the poetics and the sentiment of his work is far stricter than that exerted by Boulez. So when Dani Spinosa argues that

[a]lthough Cage's mesostics rely on the name of the author of the source text as seed, his process works to dismantle the power and control of conventional, expressive authorship, thus fitting it in nicely with Cage's career of author-effacing and expression-obscuring poetics exemplified by 4'33" (Spinosa, 2017, np)

she overlooks the highly meta-textually expressive, or self-revelatory, nature of Cage's conceptual authorship. Like many kindred conceptual – rather than strictly musical, plastic, or literary – artists, we see in Cage a deeply personal involvement, or investment, in his grand ideas, such as the four minutes and thirty three seconds of "silence" to which Spinosa refers, or the more traditionally poetic, musical, or sonic-artistic works discussed in this chapter.

4'33", apparently an even more spare or stark conceptualist gesture than Marcel Duchamp's urinal or Carl Andre's bricks, is heavily loaded with Cage's Zen-inspired ideas about the impossibility of silence when nature (particularly sentient nature in the form of an audience) is present. Though Cage has called this "my silent piece" (Cage, 1979, p. 4), he always intended this "silence" to be impinged upon by audience whispering, coughing, shuffling, etc., as well as by external sounds. The "silence" is, we may say, in itself incomplete, not quite functionally silent. Indeed, different versions were prepared, some of which expressly included specific ambient sounds, thereby bringing the work closer to the noisy *sound-scape* of *Roaratorio* than it may at first seem:

I had earlier connected the notion of place with sound ... at the invitation of Nam June Paik, in a filmed variation of 4'33", my silent piece, in which having subjected a map of Manhattan to chance operations, we went to I-Ching determined places to simply hear what there was there to hear, it was natural [with *Roaratorio*] to decide to add recordings of ambient sound from places mentioned in the *Wake* to the sounds already listed. (Cage, 1979, p. 4)

Here the concretist Cage takes the (real, functional) street map as a found object of inspiration or stimulus of generation rather than, in the case of the abstracting Boulez of the *Third Sonata* and *Structures*, discussed in Chapter 3, as an (imaginary, dysfunctional) end in itself. We might say that, where Boulez is always working toward an idea that he never reaches, Cage constantly works away from an object (material, textual, or conceptual) from which he never escapes.

I argued in Chapter 3 that there can be found in the European high-modernist Joyce a greater compositional kinship with the combinatorial, integrative Boulez than with the concretist, compositorial Cage. In this chapter I partially set aside this dominant structurative Boulezian "Shaunishness" in the *Wake* to consider the subordinate (but nevertheless crucial) "Shemish" Cagean sonic poetics of the book. In this, I ask whether Cage's inviting of aesthetic chaos and disintegrity into his creations surpasses, in its positive Wakean disablement of composer, work, and audience, even the authorial-textual-reader disablement of integral serialism. Of the generative process for *Roaratorio*, Cage wrote:

I began to think of the Venus de Milo who had managed to get along so well down through the ages without arms. The de Milo situation in reverse: a work could be

incomplete to begin with. One could work on the whole work from the beginning in such a way that from the moment the work began it was at all times and at anytime finished. (Cage, 1979, p. 5-6)

Ana Luísa Valdeira suggests that,

Cage's compositions were never complete bodies. They were not unified pieces, but many disaggregated pieces. *Roaratorio* is, of course, a composition in pieces, a multilayered construction of separated elements that are presented to the listener as a chaotic medley of sounds and words, a complete babelian confusion Therefore, *Roaratorio*, as a recycled composition based on *Finnegans Wake*, is not only retelling some of [the *Wake*'s] sentences, words and implicit sounds ... but also its main form: a Babel-like tower. (Valdeira, 2015, p. 97)

I return to the points Valdeira raises here concerning “[in]complete bodies”, “Babelian confusion”, and the “recycled composition” later in this chapter. It may be helpful first, however, to place Cage in historical context as regards the retrospective influence of Joyce and the concurrent (and conflicting) career of Boulez.

The contrast between the high-functioning anxiety of Pierre Boulez and the quasi-dissociative insouciance of John Cage in expounding their respective Joycean projects forms a trans-Atlantic comedy of manners. It shows two contemporaries whose sympathies at a broad art-philosophical level were undermined by intractable differences in their modes of formulation and realisation. A relationship that began with each composer expediting the other's acceptance into the European and North-American avant-garde scenes respectively, and with a shared admiration for Joyce, quickly degenerated (particularly from Boulez's point of view) into an aesthetic polarisation. As Peter O'Hagen notes,

the early correspondence ... is remarkable for its tone of good humour and mutual empathy, with no sign of the abrupt parting of the ways that would shortly occur. Thus a letter from Boulez describes the beginning of work on his *Polyphonie X* in the following way: ...

...Above all, I would like to get rid of the notion of the musical work made to be given in a concert, with a fixed number of movements. Instead, this is a book of

music with the dimensions of a book of poems (like the grouping of your Sonatas or the Book of Music for Two Pianos). (O'Hagan, 2016, p. 171)

But as O'Hagen shows, "a first note of divergence between the two" (O'Hagan, 2016, p. 172) quickly emerged in this initially comradely exchange. "The only thing, forgive me", Boulez writes, "which I am not happy with, is the method of absolute chance. ... I believe that chance must be extremely controlled" (Nattiez, 1993, p. 112). And shortly afterwards, during his stay at Cage's apartment, Boulez wrote to the Russian-French writer on music Pierre Souvtchinsky that, "Cage counts for nothing in the story" (O'Hagan, 2016, p. 172)

As we will see in this chapter, the relative compositional disability of these two artists and their works is not a simple matter to assess. Boulez's "unhappy" sense that "chance must be extremely controlled" recalls his melancholy frustration at the, as he perceived it, undeserved canonisation of Schoenberg. As an undoubted prodigy, Boulez feared both Schoenberg's seemingly unshakeable hegemony and Cage's anti-prodigious egalitarianism. With Joseph N. Straus's categories of "prodigious", "normal", and "disablist" in mind, Boulez and Cage might be cast, the first as a master of his art but insecure in his poetic powers, the second as a relatively limited originator possessed of acute executive faculties, and both as abject composers coping and not coping with the world from which they draw their materials.

It may seem safe to say that, of the two composers, the Hiberno-American Cage is the more Joycean character: folksy, irreverent, and off-hand in his artistic self-construction. But alongside a Gaelic, vernacular, "Shemish" poetic nature, Joyce exhibited a Latinate, rhetorical, "Shaunish" rationalism close to that of Boulez. And indeed, the Gaelic and the Gallic are not always poles apart. The affinities between the musics of Fryderyk Chopin and John Field in the Romantic era ("our nocturnefield" (360.11)), and those of Erik Satie and his trans-generational disciple John Cage in the modernist era, demonstrate the humour and vivacity of the Francophone musical tradition and the academic rigor of the Hiberno-Anglophone one, as well as the perhaps more expected reverse attributions. We might read Boulez's Latinate Frenchness in his rejection of the Austro-German Schoenberg; but he also rejected his teacher Messiaen, who, though himself a radical, sits more obviously in the national tradition of Fauré, Debussy, and Ravel than does Boulez. In any case, as we began to see in Chapter 3, neither of these rejections was total, and nor was either meaningfully nationalistic or antinationalistic. The Francophone and Francophile Irish exile Joyce is also clearly a difficult case for national pigeon-holing, and the diasporic Cage even more so.

A different oppositional view, which perhaps encourages a new-world/old-world division, sees the Apollonian, seraphic, Zen Cage as rather more spiritually chaste in what he says and how he says it than is the often Dionysian, devilish, Catholic Joyce with his deliberately scandalous “journalistic dirty-mindedness” (Lawrence, 2002, p. 508). Though the scandals stirred up by Boulez were music-cultural rather than sexual or religious, he may, unlike Cage, nonetheless rightly be seen as more Dionysiac than Apolloniatic, “more leprechaun than “Messiah”” (Brooks, 1993, p. 224) in his trespasses against orthodoxy. Witness his iconoclasms against Schoenberg and others (discussed in Chapter 3) and his call for the burning down of the opera houses of Europe (see *Der Spiegel*, No. 40, 1967).

But in general we may read in Cage above all things a non-exclusive, crypto-anarchist, even class/race/gender-neutral vernacular quality that implies, perhaps deceptively, an amateur, differently-abled, author-demoting universalism found in Joyce and not in Boulez. Richard Kostelanetz speaks of Cage’s “nonfocused, nonhierarchical, uninflected structuring” (Kostelanetz, 1993, p. 213). And Scott Klein writes that,

[f]or Cage the initials [HCE] signal the political presence of total democracy, a welcoming of all peoples and aesthetic effects to the circus of the world, what the *Wake* calls a “funforall” (458.22) (Klein, 1999, p. 158).

But I feel I might have had rather less fun at one of Cage’s “happenings” than I do at *Finnegans Wake*. Joyce’s intoxicating post-funereal “funforall” seems to have less stringent entry criteria than do Cage’s ascetic *Bacchanales* (*Bacchanale*, Cage, 1940).

Like Luca Crispi’s mid-1930s Joyce, who was

able to compose in a manner ... analogous to artisans who ... construct a visual image from shards of material as they come to hand, possibly with only a faint idea of the “final work” (Crispi, 2007, p. 228)

Cage presents himself in *Roaratorio* as the maker of, or lead collaborator in the making of, “an American quilt” (Otto, 1991) out of fragments from the old country. After all, Cage and Joyce were both members of ethnic-Irish communities abroad (Joyce’s in Paris admittedly being a small, close-knit affair). Cage and Joyce each seem in different ways to have opposed a Yeatsian and earlier sense of art emanating in a fully coherent stream from the

poet's soul and shining upon a passive *audience*. As Cage writes in his 'Lecture on Something',

[w]hen Art comes from within, which is / what it was for so long doing[,] it became a thing which seemed to elevate the man who made it above those who observed it or heard it (Cage, 1973, p. 129).

But as Klein notes of the piece for speaking voice and sound collage that is the main focus of this chapter,

Roaratorio ... denies ... the ultimate authority of the composer, but also reinstalls the composer within his work through his speaking voice. The impersonality of chance operations is philosophically at odds with the vocal presence of their creator, even as that presence blends into the sonic materials of the overall composition. (Klein, 1999, p. 163)

Then again, as Dani Spinosa argues, "[Cage's] work relates to the readers, implanting ideas in their heads because "hey, they could do that too" – which is, perhaps, the exact *opposite* of the effect of reading Joyce" (Spinosa, 2017, np).

While I feel that Spinosa's binary of Cage the accessible "everybody" and Joyce the remote auteur is too stark, her view of Cage as producing in the *Wake*-derived "mesostics" of his *Writings Through Finnegans Wake* a compendious artistic entity that in its broken-up, bite-sized nature is easier for readers to swallow, and certainly to replicate, than the whole *Wake*, seems indisputable. Some of these mesostics became both a geno-textual stimulus for, and an intra-textual element of, the sonic-artwork formed of found sounds, appropriated music, and spoken word that Cage would call – to give the work its full title – *Roaratorio: An Irish Circus on Finnegans Wake*.

Where in an acrostic the first letters of the lines of verse are designed to spell out vertically a word or phrase, in Cage's far less regimented mesostics an existing text is data-mined to find irregular vertical-diagonal occurrences of a name or other phrase: this phrase being, in *Roaratorio*, "James" + "Joyce". By stringing together fragments containing these letters, new poetic works are drawn from the original prose, the mesostic letters being capitalised in a way reminiscent of *H...C...E* and *A...L...P* in the source text. Indeed, in the *Writings Through Finnegans Wake*, Joyce/"Joyce" him/itself becomes part of Cage's ragbag of scraps from the Irish past. Once or twice in a 1979 conversation between Cage and his

collaborator on *Roaratorio* Klaus Schöning, recorded in Paris, the pair happen upon the subject of Anthony Burgess's *A Shorter Finnegans Wake*. In these brief exchanges we can perceive Cage's profound internalised appropriation of Joyce (encapsulated in the *Writings Through*), and his jealous policing of that very personal appropriation:

Schöning. There exists a Short *Finnegans Wake* which is published by (?). But this is not what you made.

Cage. No, no. The short *Finnegans Wake*— I've not seen it, but Norman Brown told me about it. It tries to give you the gist or story of it. But the story of it is exactly what it isn't. It's a larger thing than a single line.

...

Schöning. I now see the name of the guy who had made this Shorter *Finnegans Wake*. It's Anthony Burgess.

Cage. Norman Brown said — after telling me of that book, which I haven't read — he thought that these mesostics were actually the best shortened version. Because there is no intention in them. They are freer. They are freer of ideas.

Schöning. But I'm curious to hear what the serious interpreters of *Finnegans Wake* —

Cage. Oh, many people won't like it. But some will. Some people have said for instance that it is another music.

Schöning. And it keeps the intention of Joyce.

Cage. Yes.

Schöning. But perhaps for some it's like a sacrilege to make mesostics with text: 'JAMES JOYCE, JAMES JOYCE'.

Cage. Well, it's not just a sacrilege. It's also — what do you call it, when you do something to honor someone? It's —

Schöning. — an homage.

Cage. It's an homage. Yes.

(Cage and Schöning, 1979, p. 31; p. 36)

Centennial Joyceana – such as *Roaratorio* and that very different piece of musical theatre, Burgess's *The Blooms of Dublin* – has tended to fetishise, but also to plunder, the Joycean trove. Cage's mesostics (as sonically realised in *Roaratorio*) in particular emblematised and prosthetised Joyce/"Joyce", making of him/it both a badge of authenticity and a lifelike authorial appendage for a later artist to sport. Where in the case of Burgess's conventional

stage musical the dramatist imposed upon *Ulysses* music of his own and placed Joyce's words into the mouths of actors, Cage sought in his "radio drama" to avoid such secondary-authorial agency, instinctively selecting music rather than composing it, and allowing dramaturgical and performer determinacy somewhat to take care of themselves:

I went to Norwich in England in late April of this year to hear [Joe Heaney] sing in a pub. It was a delightful experience. He is a marvellous [singer] and excellent for the part of HCE, the aging father in *Finnegans Wake*. ... [H]appily he agreed to come later to Paris, to IRCAM [*Institut de Recherche et Coordination Acoustique/Musique*], to be a part of [*Roaratorio*] with his singing of songs, many of them in Gaelic. He also advised ... me to include music for fiddle, flute, Uilleann pipes and bodhran drum and gave me the name of Séamus Ennis, a pipes player.... / The reason the work was to be done at IRCAM was that Max Mathews and Pierre Boulez of that organization had asked me to accomplish a project there. (Cage, 1979, p. 4)

For Louis Armand, Cage's *Writings Through Finnegans Wake* "affect a retrospective illusion of affinity (to or with 'JOYCE,' as it were)" (Armand, 2004, np). And as Spinoza notes, citing Armand,

The illusion of affinity, which comes with most allusion, in the Joyce *cum* Cage is revealed, by Cage's use of Joyce and his discussions about this "collaboration" in paratext and interviews, as "merely ... an act of assumption of a commonality, of a 'discourse' whose lineaments assume an inherence in the object to which it seemingly refers". In this way, Cage resists consideration of himself as inheritor of a Joycean legacy.

And,

"[i]n this sense," Armand continues, the "'JOYCE' [of Cage's mesostics] becomes nothing more than a schematic figure, just as HCE and ALP can be seen to operate as schematic figures in the *Wake*, buoyed up by the illusion that each affects within itself a semantic inherence which is in fact the outcome of an increasingly fortuitous encounter between otherwise disparate (material) elements" (Spinoza, 2017, np)

In this typographical sense among others, the Joyce/"Joyce" of the mesostics and *Roaratorio*, as well as Cage's Joycean authority, affinity, inheritance, and "inherence" are incomplete. A name is nothing on its own: there is nothing Joycean about "Joyce", and nothing "Joycean" about Joyce.

2. The Roaratorical method: Re-membling *Finnegans Wake*.

Cage claimed that he opened his Viking Press edition of *Finnegans Wake* at random, happening upon page 356 (about half way through), and began to assemble his mesostics. But this narrative of dysfunctional process as a means of generating dysgenic artworks may be misleading. Recto-verso books tend to offer forth their central pages to our symmetry-seeking perception, and random and dysfunction are – as seen in previous chapters and in this one – not so easily exploited in art creation.

Cage initially compiled 115 pages of mesostics that would make up *Writing Through Finnegans Wake* (volume 1). Here is one, corresponding to *FW* 626.29-627.10:

My lips went livid for from the Joy
of feAr
like alMost now. how? how you said
how you'd givE me
the keyS of me heart.

Just a whisk brisk sly spry spink
spank sprint Of a thing
i pitY your oldself i was used to,
a Cloud.
In pEace

(Cage, 1980, p. 134)

The process for the second volume of *Writings Through Finnegans Wake* was similar, though more circumscribed, precluding repetition in an almost serialistic way. It might be borne in mind that Cage's earliest works (dating from the early to mid 1930s) show, as well as a literary inclination, a determination to pursue new modes of composition within the still developing basic rules of serialism. So when it came, much later, to constructing literary

works such as *Empty Words* and the *Writings Through Finnegans Wake*, Cage had this axiomatic methodology to reflect back on and to subvert. As well as admiring the combinatorial prose of Gertrude Stein, with its “willed sickness” (Lewis, 1989, p. 346), he had, as a young man, felt the pull of what was, in avant-garde musical spheres of the time, the irresistible gravity of The Second Viennese School. After returning to America from his six-month stay in Paris (funded by the Guggenheim Foundation and the American Academy and National Institute of Arts and Letters), he took composition lessons in California with... none other than... Schoenberg. But Cage’s ambivalent engagement with the discipline of harmony led him to abandon his expeditions into dodecaphony (such as the 1933 *Sonata for solo Clarinet*) in favour of compositions for percussion ensemble (including *Construction in Metal* of 1939-41). What Cage borrows from Schoenberg is in essence not so far from what Boulez derives, which is an author-disabling systematism: both composers – in quite different ways – rejecting their “troubling” (Rosenfeld, 2016, p. 83) forerunner’s post-Romantic expressivity.

In *Writing for the Second Time Through Finnegans Wake*, Cage precluded the repetition of a syllable that corresponded to a given letter in the name “James Joyce”. For example,

the syllable “just” could be used twice, once for the J of James and once for the J of Joyce, since it has neither A nor O after the J. But it could not be used again (Cage, 1980, p. 135-6)

In these new restrictions we might detect a sympathy with Boulez’s injunction that “chance must be extremely controlled”. We might observe Cage engineering the genome of the nascent *Roaratorio* in order to exclude any undesirable mutations. To regulate this limitation, Cage employed a card index in which he listed the syllables he had already used. From this arose a group of mesostics half the length of the first set at only forty pages long. These were the mesostics that he would use in a spoken form in *Roaratorio*.

This being said, the always essential element of chance in Cage is crucial to the “final” form/content and aesthetic quality of the mesostics. As Jonathan Scott Lee writes of Cage’s random and cart-before-horse employment of syntax, “[f]inally, punctuation is scattered over each page in accordance with I Ching operations. Thus, necessity combines with choice (both riddled with indeterminacy, of course) to produce the text” (Lee, 1993, p. 180).

When Cage had completed *Writing for the Second Time through Finnegans Wake*, Klaus Schöning of West German Radio asked him to produce some music to accompany the

mesostics. Cage agreed, and started to read through Joyce's book again, making a list of all the sounds he noticed referenced in it. The outcome was a long text headed 'Listing through *Finnegans Wake*', which comprised about four to five thousand acoustic phenomena.

He next consulted Louis Mink's *A Finnegans Wake Gazetteer*, in which Mink had aimed to list all the places alluded to in the *Wake*. Cage described these as "all over the world and out into space, physical space and that of the imagination. Half are in Ireland, and half of these are in Dublin" (Cage, 1979, pp. 3-4). He then had the idea that he would connect location with audition, somehow colliding real recorded sounds from the places cited in the *Gazeteer* with the as yet notional sounds in his list. This method is both distinctly Joycean and prodigiously disablist in its differently-rational systematism. Like Joyce, Cage was a keen traveller through "physical space and that of the imagination", understanding himself as thoroughly international, and casting his net wide in the gathering of linguistic and aesthetic fragments.

But overridingly enamoured as he was with the Hibernian side of Joyce, Cage decided (with Joe Heaney's guidance) to incorporate a prominent element of Irish traditional music: some songs sung in Gaelic and English, and music for fiddle, flute, Uilleann pipes, and bodhran drum.

Roaratorio would finally be composed of four categories of sounds: those mentioned in *Finnegans Wake* and collated by Cage; the ambient sounds correspondent to the places alluded to in the book and listed by Mink; those of Irish traditional and other musics; and finally Cage's own readings of the mesostics. The resulting cacophonous *mélange* includes: these various types of instrumental and vocal music, all sorts of human noises (shouts, weeping, laughter), an array of bird and animal calls, sounds of inanimate nature (wind, water, thunder), sounds of human manufacture (church bells, explosions, breaking glass), and – not to forget – Joyce's *Wake*an words themselves as extruded through Cage's mesostic making machine.

Cage employed the prosthetic auditory device of multi-track tape to realise *Roaratorio* as an hour-long *hörspiel* ('ear-play'). In order to (ir)rationalise the recording process, he used *I-Ching* chance operations to reduce the named places he would draw from Mink's book to 626 (the number of printed pages in the *Wake*). He then (in a move accepting of human bodily interdependency) called on multiple collaborators from radio stations and universities around the world to go to the non-Irish locations and record the ambient sounds. He travelled to the cites inside Ireland himself. Once all the material had been gathered (the ambient sounds, the sonic phenomena from his list, the *various musics*, and his own reading of the mesostics), he

assembled them (at IRCAM) according to the page and line to which they correspond in the text. He used the recital of the mesostics as a guide, all elements thereof being identifiable with a given page and line of *Finnegans Wake* and so indicative of the desired position for each of the other sounds. Each sound was thus positioned in relation both to the entire original text and to the mesostics read by Cage.

Regarding the process for arranging these elements into a coherent whole, Cage reported:

[T]hrough chance operations, we had determined what the stereo position of the sound would be, whether it would be short, medium or long, how it would come in, whether it would fade in, whether it would switch on, whether it would roll in, what its dynamic level would be, or levels, it could have one, two or three levels, and then how it would die away: whether it would fade away, roll off or switch off. All this was done with chance operations. (Cage, 1979, pp. 3-4)

The piece is in four parts that roughly equate to the relative lengths of the four books of *Finnegans Wake*. The lines of the mesostics to which the parts correspond and their durations on the recording are as follows:

Part One (to Line 220) 26:46

Part Two (to Line 406) 16:14

Part Three (to Line 594) 14:17

Part Four (to End) 3:13.

Roaratorio had its first airing on West German Radio on October 22nd 1979. It was then broadcast in the Netherlands and Australia, and had its first stage production at the Paris Festival d'Automne at Beaubourg in 1982 for the centenary of Joyce's birth, and was performed (with an additional dance element by the Merce Cunningham Company) in 1983.

Cage's chaotic abnormality may, unlike the "extremely controlled" heterogenisation of Boulez the – as he became – tonal establishment figure, be seen never to have been entirely acculturated. That being said, unlike Boulezian axioms and algorithms, Cagean sonic objects and found sounds are now commonly encountered (albeit in a sanitised form) in "high" and

“popular” cultures alike. It is hard to imagine Boulez having been asked to produce a work for an Olympic games as Cage was (Los Angeles 1984). “Here Comes Everybody”, implies the title of Cage’s piece *H M C I E X* (interspersing *H...C...E* with the letters of the word *mix*). This tape collage of folksongs of the world might seem slightly passé by this date (Karlheinz Stockhausen had done something similar with *Hymnen in 1966*). But here again is the Cagean partial disinterest in aesthetic innovation. The innovations Cage truly sought were meta-semantic, inter-personal, and pan-spiritual. As Klein puts it, much of Cage’s work “stemmed from social and musical utopianism: first, from the belief that music is an action, and second, that action could produce political effects” (Klein, 1999, p. 157). Cage wrote in the score of his *Variations VI* (1966) that the performer should “let the notations refer to what is to be done, not to what is heard or to be heard.” (Klein, 1999, p. 157). This highly counter-intuitive removal of “what is heard” as the final goal of sonic-aesthetic production speaks of Cage the rejecter of artifice in pursuit of actuality, “beauty” in favour of “truth”. Boulez, by contrast, perceives no truth other than beauty, no actuality other than artifice.

3. Incomplete bodies: *Roaratorio* and the Cagean Joyce.

When I say that I view Boulez as the greater poetic “abandoner” of Boulez and Cage, I am thinking of a sort of sonic-poetic incompleteness or unfinishedness in the former’s work stemming from his abandonment of both individual works and of a specific kind of r/Romantic poet status. When Boulez asks “*Sonate, que me veux-tu?*” (Boulez, 1990b), he indicates a composition-composer antagonism/co-dependency far more torturous than we find in Cage. We may think here of what I characterised in Chapter 2 as the incomplete-complete state in which Anton Webern’s works of “restricted growth” are born. And indeed, there has been no more devoted disciple of Webern than Boulez. But where Webern’s incompletenesses were in a Classical-Romantic sense “complete”, Boulez’s were perpetually expansionary, never reaching completion. Cage’s abandonment, meanwhile, corresponds to the traditional r/Romantic rejection of rigid socially dictated conformities (remember that other subject of Cage’s rewritings, the self-denying yet self-determining Henry David Thoreau). There is no temporal abandonment of the “poem” in Cage as we find in Boulez (though the latter in the end tended to find himself umbilically joined to that which he abandoned), but a Beat-like throwing off of restrictions *around* (rather than *within*) the artwork. Cage abandons, not “poet” status, but the “poetic” process. Cage never produces a poem to abandon because he follows no poetic (syntactic-aesthetic) procedure. This may

seem a harsh – indeed naively sweeping – judgement; but I do not intend it as derogatory or dismissive. Many prodigious aesthetic creators of the twentieth century rejected such titles as “poet” and “artist”. With his innovation of the ready-made, Duchamp removed material construction from the artistic method altogether, leaving only conception, or what we might call *passive artifaction*. The aforementioned Stockhausen claimed he was not in fact a “composer”: viewing himself rather as an executor of aesthetic and extra-aesthetic events. And from Schoenberg’s teacherly perspective, Cage was “an inventor of genius” more than he was “a composer” (Hines, 1994, p. 93). Spinosa cites “speakers of the panel” at a conference entitled ‘Cage and the Computer’ as observing that on acquiring a computer, Cage “was now free to step in as a non-composing individual, to become a performer at the final stage” (Spinosa, 2017, np). And as part of her conception of “Joyce as computer” in Cage’s *Writings Through Finnegans Wake*, Spinosa herself argues that,

Joyce’s looming presence throughout *Writing Through Finnegans Wake* (and, to a lesser extent, ... *Roaratorio*) functions more like a computer’s generative capabilities than an agential collaborator or even a source text as seen in other writing-through or cut-up methods. (Spinosa, 2017, np)

So while Boulez, and – in Daniel Ferrer’s conception (see Herman 1994 in Chapter 1B) – Joyce, are inventors of computational language systems (the *Wake* being conceived of as itself a sort of difference engine), Cage is not a directly computational creator-executor. While Cage employed digital and analogue “computers” (an early PC and *Finnegans Wake* respectively), the methods he used to execute his works in themselves resemble random generation more than computational syntaxis.

One might ask if, by integrating one’s artistry with the prosthesis of a computer, one in effect disables oneself by acknowledging (or creating) a lack that would otherwise not exist. The computer, or difference engine, may be digital, analogue, (geno)textual, or epistemological, but its appendage to one’s creative faculties will necessarily draw attention to the deficiencies for which it compensates and which it generates. Whether one is more disabled if one keeps the computer at arm’s length as Boulez did (programming it thoroughly then letting it run) or if, in the manner of Cage, one allows the computer only limited agency (tempering the machine’s in/competencies with one’s own), the acknowledged deficiency is perhaps just the same.

While Cage's ostensibly dissociated stance in his discursive pronouncements presents a semi-incapacitated executor willing to follow where the work in progress led him, it is clear to see the deep strain of continuity and methodological consistency running throughout his career, as well as a conceptual oneness and wholeness to each project that led him to pursue it to a coherent end. By contrast, Boulez invented a series of novel compositional methods within (a)tonal music, only then to abandon or redesign them one after another, and seems – at least during his early career – always to have been at the mercy of individual projects. At one level, a work such as *Roaratorio* seems far more aesthetically abandoned than – say – Boulez's *Third Sonata*. The verb-noun duality of the word *abandon* is useful here. While Cage perhaps acts *with abandon* more than Boulez, Boulez abortively *abandons* key ideas and material far more readily than Cage does, underlining Boulezianism's crucial distinction from Cageanism: the former's sublimation of working materials as opposed to the latter's concretion thereof.

As much as Joyce, in composing the *Wake*, often abandoned and radically recycled developed material, employing “destructive” quasi-Boulezian integral combinatorial techniques, we may, over all, see in both *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* a Cagean conceptual unity and formal coherency lacking in works of internally semantic (a)tonal music. This disablist Joyce/Cage kinship is enabled precisely through the extra-musical nature of Cage's work. As he is not strictly (or only) a *musician*, Cage is able – through his found sounds, verbal material, isolated real-world sonic phenomena, and re-framed extant music – to maintain a sort of semantic pressure that is always threatening to be lost in the delicate balance of integral serialism.

We may read from the previous chapter's parallel analysis of Boulez and Joyce that neither artist generated any fundamental materials in conceiving his artwork. The basic well-functioning elements that each arranged and rearranged (notes, intervals, morphemes, phonemes, and simple phrases) pre-existed the malfunctioning compositions of which they became part. The twelve notes and the finite notatable articulations and modes of attack drawn from in the *Third Sonata* are the same as those at Mozart's disposal in composing his *Piano Sonata in C*, K.279. And the arbitrary conjoinment of signifier and signified that requires language to operate within established rules of comprehensibility constrains the *Wake* as much as it does the prose of Jane Austen. With *Roaratorio*, Cage may be seen – or heard – to have escaped both of these restrictive frameworks. While the piece incorporates, not only identifiable notes, but identifiable note relationships (in the pre-recorded music), these notes and note relationships are so de-contextualised as to disable their internal musical

semantics and make them behave as external-semantic signifiers. And while *Roaratorio* contains language (in Cage's *Wake*-derived mesostics), the Process of de-syntacticisation through which the piece puts Joyce's lingual constructions means that they too are divided and independent from their original function. Consequently, we may say that, unlike Joyce (or any writer) or Boulez, Cage did indeed employ new "fundamental materials" in "composing" *Roaratorio*. Klein characterises Cage's recorded fragments as "'ready-made' sounds" (Klein, 1999, p. 161). But, notwithstanding Cage's admiration for the inventor of the "ready-made" (evidenced in 'James Joyce, Marcel Duchamp, Erik Satie: An Alphabet'), these – as I think they are better described – *found sounds* are, unlike Duchamp's extant artifacts, one-offs, unique frozen auditory moments. By replacing notes with concrete, indicative real-world timbres found nowhere other than in *this piece*, Cage also replaced syntax with a sort of semantic (re/de)contextualization. Though there are familiar auditory stimuli here (common words, relative note values, identifiable worldly sounds, and the ambient noise of place), all of this is impeded from "meaning" what it usually "means". While we may hear an *E*, or a "me", in the sonic text, this note and this word are operatively part of no overarching musical or other paradigm or syntagm that might allow for their interpretation. Thus this *E* and this "me", or the sound of industry or of inert space, are, despite their external semantic familiarity, in fact newly generated fundamentals: non-arbitrary, prosthetic, direct (but indirectly functional) signifiers. Klein writes:

Occasionally a snippet of an old recording of opera appears like a long deceased singer from Joyce's *The Dead*, while fragments of gamelan music weave in and out of duets for bodhrán.... Fragments of a jazz band, military fanfares, choirs, and classical music for strings suggests *Roaratorio*'s attempt to capture not only Joyce's sonic world, but also in Joycean fashion, to act as a kind of democratizing agent for music. (Klein, 1999, p. 163)

While I agree with Klein's analysis, I feel that he stops short of identifying Cage's full intention, which was to democratise, not only music, but all sound.

"*Roaratorio*" is a title acutely descriptive of the work's nature. The piece neither quite *speaks* (orates) nor *sings* (as in an oratorio) but rather roars, or howls, its meaning through a mediation and denaturation of actuality. In this, it perhaps does what the *Wake* was unable to do, destroying or disabling boundaries between sonority, cacophony, and the word. Valdeira writes that,

Cage's title underlines the very architecture of his work, which results from the combination of music, speech and noise. Besides, and ironically, the title already gives emphasis to the fact that language (here in the form of ORATORY as the art of speaking eloquently) can fall into unintelligibility and noise. / Cage's oratory is dismantled like the Tower of Babel. If *Finnegans Wake* already started to show the fragile construction of language, the recycled composition of Cage continues to confirm its weakness, promising word by word that its legibility could always collapse. The Babel myth tells of the fall of a dream of a single language where all humans will perfectly understand each other. The fall of that dream, retold by Joyce, and then resounded by Cage, puts into question the very limits of comprehension, the boundaries of human perception and interpretation. (Valdeira, 2015, p. 97)

Valdeira makes several observations here that feed directly into a disablist Cagean reading of the *Wake*. The common tautology "speaking eloquently" (*eloquent* derives from the Latin *eloqui*, 'to speak out') emphasises the essential semantic functionality of language, whereby if it does not function, it is not language. As we have seen, Joyce pushed this functionality to its limits, somewhat as Schoenberg and Webern, Boulez, and in a different way Cage, tested the bounds of sonic-aesthetic functionality. Valdeira's celebratory tone regarding the thought that language, with its "fragile construction" and in all its "weakness", "promise[s]" at any moment to "fall into unintelligibility" or be "dismantled like the Tower of Babel", her positive reading of the aesthetics of "noise" and "recycled composition", and her scepticism about the "dream of a single language where all humans will perfectly understand each other", oppose readings of the *Wake* that seek to normalise Wakean semantic-aesthetics and draw back from the "limits of comprehension".

The disintegrative textual dynamic between author and reader is very different in Cage than it is in Boulez and Joyce. When I spoke in Chapter 3 (with regard to Boulez and Joyce) of a disintegrated body or work of art, I was thinking of a systematic – or systemic – disintegration. With Cage, the disintegration is non-systemic, arising from no program of syntactic disablement, but rather beginning from a premise of non-syntacticism. Thus, *Roaratorio* and other characteristic Cage works may be heard as only partially disabled or, in fact, fully abled, denying from the start any retrospective imposition or construction of inability.

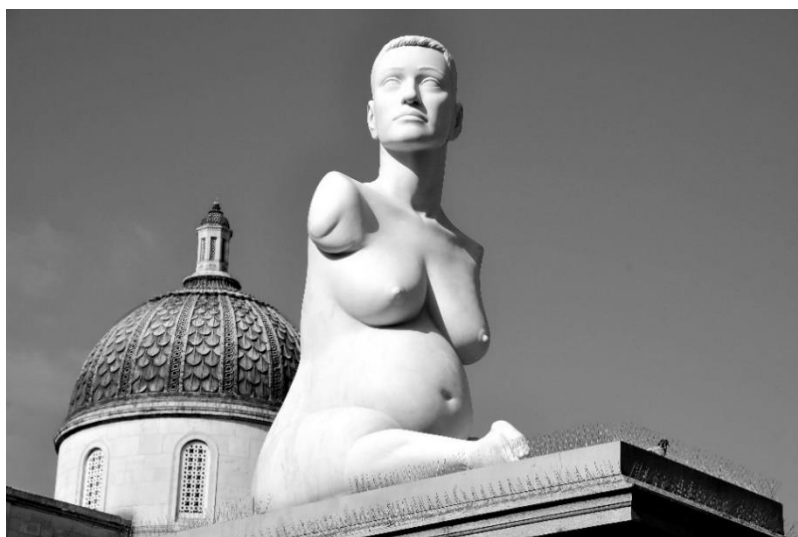
Leonard Barkan has argued that Michelangelo’s “habit of abandoning, not finishing, or even mutilating his sculptures” (Siebers, 2008a, p. 331) might be attributed to a category shift in aesthetics triggered by the discovery of fragmentary classical statuary in the early modern period. Citing Barkan, and starting from the premise that visible disability came historically – beginning with the unearthing of works such as the *Torso Belvedere* and the *Venus de Milo* – to constitute a special, perhaps superior, form of beauty, Tobin Siebers considers a series of artistic representations of bodily “incompleteness”.

In the modernist era, he cites René Magritte’s *Les Menottes de cuivre* (1931) (a transfiguration in paint of the *Venus de Milo* as a double amputee), explaining that,

[Magritte] painted his version of the masterpiece ... in flesh tones and colorful drapery but splashed blood-red pigment on her famous arm-stumps, giving the impression of a recent and painful amputation. (Siebers, 2008a, p. 332)

Cage’s comment that the *Venus* “had managed to get along so well down through the ages without arms” could be read as a disablist statement. Though he clearly means that this inanimate object “managed” aesthetically to maintain its currency despite its incompleteness, it is hard not to think of the often painful experience of disabled people simply “managing” or subsisting. Equally (and perhaps closer to Cage’s mischievous intent), one is tempted to entertain the idea of the *Milo* persisting Black-Knight-like (Monty Python, 1975) with some physical task despite seeming to lack all capacity to fulfil it.

Siebers’ most up-to-date case study is Marc Quinn and Alison Lapper’s *Alison Lapper Pregnant*.



Alison Lapper Pregnant. Marc Quinn. Trafalgar Square 2005–7.

Quinn/Lapper's collaborative piece (which was placed on the vacant fourth plinth in Trafalgar Square in 2005), though in some ways a non-radical artwork (a naturalistic white marble figure of a young unclothed Caucasian woman sculpted by a man), nonetheless twists many of the aesthetic norms it appears to uphold. As Siebers tells us,

Lapper, born without arms and with foreshortened legs, had already begun to represent herself as the next incarnation of the *Venus de Milo* before she met Quinn. In *Untitled* (2000), she photographed herself in series against a black backdrop, mimicking the standard photographs of the *Venus de Milo* in art history textbooks. (Siebers, 2008a, p. 333)

So not only was this sculpture not disfigured accidentally or retrospectively (as the *Venus* was), but it, like *Finnegans Wake*, took a form extrinsically indicative of bodily incompleteness but intrinsically constitutive of biographical completion in progress. Its form is inseparable from its subject, who is also its co-creator.

Alison Lapper / "*Alison Lapper*" as object, subject, and creator resembles somewhat Persse O'Reilly / HCE / Joyce. Like Joyce, Lapper generated her own "scandal" by (co)creating an artwork that (partially) depicted her in both body and personality. Both Hosty/Shem/Joyce's *Ballad of Persse O'Reilly* and Quinn/Lapper's facsimile of Alison Lapper take a quasi-Miloesque form indicative of a (post)modernist disruption of hierarchies of embodiment. Where Quinn/Lapper's work is perhaps *post-post-modern*, however, is in its conjunction of figurative naturalism with an unapologetic positivity about different embodiments. HCE's crippled state is both a deficiency for him to overcome and a signal of his "moral ambiguity". No such abject condition or moral greyness can be detected in the "flawless beauty" of *Alison Lapper Pregnant*.

What Cage calls "the de Milo situation in reverse" is one way in which *Roaratorio* is distinct from the *Third Sonata*. Though we may hear in Boulez's sonata an apparent surface incoherency, its internal semantics are coherent. The incompleteness of *Roaratorio*, unlike that of the *Sonata*, is one arising from a chaotic generative process. Cage himself distinguished the "law and order" of syntactical construction from his own art's "poetry and chaos" (Cage and Schöning, 1979, p. 38), apparently overlooking the inherent order of poetry/verse. As with the more disfigured than disabled *Venus de milo*, the disorder of *Roaratorio* can only be understood by how it strikes the senses. There is nothing semantically

internal to the *Milo* or to *Roaratorio* that speaks eloquently to its external deformed aesthetics. *Roaratorio* simply lacks certain of the body parts on which (differently-)functional artworks depend. The *Third Sonata* is in this sense complete. Though Boulez left the work unfinished, the watertight coherency of its composition means that it was, in a sense, at every point in the process complete. Contrary to Cage's judgement of his own work, such a completeness cannot be attributed to *Roaratorio*. Indeed, the reverse might be said: that it was always, and would always be, incomplete because it was constructed based on incoherent (or non-existent) compositional principles. Such principles, and composition itself, must by definition be able to be decoded from the "final" work, or else they are not principles, and it is not composition. To put it another way, Cage is successful in "using chance operations to liberate [his] music from every kind of like and dislike" (Cage, 1981, p. 202) insofar as an artwork that is not conceived based on its creator's aesthetic values can be free from all semantic and syntactic comprehension and appraisal. Jean-Jacques Nattiez writes:

[with Cage,] chance grew from the status of compositional method (*Music of Changes*) to that of interpretation (*Williams Mix*) and would later transform the musical work into a "Happening". By contrast, Boulez reinforced the element of control and extended serial principles to all aspects of composition. (Nattiez, 1993, p. 15)

Regarding where the moment of (aleatorically guided) completion should lie, in composition, in performance, or somehow in both, Boulez wrote: "I do not admit — and I believe I never will admit — chance as a component of a *completed* work" (Nattiez, 1993, p. 150) (*my italics*). But speaking of the "completed" work's ability to take shape in a number of different ways, he explained that he had "respected the '*finished*' aspect of the Occidental work, its closed cycle, but ... introduced the '*chance*' of the Oriental work, its open development" (Boulez, 1968, p. 47) (*my italics*). Ironically, the classical austerity of the *Third Sonata*, the disabling restrictions it places upon its pianist, help to prevent a phenomenon common in improvisatory execution, whereby both work and performer may regress into past authorial subjectivities that might compromise the aleatory integrity of the generative process. Nattiez writes:

the opposition of Boulez and Cage rests essentially on the establishment of a fact that is rather forgotten by the advocates of chance: in the immediacy of improvisation, the musician can all too easily fall back on memory and stylistic cliché. In an unpublished letter, Boulez writes that

All renewal in music – even renewal of materials – passes through the reorganization of compositional practice. I was quite alone in thinking that at the moment of dissemination and diaspora. Much was – and is – spoken of freedom; whilst this so-called freedom is nothing but a perfumed subjection to memory. The illusion in the cave. (Nattiez, 1993, p. 24).

We may see Cage's *creation free of principles* and *engagement free of "like and dislike"* in his analogue of "the de Milo situation in reverse", wherein he conceives of "a work" being "made incomplete to begin with". He seems, unlike Boulez, to distinguish a work being "complete[d]" (Valéry's word) from it being "finished" (Auden's), proposing that "[o]ne could approach the whole work in such a way that from the beginning it was at all times and at anytime finished". This superficially echoes Gerard Manley Hopkins' report on his sonnet 'Spelt from Sibyl's Leaves' that he had "at last completed but not quite finished the longest sonnet ever made and no doubt the longest making". But the length of the making process in the Cage instance is irrelevant because the author is *approaching* the work with no aspiration toward its completion or finishing. Finn Fordham proposes that, "the distinction for Hopkins is that where 'complete' means a kind of 'filling up' of a form, 'finish' carries with it the sense of 'polishing' or 'rounding off'" (Fordham, 2010, p. 102). And he adds, "it might be argued that Hopkins is abandoning the poem in a state that is completed but not finished" (Fordham, 2010, p. 104). I would suggest that *Roaratorio far* exceeds this ableist mode of deferred perfection, and is at once compositionally (developmentally) incomplete and textually (constitutionally) unfinished.

Taking these sonic-semantic factors into account, we can see *Finnegans Wake* as a work at once forever textually abandoned and compositionally in progress. In this, it surpasses both *Roaratorio* and the *Third Sonata*: exhibiting an arrested yet infinite expansionary textuality and a malformative but coherent syntactic structurativity. Cage's mesostics and *Roaratorio* are more like the *Venus de Milo* and the fictively distorted *Ballad of Persse O'Reilly* than they are like *Finnegans Wake* as a whole. *Roaratorio*, the *Milo*, and the *Ballad* are disfigured more than figured, what they are because of what they lack. The incompleteness, to some extent of Boulez's *Sonata*, and certainly of the *Wake*, is, in contrast, that of suspended yet indefinite animation.

4. *The Ballad of Persse O'Reilly and the half-formed Wake.*

The awkward positioning of *The Ballad of Persse O'Reilly* within the multidimensional Wakean universe, its notional expansionary nature (and the uncertain point in its expansion at which we encounter it), and the many vectors on which it interacts with lingual and conceptual material outside itself, all propose it as a synecdoche for the larger text of which it is part. One key way in which we see this is in both the *Ballad's* and the *Wake's* incompleteness in the sense of indefinite and indeterminate form.

The singular, dual, triple, quadruple/quintuple, and finally innumerable “whackfolthediddlers” (“crewth fiddle[r]” + “songster” + 1 = “trio” + an “intentions apply tomorrow casual and a decent sort of the hadbeen variety” (42.1-3)) who, led by Hosty/Shem, conceive, collate, realise, and perform the *Ballad*, give it to us in a dysfunctionally unfinished state. This work in progress exhibits all of the density and obscurity of modernist verse but little of its erudition or economy. Here is Joyce’s “journalistic dirty-mindedness” both dramatised and self-parodying. Just as in a real street or pub ballad or, equally, in cod-poetic journalism or advertising copy such as is perceived and conceived by Leopold Bloom, the poetics here are incomplete: seeming direct, but lacking semantic integrity.

Another way of reading the *Ballad's* resemblance to the broader *Wake* is through its formal and aesthetic disability. It must, however, be stressed that within the *Wake's* narrative universe the *Ballad of Persse O'Reilly* is, as *Roaratorio* and the *Milo* were in the real world, disabled by chance and circumstance, whereas *Finnegans Wake* was disabled by rational combinatorial procedures guided by its author. That said, by no means all Joyce critics have viewed these choices as sound, or even basically functional. Crispi, Rose, and others hear II.2 in particular as conceived partly based on disordered choices informed by its author’s infirmity and adverse life circumstances.

In this regard, *Alison Lapper Pregnant* evades some of the risks attendant to compositional and/or authorial disability appearing on the surface of an artistic text. Though the work is partly conceived by the visibly disabled Lapper, it is not wrought by her, and communicates through its monolithic textuality little of her social or experiential otherness. Its ableist well-formedness perhaps undercuts its disablist statement, its adherence to traditional sculptural poetics offering a validation of Lapper’s visible bodily form, but not of her particular challenges or of her status as disabled artist.

This said, we might view the monumental gigantism of the piece – particularly in its context of a London square in which masculinist military prowess is celebrated – as rendering

this naturalistic figure dys-poetic. I would caveat this by pointing to a certain crypto-ablist heroism here. While *Alison Lapper Pregnant* is no “statue of Primewer Glasstone”, it bears the marks “of a maker[/subject]” (41.35-6) proposed as courageous or stoical in the face of adversity. But, instead of marshal supremacism, this female form is inflated with the potential for generating another human being. Natal gravidity is itself a sort of temporary disability, even as it indicates the ultimate ability of humankind (to reproduce itself).

The chapter that contains the deformed and dysfunctional *Ballad* is among the most fundamentally eugenious of *Finnegans Wake*. Hosty’s *song* stands out in I.2 even more like a sore thumb than it might otherwise thanks to the relatively transparent and conventional prose of this chapter. Even the eponymous ballad itself begins quite promisingly, tripping along in an inelegant but fairly regular fashion. But its essential incapacity soon becomes evident:

Have you heard of one Humpty Dumpty
How he fell with a roll and a rumble
And curled up like old Olofa Crumple
By the butt of the Magazine wall...,
(Chorus) Of the Magazine Wall,
Hump, helmet and all?

And from the second stanza onwards –

He was one time our King of the Castle
Now he’s kicked about like a rotten old parsnip.
And from Green street he’ll be sent by order of His Worship
To the penal jail of Mountjoy
(Chorus) To the jail of Mountjoy!
Jail him and joy.
(45.1-12)

– syntactic, aesthetic, and semantic order start to break down.

The Boy’s name Humphrey, not ordinarily associated with a humped back, stands in *Finnegans Wake* for Humphrey Chimpden Earwicker’s signature deformity. *The Ballad*, perhaps in sympathy with its subject, Persse O’Reilly / HCE, reads as hunchbacked or in some other way bodily malformed. It is ill-proportioned, scoliotically bent out of true; several

of its lines possess too few or too many metric feet, meaning it lacks the regularity that the verse forms it approximates require; and most of all, it is incapacitated by all of this from doing artistically what it is “supposed” to do. The bodies of both Persse/Humphrey, and of the eponymous poem/song, are, by normative criteria, “hideous in form” (45.18). The word “hideous” appears to have been selected for stanza three originally partly for its half-
assonance (especially in a certain Irish diction) with “prisons” in “prisons reform” (FDV 67) on the previous line of the first draft. “[P]risons” became “religious” in the published version, creating (in that exaggerated Irish accent) a true rhyme. This move acknowledges in a parodic and deformative way the sequential, quasi-musical temporality of verse. A word’s sonic form here retroactively influences what is to be read as forward rhyming progression. This relationship between real and compositional time on one hand, and artificial and schematic temporality on the other, is typical of poetic and musical composition and uncommon in prose writing. But Joyce employs methods similar to this throughout *Finnegans Wake*: the formation and functioning of narrative, poetic meter, and “musical” sonic-syntaxis each retarding the other two, leading to incomplete, “ill-formed”, or abortive aesthetic embodiment.

Roaratorio’s semi-Reillian poetics constitute a flattening out of this Wakean temporality and an employment, in place of the *Ballad*’s metrical indeterminacy and authorial indefinitude, of “congealed” (Witkin, 1998, p. 130) moments of musical execution and the concrete voice of the author himself. The unreal poetics and infinite music of I.2 (and of the broader *Wake*) are silent and intangible. Consequently, the *Ballad*’s verse can, as part of the *Wake*’s malfunctioning prose, sound in a thousand ways and “ten thousand places” (Hopkins, 1963, p. 51), and the “music” of each can likewise expand to fill a million different reader consciousnesses with a “Messiah of roaratorios” (41.28).

As cited in “Bednarska 2011” in Chapter 1B, Fritz Senn has suggested that the “awkwardness of the prose” at the start of the “Nausicaa” episode of *Ulysses* “suggests the awkwardness of [Gerty MacDowell’s] limp” (Bednarska, 2011, p. 74):

Gerty MacDowell ... was pronounced beautiful by all who knew her though, as folks often said, she was more a Giltrap than a MacDowell. Her figure was slight and graceful, inclining even to fragility but those iron jelloids she had been taking of late had done her a world of good much better than the widow Welch’s female pills and she was much better of those discharges she used to get and that tired feeling. The waxen pallour of her

face was almost spiritual in its ivorylike purity though her rosebud mouth was a genuine Cupid's bow, Greekly perfect. (*U* 13.79-89)

Bednarska references also Marilyn French's reading of this inelegantly phrased, naively sentimental third person narrative as "an ironic comment on the bleak life [Gerty] lives and her actual inadequacy, her moral and physical lameness" (Bednarska, 2011, p. 75). Bednarska rightly notes that this perspective is of its time (the mid-1970s), and that more recent critics have found greater agency and self-construction in both Gerty's actions and in her articulation as a character.

For the most part, the *Ballad* consists of standard words and near-standard syntax, and its style has recognisable elements of limerick and folk ballad. We do find, however, strayings into true Wakean language such as we have seen in the first and second chapters up to this point. A particularly dense example, which perhaps represents a broader digression from normal style and content – but also from normative embodiment and morality – within the composition processes of both its fictive and real authors, reads:

Where from? roars Poolbeg. Cookingha'pence, he bawls Donnez-moi scampitle, wick an wipin'fampiny

Fingal Mac Oscar Onesine Bargearse Boniface

Thok's min gammelhole Norveegickers moniker

Og as ay are at gammelhore Norveegickers cod.

(Chorus) A Norwegian camel old cod.

He is, begod.

(46.17-22)

I will not translate the whole of this particularly "hideous" passage here. Suffice to say that it contains elements of four foreign languages (French, Italian, Danish, and Hebrew) as well as, among other sonic-semantic disfigurations, a disablement of Oscar Wilde's full name: Oscar Fingal O'Flahertie Wills Wilde becoming "Fingal Mac Oscar Onesine Bargearse Boniface". The last two parts of this quintuple "moniker", which connote respectively a fat arse (as possessed by Earwicker) and our hero's profession of publican (the name Boniface being associated with that trade), confirm that we are still speaking of HCE here, and have not completely digressed to the historical figure of Oscar Wilde. Also, "Boniface" is a name significantly omitted from an externally derived list of possible lineages for HCE (Anon,

1923) given at 30.6. We may also hear here the ‘barging of an arse’ (anal sex), an outrage against propriety with which both Wilde and Earwicker are associated. As Robert McRuer suggests, “[h]omosexuality and disability clearly share a pathologized past” (McRuer, 2006, p. 1). And as Christopher Eagle observes, HCE’s “speech disorder is ... directly associated with sin[s]” (Eagle, 2013, p. 85) of sexual deviance.

This deviation from relatively standard vocabulary, normal sense, regular metrics, as well as from received personal morality, signals an overlap between the fictive musico-poetic failure of *The Ballad* and – in the opinion of some contemporary critics – the real-world moral-aesthetic failure of ‘Work in Progress’. From internal character points of view, and from external readerly ones, the performer/author of the *Ballad* (Hosty/Shem) may be heard to have overreached himself modernistically just as Ezra Pound and Stanislaus Joyce among others believed the author of *Ulysses* had with *Finnegans Wake*. “Lift it, Hosty, lift it, ye devil ye! up with the rann, the rhyming rann!” (46.23), the rabble/chorus demands in response to the above deviant ill rhyming passage. This intra-textual (self-)admonishment, absent from early drafts, may re-enact the real-world chorus of disapproval entreating Joyce to halt or reverse his semantic-aesthetic deformations. It seems clear that there is at play in this episode a meta-textualisation of bodily deformity and dysfunction, and this would seem to have been a response on Joyce’s part to criticisms from his peers (see Quirici 2016 in Chapter 1B). Indeed, through the Shemness of Hosty and the Joyceness of Shem, we may certainly read here an authorial acknowledgement, or even celebration, of hunchbacked, sexually deviant, mentally subnormal artistry apt to produce nothing whole or complete. The collective but also fragmentary action of Irish-nationalist rebellion may disable community and state, but also self. If *what one is* is to advance, then *what one was* may have to be dismantled or incapacitated. The song the crowd perhaps wants from the *Ballad*’s manifold *auteur-compositeur* is a more triumphant refrain to accompany ‘The Croppy Boy’ in a nationalist musical program.

So the rambling course of the *Ballad* is poetically disabled/deformed/incomplete. But it is in the mutation at the cellular level of *Finnegans Wake* as a whole, of which the *Ballad* is merely one small textually parodic part, that disabled bodies find their otherness expressed. The stuttering, stumbling, malfunctioning sonic-semantics of the text sympathise with the disability of its characters, author, and readers alike (whether disability is portrayed in the narrative or not).

Below is the afore-referenced “whackfolthediddlers” passage of I.2, in which the need for dentures is the only bodily deficiency mentioned, but which contains disabling, though for

the *Wake* relatively easily negotiable, lingual obstacles between text and readers and author and readers. It also sees an accelerated proliferation of musical performers (first among them the balladeer Hosty), instruments (of which more below), and phenomena in the chapter who/which are often both implicated in and subject to the progressive and unresolving expansion and deformation of *Finnegans Wake*:

...to the thrummings of a crewth fiddle which, cremoaning and cronauning, levey grevey, witty and wevey, appy, leppy and playable, caressed the ears of the subjects of King Saint Finnerty the Festive who, in brick homes of their own and in their flavory fraiseberry beds, heeding hardly cry of honeyman, soed lavender or foyneboyne salmon alive, with their priggish mouths all open for the larger appraisal of this longawaited Messiagh of roaratorios, were only halfpast atsweeep and after a brisk pause at a pawnbroking establishment for the prothetic purpose of redeeming the songster's truly admirable false teeth and a prolonged visit to a house of call at Cujas Place, fizz, the Old Sots' Hole in the parish of Saint Cecily within the liberty of Ceolmore not a thousand or one national leagues, that was, by Griffith's valuation, from the site of the statue of Primewer Glasstone setting a match to the march of a maker (last of the stewards peut-*être*), where, the tale rambles along, the trio of whackfolthediddlers was joined by a further intentions apply tomorrow casual and a decent sort of the hadbeen variety who had just been touching the weekly insult... (41.21-42.3)

At the disablist heart of this syntactic and semantic fragment is the sub-clause "for the prothetic purpose of redeeming the songster's truly admirable false teeth". The word *prothetic* pertains to the placing of the objects employed in Eucharistic office onto the "credence table", but also (interchangeably with *prosthetic*) to the adding of a letter to the beginning of a word, such as in the Spanish *escuela* (from Latin *scola*, 'school'). Here the disablism of *prosthetic* is disabled by the absence of its *s*, just as the "songster" might not be able to say his *ss* properly without his prodigious gnashers.

The meticulousness and complexity of Joyce's unweaving and reweaving of plot, character, and location in the *Wake* can engage an extra-linguistic spatial and temporal sense in readers akin to that demanded in listening to polyphonic music. This may indeed be the key to understanding the (in)completeness of the book. In uni-temporal, uni-linear terms, the *Wake* is incomplete: it offers few teleological resolutions and arranges itself along no one clear syntagm. But in vertical (quasi-harmonic) and lateral (quasi-synopatory) terms, the text

is complete, or perhaps more than complete (a prodigious disabled body seeking to operate in a merely abled world).

As an artefact, though not in its genesis, *Finnegans Wake* resembles Cage's "ear-play" more than it does Boulez's conceptual installation. Like *Roaratorio*, the *Wake* is singular and impenetrable: a Tower of Babel that cannot, despite what Valdeira suggests, be "dismantled" and reconstructed without damaging its fundamental fabric. But like the sonata, and like the Tower of Babel, Joyce's text can speak its nature in a number of different modes, such that it may be read as syntagmatically – if not sonic-aesthetically – infinitely multi-layered and multi-abled. Cage was less ambitious than Boulez and Joyce, opting for only four main (substratified) layers to his concrete artwork: his *quilt-stitching* method perhaps betraying a certain utilitarian new-world conservatism.

As I have suggested, the name Humphrey does not usually indicate a deformity in the spine of its bearer as it does in the case of "Humphrey Chimpden Earwicker"; and the parodically irregular construction of the *Ballad* also acts as a nontypically indicative (and also demonstrative and performative) expression of this bodily defect or deficiency. HCE's 'earwig'-derived name is so misshapen in the *Ballad*'s title that it is barely recognisable. The name/title of the *Ballad*, its persona, and its poetic structure are mutually and sympathetically disabled and disabling. Such a Gordian knot of the characteristic, the aesthetic, and the semantic is far more common in music than in literature. The sense that this imaginary song does not do artistically what it is "intended" to do may, one might fancy, stem from its having been written (fictively speaking) to be sung rather than privately read. Its sung lines may be those of flowing *recitative*- or folk-song-like fluency rather than of reproducible metric regularity. Indeed, the sonic "text" of the *Ballad* (its audible surface) is not merely incomplete, but absent from the aesthetic universe of the book. As I argued in Chapter 3, a musical score, such as that of the *Ballad*, might be viewed as sub- or pre-textual, a code requiring the cypher of music reading in order to be decoded.

Cage could not – despite the apparent evidence of the "silent" 4'33" – content himself with abstract (in the broadest sense of the word) artistry. Even his "silence" is concrete, drawing into itself its situation and its moment of realisation. It is not an amorphous vacuum, but a strictly delimited frame through which to perceive a fragment of the perceptible world. Like Hosty's "ballad", Joyce's and Boulez's "novel" and "sonata" always (with every reading and performance) fail or fall because they always build themselves too high. Each is a meta-tragedy: each has its own collapse built Babel- or Humpty-Dumpty-like into its fundamental structure.

The deformative compressions and protrusions in the metric spine of *Persse O'Reilly* (which a hypothetical performer might correct chiropractically) sympathise with both the Balladic subject's alleged crooked and deviant amorous predilections, and the authorial mob's rambling, drunken, slanderous brand of story-telling. The lines of the poem-song are metrically roughly those of a limerick. If we seek to read or sing the below excerpt to such a pattern (as directed in the musical score) we must try to squeeze flurries of syllables into spaces only big enough for two, three, or four:

It was during some fresh water garden pumping
Or, according to the Nursing Mirror, while admiring the monkeys
That our heavyweight heathen Humpharey
Made bold a maid to woo

(Chorus) Woohoo, what'll she doo! ...

(46.24-8)

But this is no pro-intuitive sprung meter. It is, in the end, impossible to read/sing this text to the measures of the score. Gerard Manley Hopkins' poem 'The Windhover' (with its Hellenistic multi-compound words, many syllables per beat, and division of the word *kingdom* over two lines) exhibits – despite these convolutions – a flexible discipline and suspension of regulated chronological time suggestive of its prodigious subject the kestrel:

I CAUGHT this morning morning's minion, king-
dom of daylight's dauphin, dapple-dawn-drawn Falcon, in his riding
Of the rolling level underneath him steady air, and striding
High there, how he rung upon the rein of a wimpling wing
In his ecstasy! ...

(Hopkins, 1963, p. 30)

The Ballad of Persse O'Reilly, by blaring contrast, presents (despite its apparent infinite expansive potential) as constitutionally inelastic, clumsy, and out of step with itself, as though in a state of partial paralysis. The Words and music of the *Ballad* together self-parodically defy visuo-cognitive rationalisation as the *Wake* defies conventional realtime reading. ... Then again... perhaps if we just squint a little at *Persse O'Reilly*, maybe we do see a certain Hopkinsianism. The *Ballad's* – in Fordham's words referring to a Hopkins

poem usually known as ‘As Kingfishers Catch Fire’ – “settled indecision” may just allow it to sustain, through its rambunctious blunderings, a touch of formal “truth”. Perhaps, in a disablist vein, we might say of *Persse O’Reilly*, as Fordham writes of the Hopkins poem’s multi-version textuality, that,

Doubled and overlapping, it is like looking at things cross-eyed, and we cannot move through the poem easily, having to make choices where we would expect them to have been made for us. (Fordham, 2010, p. 104)

Boulez’s *Third Sonata* cannot be sight read as can – say – Mozart’s K279. A moderately skilled pianist could easily sight read an early serial work such as Schoenberg’s *Opus 25*, but the *Third Sonata* resides in a realm of comprehension and interpretation inaccessible even to highly abled musical minds. This being so, why should we expect a high-modernist “novel” such as *Finnegans Wake* to be immediately comprehensible. It is for different reasons than these that *4’33’’* and *Roaratorio* are illegible and unintelligible. Here there is nothing to read or interpret. Though there is plenty of conceptual and aesthetic content, there is no functioning (meta-)syntax, syntax being the key element through which high-modernist musics, literatures, abstract plastic arts, and other modes are accessible. The apparently unreadable *Wake* and *Sonata* manifest a strictly formalistic illegibility. Unlike *Persse O’Reilly* and *Roaratorio*, these works are not un-, but differently-readable, differently-interpretable.

The above excerpt, consistent with the rest of the *Ballad*, displays relatively few semantic disfigurements of the sort that have, by this early point in the book, already emerged as dominant. The distortions and disablements here are instead formal and cultural. The fictive authorial indelicacy of the scansion, and the Limerick-like metrics, enact (though implausibly) a spontaneity of performance and a folksy communitarian milieu. But this corporate “everybody” is also “Everybody” (32.19). The malformed, malfunctioning “supercrowd” (42.22) is HC, and HC is that crowd. To deform (The Ballad of) Persse O’Reilly is to deform HC in person, name and reputation.

What Cage misses primarily in his Wakean appropriations is the symbiosis in the book of meaning, sound, and – crucially – syntactic form. Without its exquisite “conventional grammar” (Klein, 1999, p. 159), *Finnegans Wake* is merely a couple of dozen hours of noise. The content that the structure can barely hold is, in itself, a torrent of miscellaneous poetic data. In disabling syntax in the mesostics, and, in *Roaratorio*, synthesising the aesthetic

surface of Joyce's text but not its deep structure, Cage neglects to exploit the full sophistication of this fabulous lexico-syntactical computer. So when Cage notes with disdain that, "[t]hough Joyce's subjects, verbs and/ objects are generally unconventional,/ their relationships are the ordinary/ ones" (Cage, 1973, pp. 102-3), he is unwittingly paying his subject a great compliment. As to his friend Norman Brown's conception that "syntax is the arrangement of the army" (Cage, 1980, p. 183), part of the inclusive humour of *Finnegans Wake* – as opposed to the relatively remote and studious in-jokery of the *Writings Through* – arises from the very familiarity of its grammar. The school-bookishness of Joyce's style is one of its principal joys. It is in the author's testing and rupturing of this grammar, and the way this releases signs, sounds, words, and meanings, that the *Wake* universe communicates with the outside world.

5. "Piggots's purest": The instrumentation of *Finnegans Wake* I.2 and *Roaratorio*.

The partiality of Cage's musician status extends to an ambivalence on his part toward musical instruments. In his works for "prepared piano", several of which have *Wake*-derived titles, he adapted the piano and employed it more as a sort of primitive analogue drum machine than as a subtle, organically evolved device of "poetic" expression. The "preparation" involved the insertion of foreign objects between the strings in order to subtly or radically alter the sound the instrument produced. He seems to have been reluctant to embrace the full lyrical (syntactical) capacity of this unwieldy sound-producer. In a proto-minimalist mode, and perhaps under the influence of Satie, he restricted himself in these pieces to (mostly toneless or tonally ambiguous) repeating patterns of simplistic, if compulsive, rhythmic fragments. As early as 1942, he took the preparing of the piano to an extreme with his *Wonderful Widow of Eighteen Springs*, directing that the lid which covers the keys, as well as that which covers the strings, be closed throughout the performance. Instead of playing the keys, or even plucking the strings, the pianist drums on the body of the instrument as an accompaniment to a setting for soprano of several lines from page 556 of *Finnegans Wake*.

In these early works he first impeded the instrument's power of "speech" ("pick out and vowelise your name" (360.3-6)), then forced it to "speak". Or to take a less dysfunctionalist, more hybridic view, he made the denatured piano half something else: half drum kit, half gamelan orchestra, or half synthesiser. This semantic-aesthetic wherein a musical device says "I am a drum, a cymbal, a bell" (or whatever else) while clearly presenting as a piano, a violin, an organ... sympathises with a phenomenon profuse in I.2, namely the hybrid musical

instrument / sentient being / mute inanimate object. In *Roaratorio*, though one hears a fiddle, that fiddle's voice is mediated and distorted through recontextualisation, framing it as though in quotation marks, making its diatonic articulations (with Irish inflections) not "mean" what they usually "mean", or mean nothing except "this is Ireland/Irishness". Again, while this characterisation sounds sweeping and hyper-critical, I do not intend it as negative. Cage was wittingly avoiding internal musical coherency. He quite clearly did not engineer the sounds layered above/below the fiddle either to concord or to discord with its tonal melody. The solitary church bell that chimes in with the up tempo folk dance says of itself "I am a bell" as bells do in the real world. Unlike the fiddle, it does not say "I am producing a major third or a diminished fifth" (or whatever note value) or "I am heard at this or that point in a rhythmic measure". Such non-musical musicality subsists in our external reality, in the *Wake*, and in *Roaratorio*. The incomplete (a)tonality of this instrument (the bell) more of external communication than of musical semantics provides – for real world Church, modernist author, and post-modernist composer – a useful middle ground between incidental, linguistic, and musical sonicities.

Cage displayed no particular interest in notes (melody, harmony, tonality), and was compelled instead to create pallets of non-tonal, real-world, or invented sounds from which he built his semi-indeterminate structures. He perceived in himself a shaman-like sensitivity to the "voices" of things, a quasi-direct resonance with what is already there but becomes new upon its discovery by the artist. In his 1979 conversation with Klaus Schöning, he remarked of his sound-gathering expedition to Ireland that,

you see the traces of the suffering that they had under English rule. The churches are all in ruins. The whole place is a grave-yard of architecture and they leave it that way to remind themselves that they suffered. It's almost hebraic.

And the dialogue continues:

Schöning. Some of this is in the voice of Joe Heaney, I think.

Cage. — and in that bell that you hear in the piece, that sounds so cracked and so sad.

It's both sad and joyful: "laughtears" [15.9].

Schöning. 'Laughtears'. You mention it so often.

(Cage and Schöning, 1979, p. 35)

We might think here of that “symbol of Irish art”, the “cracked lookingglass of a servant” (*U* 1.146). Perhaps Cage perceived his Irish self in the *metalingual metallurgical* clarity of the bell, cracked as it may be.

The church bell is a key trope in the narrative of *Finnegans Wake*. In this work of literature, the additional element of “bell” (the graphic and phonic form) is added to *bell* the object and *bell* the ambient sound as heard in *Roaratorio*. But Joyce’s subsumption of such plain auditory signifiers into the morass of Wakean semantics helps to poeticise this simple indicator, blurring it together with its indication.

But before considering such non-musical musics as those of the “bell” and the “hunting horn”, we should first discuss the indicatively incomplete presence in *Finnegans Wake* (focussing on I.2) and in *Roaratorio* of “true” musical instruments (including the human singing voice) and their sounds.

If *Wake* readers can adjust to the phenomenon of two or more sound-meanings occupying a single point on the page, then perhaps they will also accept two or more musical instruments sharing a single point in Wakean spacetime with a human body and/or a nonmusical inanimate object. These instruments and their sentient and inanimate symbionts suffer from the mutual disablement of conjoinment combined with an inward fracturing of their own selves. They exist in a “Studium of Sexophonologic Schizophrenesis” (123.18). That is to say, the generative, the psychic, the somatic, the moral, the phonic, the graphic, the material, and the logical are fractured and recombined just as are the impossible objects in which they are immanent. Here is quasi-verbal written lingual distortion expressed in, or extended to, musicality and instrument construction.

The universe of the *Wake* is a sexually “disordered” one in which such a discipline as “sexophonologistics”, such a person as a “saxopeeler” (441.33), and such a question as “You phonio saxo?” (16.7) can coexist. Though found in I.1, the latter of these constructions arises from the same collision of the symbolic, the conceptual, and the real that generates the fantastical musical instruments of I.2. Firstly, it is made up of individually coherent elements (“phonio” from the Greek ‘to make sound’, and “saxo” indicating the Anglo-Saxon or English tongue). Even the grammatically dispossessed second person pronoun here is invisibly but audibly prefixed to, and so made interdependent with, the stronger symbolic forms representing ‘sound’ and ‘speech’. Secondly, the overall linguistic integrity of this interrogative phrase depends on abstract conceptual elements (euphony and Anglo-Saxon ethnicity). And thirdly (undercutting this), the lower case *s* of “saxo” and the *-io* ending of “euphonio” turn these concepts into real musical instruments (the saxophone and the

euphonium). The question asked here seems therefore to be either “is that a euphonium-saxophone?”, “do you speak English?”, or both. The irony of this punning tangle of words and ideas, of this curious musical instrument’s unanswerable question, is that its own threefold form is not *euphoniosaxo* at all: it speaks English not clearly or euphoniously, but obscurely and disphoniously. Though *Finnegans Wake* is ostensibly an *Anglo-Saxophone* book, it is an *Anglophony*, an *Anglography*, and an *Anglo-syntaxis* impeded and disabled by foreign and artificial elements. The *Saxophony* here is, like Adolphe Sax’s slightly conical invention, designed in such a way that it cannot produce a “pure”, “true” sound.

Within social constructions of disability, such aberrant conditions as fracturing and conjunction are conceived as falling short of wholeness. In fractured bodies (those that fail to adhere to normative form and/or function) societies see a lack of integrity. In rare conditions of bodily symbiosis such as conjoined twinhood, or more common cases of psychological co-dependency, a construction of double failure rather than one of double survival in adversity is imposed. Clearly neither disintegrity nor double failure is an apt assignation in these cases; but such elisions of wholeness, integrity, oneness, and coherency are almost inescapable in modern societies, cultures, and aesthetics.

The surreal complex of deformities and dysfunctions in Joyce’s silent conjoined and fractured musical instruments proposes them as the very image of impossible Wakean sign-symbol-subject-object identity:

To the added strains (so peacifold) of his majesty the flute, that onecrooned king of inscrewments, Piggots’s purest, ciello alsoliuto, which Mr Delaney (Mr Delacey?), horn, anticipating a perfect downpour of plaudits among the rapsods, piped ... (43.31-4)

The instruments that make up this five-to-eight-fold cluster in I.2 are ostensibly mute, nonsentient, inanimate objects that nonetheless contribute to the, by this point in the narrative, ubiquitous flood of gossip swirling around the town and beyond. They are, in brief, in their predeconstructed, pre-recombined forms: the flute/organ (“his majesty” and the “king of inscrewments”); “Piggots’s purest” (perhaps an item bought from Piggott’s (sic) music warehouse, Dublin); the cello/lute (“ciello alsoliuto”); and the horn (played, as it may be, by “Mr – or Dr Patrick – Delaney”).

The little flute and the mighty organ are as one here. The *flute* – together with the *oboe*, or *haut bois* (“high boys” (33.9)) – is at once an instrument in its own right, and an organ stop. This prosthesis (artificially erect organ pipe replacing perhaps flacid “peacifold” flute)

is part of a *Wakewide* extended metaphor of the replacement or augmentation of body parts to compensate for incompleteness, incapacity, or impotence. This includes, in I.2: “false teeth” (worn by Joyce), which may also be found in “Seudodanto!” (47.19); and later in the book: “mock lip” (169.13) and “artificial tongue with a natural curl” (169.15). These oral appendages might be read partially as Joyce’s answer to accusations of magpie-like literary plundering supposedly to conceal an incomplete or inferior education. “[A]rtificial tongue” in particular (applied to Shem the penman) seems to indicate the borrowed/artificial literary tongues (or voices) employed by Joyce in both *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*. “Seudodanto!” (shouted out from the crowd during *The Ballad of Persse O’Reilly*) resembles the epithets given to anonymous – perhaps unoriginal – authors, such as Pseudo-Dionysius. The interactive, interruptive audience throws praise – and/or insults – at the musicians in the form of inflated honorific titles, others being “Suffoclose! Shikespower!” and “Anonymoses!” (47.19). But while this unsolicited participation is apt to disable the fictively sung (paratextually scored) music, it may also lend it aleatory spontaneity, emphasising unruly polyvocality and cacophony alongside symphony and euphony.

As I suggested above, it is perhaps Cage’s non-musician status that brings the “music” of *Roaratorio* close to the “music” of the *Wake*. Just as a literary text – even one as inclusive as *Finnegans Wake* – cannot incorporate real musical instruments, only mutant clones thereof, so Cage’s sonic-dramatic text seems to reject these functional producers of musical sound, absorbing them as just more sustaining matter into the digestive machine. The more we try to hear the fiddle, the pipes, or the drum, the more our ear elides these sounds with other individually indistinct aesthetic noises and sonic indicators. Equally, a voice is not a voice in the usual way: Cage’s reading, Heaney’s singing, and the found vocal sounds that populate the text, do not have lives of their own as in a melodic song performance.

By seeking to imagine the *Wake*’s consort of instruments as real, we paradoxically render them ever more nonviable as entities, half-tangible, half-audible deformed object-symbols stirring the air of Wakean space in an impossibly fractious way. As I stated above, *FW* I.2 in particular, in common with *Roaratorio*, employs semi-non-musical sound-producers such as bells, clattering crockery, broken glass, and HCE’s jingling keys, somehow to tie the musical to the indicative, the phatic, and the onomatopoeic. As Andreas Fischer hypothesises with “Sirens” in mind, “in an attempt to become music language will break some of its conventions, will disrupt some of its norms, will — in short — become strange”. (Fischer, 1999, p. 248). And it is perhaps precisely this sort of “abject” (Quirici, 2016, p. 91)

or “disqualified” (Mitchell and Snyder, 2000, p. 3) sonic-semantic “strangeness” that we hear realised in *Roaratorio*.

Real-world clock tower bells (such as chime in *Roaratorio* and can sound “so cracked and so sad”) indicate the temporal in a non-textual, non-ocularcentric way. They align with the oral in literature in that they tell rather than show. In *Roaratorio* bells may be heard to *tell the time* (either clock time or the moment of an ecclesiastical event), whereas in the *Wake* no such quotidian temporality takes shape. For Cage, “that bell that you hear in the piece” is “both sad and joyful: “laughtears”“. In *Finnegans Wake*, *sadness* and *Joy*, *Both* and *and*, are never so “cutanddry” (Ellmann, 1982, p. 585). The “twinglings of twitchbells in rondel after” (222.34) that tickle our disabled ears in reading the *Wake* (*twitchbell* being a dialect word for ‘earwig’) leave us unsure whether to look, listen, dance a *rondel*, attend church, cover our ears, shake, quake, tremble, twitch, turn to our *Wake* concordance, or smile sadly in incomprehension. “[T]he suffering that [the Irish] had under English rule” is not in Joyce “almost Hebraic”: it is *indeed* Hebraic (as well as Hibernian, Gaelic, Catholic, Anglican, Saxophone, euphonious, dysphonious, and none of the above).

Like breaking glass in *Roaratorio*, or New York car horns in that particular rendering of 4’33”, the ring of church bells through the streets or across a landscape sounds out the topography of those spaces and tells you where you are as well as when. It may also tell other people where and when you are, or were. In this sense, the aural and auricularcentric align with the oral and non-ocularcentric. Bell rings, like gossip, spread out in waves, losing clarity but gaining range. The further one gets from their static tolling of the hour (the further in time from the moment of first hearing), the more time tells and takes its toll on the meaning, and perhaps on the truth, of that sound.

Bells ring throughout I.2 in variously metaphorised and prosthetised forms. But their epitomisation of the tonal, the tonic, and the primary, is clearest when we hear “old Fox Goodman, the bellmaster, over the wastes to south, at work upon the ten ton tonuant thunderous tenor toller” (35.30-2). Everybody in a town hears the chime of the bells (except (perhaps) the deaf, such as Quasimodo): it is the keynote of the city, its most penetrating voice. But as soon as that voice travels out into the streets among the other voices, its plain stable truth may be complicated and undermined. Fox Goodman is in the position of the mythic servant of the gods, with a vital task and a unique perspective but with no true agency or autonomy. His perspective, though a true one, will not, and cannot, be taken by other characters, and only with difficulty by readers. It is perhaps one of our main challenges as *Wake* readers to try to identify and adopt such abstracted viewpoints, to locate the (a)tonic

notes in the decentred harmony of the *text*, to resist the temptation of giving up on narrative and aesthetic order, and to find an internal sonic-semantic Wakean logic. If I might adapt Joseph Straus: *For the reader approaching Finnegans Wake from the outside, imbalance and unrest are sources of pleasure and interest, but from the point of view of the book's underlying narrative and poetic construction, they are disruptive and potentially disabling events that must be contained, abnormalities that must be normalised* (see Straus 2011, p. 49). Though this “containment” and “normalisation” are conceived of by Straus as reactionary, normative actions, they may, in fact, be employed positively in a disablist aesthetics. Whether and how disability and disablism should be assimilated into, and thereby rendered semi-indistinguishable from, able-genious culture is a profound, and to date open, question. Such an assimilation/inclusion could have either a homogenising, or a heterogenising effect.

If we compare Schoenberg's dislocated tonic to displaced elements of coherence in I.2, we find a (disablist) heterogeneity of perspective in *Finnegans Wake* akin to the democratisation of relative pitch in the twelve-tone system. If we then consider language as too heterogenous even for this democratising (a)tonal model to hold, we might turn, as in Chapter 3, to Boulezian *integral* serialism. Then if, going further, we hear even this ir/rationalised model of sonicity as too “militarised” for *Wake* reading, we can bend our ears toward *Roaratorio*'s “poetry and chaos”. In the end, it must be a dynamic switching between these three modes that will provide the most intuitive and effective approach. The three-fold (a)tonal, integral, and disintegral nature of *Finnegans Wake*'s “music” defies a singular reading.

The “horn” is, for Joyce, a ready-made threefold pun on hunting or post horn, cow/bull's horn, and male sexual organ. This triadic semantic structure leads us to hear the hybridity of Wakean instrument construction as inseparable from the book's punning hybrid words. Though the sporting/postilion, bovine, and erotic “horns” all sound the same, they can, as one, produce in readers' ears a sort of chord of meaning or semantic frequency oscillation akin to that elusive musical simultaneity discussed in previous chapters. After all, what is a “chord” in modernist terms anyway?:

...[R]ecently, the chord, having gradually lost its structural functions, has become a sonic aggregate; it is chosen for its own sake, for its internal capacities of tension or relaxation, according to its registral disposition and the intervals it puts into play. Thus

its structural function is both diminished and sharpened, which tends to demonstrate that the truly harmonic era of Western European music is at an end. (Boulez, 1991, p. 281)

And while, like the monodic notes of the *Ballad*'s musical scoring, words are tonally nonplural, their denotative plurality might nevertheless feel, intra-auricularly, a little like the phenomenon of a single note giving voice to either a major or a minor key. We might think of the seeming major tonality of the repeated note in *TAH-DAH!* (when somebody ostentatiously reveals something) or of the energetic *ping* of a countertop bell, and contrast this with the ostensible minorness of a single sustained low note played on double basses. In other words, by subconsciously placing a discrete tone or meaning in an imaginary intra-auditive or intra-semantic context, listeners/readers might hear that tone or meaning as expressing half of a duality or part of a plurality, ringing as a note in a quasi-real sonic and/or semantic chord. Joyce might be heard as having tried to force the sounds and meanings of three or more words into a single textual place and time. If anything, the fact that this cannot ultimately be done, the disablist effect of a sonic-linguistic experiment failing, makes it all the funnier and more aesthetically and semantically pleasing.

Similar semantic-aesthetic failures in the realisation of *Roaratorio* (sometimes due to shortcomings in the available multi-track technology) lend it a Wakean self-interference and distortion unpresent in the crystalline *Third Sonata*. Later works of Boulez's would employ great aggregates of microtones (tonal increments between adjacent notes of the normal chromatic series) to achieve comparable mutually interfering results. However, in Boulez, everything we hear we are meant to hear, and any sound that we do not at first hear may be detected if we listen harder. In *Roaratorio*, as in the real world, many sounds, noises, utterances, and meanings are cancelled out by one another (the text and its "readers" are rendered partially deaf). The sound/meaning-scape of *Finnegans Wake* perhaps falls somewhere between these two extremes. Arguably, no data entered by Joyce into the *Wake*'s system is entirely lost to readers in the morass of other data: it is all there somewhere to be teased out. But in realtime reading without the benefit of an impossible complete sonic-semantic understanding of the text, a large part of what we see/hear will lack in the reading/listening much of the sound/meaning programmed into it by Joyce. Whether this partial mutual cancelation is to the detriment of the experience of reading/listening to *Finnegans Wake* or *Roaratorio* is a point on which Cage seems uncertain. He writes:

From time to time we would stop and listen, say to a part of one of the 16 track tapes. And we were pleased. But what would 64 tracks together sound like? Clearly much that we liked would be covered up. My reading, parts of which no matter how many times we heard it had a certain charm, was already inaudible. Why go on? (Cage, 1979, p. 7)

And in his conversation with Schöning, we hear the following exchange:

Schöning. All this could be called in a certain way sound poetry. Like Hausmann and Schwitters had spoken. Your reading, I think, must be broadcast separately because it's really marvellous. But when you put it in, or let me say when you took it as this ruler of the Roaratorio with the sound track sometimes we will hear that your voice is out and not hear — also if it is heard even English-speaking people could hardly get semantic sense of this reading — and sometimes the tone of it is destroyed.

Cage. But this is our experience in life every day. Wherever we are a larger amount of what we have to experience is being destroyed every instant. If for instance you are looking across the street and a car passes between you and what you are looking at or if you go to a museum where you would think that you have greater peace and quiet as you are looking at the Mona Lisa someone passes in front of you or bumps into you from behind —

(Cage and Schöning, 1979, p. 49-50)

A musical instrument like the violin or the Uilleann pipes was designed and has evolved to pierce through extraneous noise and accompanying music. Something similar might be said of the design of that musical instrument the human singing voice. It is hardly surprising that Cage's spoken-sung delivery in *Roaratorio* (musical though it may be) is often lost (in its full semantics at least) amid other non-tonal sounds of human discourse and activity. A sound like the bell, the fiddle, or the sung refrain resides in a special category of audition unavailable to Joyce and demoted by Cage. But both Joyce and Cage wish us to include this category in our intra-auditive spectrum as we read / listen to their texts.

The horn, like the bell, is arguably a utilitarian interloper into the family of abstractly (dysfunctionally) expressive musical instruments. Such noise-producers are not, one might argue, really musical at all. The bell is an ecclesiastical necessary evil for calling the faithful to prayer. The playing of other instruments – save for the *super-human* organ – in churches tends to be frowned upon. The horn's rude cry serves a function in the pursuit of prey or the

announcement of a postal delivery. Its inclusion in classical musical compositions often comes across, or is intended, as a “representation” of a sound more than as a sound in its own right. In real-world use, it does not necessarily matter if either horn or bell is in tune (“euphonio”) or produces a note of intelligible pitch. Bells in Russian Orthodox churches are famously tonally chaotic, clangerous with clashing overtones. The hunting or post horn likewise defies conventions of stable pitch and tonal wholeness and oneness. We find such tonal disintegration in the desiccated tones of Iannis Xenakis’s extended techniques for strings and wind instruments and in the “non-tempered sound worlds” – as Boulez described them – of Cage’s prepared piano (Boulez, 1991, p. 176). “How can one at present solve the problem posed by sound production?” Boulez asked:

John Cage’s prepared piano provides a solution which is pragmatic and embryonic, but nevertheless plausible. In any case, the prepared piano has the enormous merit of making concrete here and now the sound worlds which we would have had to give up provisionally, given the difficulty in realizing them. (Nattiez, 1963, p. 8-9)

A brief survey of the quixotically heroic and dysphoniously adventuring career of the horn shows it as an instrument of highly unstable identity and distinctly dubious character. Entering interior acoustic spaces in the early eighteenth century (having previously been an entirely outdoor racket-maker), the *trompe de France* gallops through music history like Black Beauty, somehow rarely offending with its at once vulgar and uncouthly noble yelps, parps, and flatulent expulsions. It sometimes, particularly in its multiple guise, speaks of water in spate, tumbling over itself like the Volga or the Danube, somehow articulating nation as it flows on through. It is tempting, though spurious, to connect ALP’s river associations with the call of the Alp horn, that rather Wagnerian super-woman flowing and fluttering through the *Wake* and through Dublin like the Rhein through the *Ring* cycle and Germanic Europe. But surely it is HCE who is the horny one. A little like Blazes Boylan, we always see and hear him coming, announced, or announcing himself like the brassy protagonist of Richard Strauss’s *Ein Heldenleben*.

When HCE is “jingling his turnpike keys” (31.1), these de facto bell chimes may be pleasing to the ear, but they are not sonic-semantically functional, that is, unless perhaps a sonic artist such as Cage should auditively *intend* them as such (see Schaeffer’s “*entendre*” below). The fact that HCE is, at this point, a turnpike (or tollgate) keeper offers a pun of HCE’s keys tolling the arrival of the king. Or perhaps this stooped, bovine sexual

“*degenerate*” requires, like Blazes Boylan with his jingling carriage, to be heralded so that wives, daughters, and servants can be kept safely away.

The main instrumental voices heard in the one commercially available recording of *Roaratorio*, convoluted within the broader musical, verbal, ambient, and concrete texture, are: Joe Heaney’s voice; Séamus Ennis’s Uilleann pipes; Paddy Glackin’s fiddle (the first sound heard in the piece); Matt Malloy’s flute; and Peadar and Mell Mercier’s Bodhran drums. There is, as mentioned, also a certain verbal music to Cage’s reading, with its lilting, *Sprechgesang* – or as Cage had it, “*Sprechstimme*” (Klein, 1999, p. 162) – sonorities. It may be said that this latter voice is the only one that is, in itself, distorted as sonic-semantic identities such as the flute and the cello are distorted in *Finnegans Wake*. Cage’s words themselves are de/re-formations of Joyce’s writings, and *Roaratorio*’s mode of delivery exacerbates the obscurity of the already muddled semantics. But in listening practice, the traditional musics woven into the audioscape are distorted by their context in a way not dissimilar to the layered, cross-valent dysmorphias of the “peacifold ... flute” and the “ciello alsoliuto”. *Roaratorio* was produced with “technical cooperation” from IRCAM in Paris, a – for the time – high-tech music studio opened in 1977 with Boulez as its founding director. Indeed, IRCAM, with its pleasingly Wakean audio-visual (*ear-cam*) sound, is predominantly associated with Boulez and Boulezian computer-enhanced combinatorial musics. Works by Boulez such as *Anthèmes II pour violon et dispositif électronique* take acoustic instruments (in this case a solo violin) and alter and augment their sonic capacities through computer procedures and electro-acoustic filtering. We may well hear these techniques as an (unwitting) realisation of the nominative distortion of musical instruments in *Finnegans Wake*. The “computer” that is Joyce’s “Book of the Dark” (Bishop, 1986), like the artless electronic computers at IRCAM, blindly or deafly processes graphic-sonic material to highly artful effect.

Most of the musical works included in *Roaratorio*’s audio text are songs (musico-lingual elisions) with their words either included or omitted; and each therefore represents or remarks (more or less obliquely) on realities external to the musical semantics. Joe Heaney sings ‘Dark is the Colour of my True Love’s Hair’ and ‘*E Amonn an Cnuic*’ (Ned of the hill) among his seven contributions. And while Matt Malloy plays the generically designated ‘Slip Jig 1’ and ‘Slip Jig 2’, he also gives us wordless renderings of ‘Jenny’s Chickens’ and ‘Moving Cloud’. Cage places musical appreciation, or apprehension, into the centre of the artwork, positioning a listener’s ear – abstracted from the real world – into a listening environment or ecology. Joyce does something similar with his own inclusion of song texts

(the titles and lyrics of songs) in the *Wake*, rendering not music, but the comprehension, or miscomprehension of music into words. Cage's distortive rewritings of Joyce in *Roaratorio*'s mesostics operate to some degree like Joyce's (ir)reverent deformations of Yeats and other earlier authors in *Finnegans Wake*. But Joyce's allusions to musical works are not, as Cage's transplantings of musical entities are, functionally musical. Nevertheless, as I have stated often in this thesis, Joyce perhaps comes as close as is possible to importing musicality into language, partially hacking the syntactic kinship between the two media to give the illusion of aesthetic-semantic compatibility.

6. Lots of song at *Finnegans Wake*.

As the work of Hodgart and Worthington, Ruth Bauerle, Zack Bowen, and others has shown, the number of song and rhyme allusions in *Finnegans Wake* (over forty in I.2 alone) is extraordinary and difficult to estimate. Only six of those in I.2 remained undistorted through the drafting process, and even these are fragmentary and placed in so alien a context as to transform their individual meaning within the text. Through this it may be seen that intact preformed elements in the *Wake* (be they song allusions or any other strings of meaning) can be as disabling to the text as are the deconstructed elements with which they interact.

Many of the allusions to songs in I.2 contain personal proper nouns that are significant in the unfolding gossip narrative of the chapter and to the distortive processes that shape the larger text. In the malformed texts and narratives of *The Ballad of Persse O'Reilly*, of I.2, and of the *Wake* as a whole, nomination and designation are always incomplete because they are at all points subjective from character, narrator, and reader perspectives. The only true song allusion I can find in the first draft of I.2 is a name: "Treacle Tom" (39.16). This is a character ("Treacle Tommy") from the song 'My Grandfather's Clock' who, in the *Wake*, morphs into the ex-convict ("just out of pop" (39.16)) brother of "Frisky Shorty" ("a tipster, come off the hulks" (39.19-20)). The former is mostly synonymous with Shaun, and the latter with Shem, although, typically for the *Wake*, these two names/figures are semi-interchangeable. The function of Treacle Tom along the circuitous route of HCE's comical tragedy (condensed in the *Ballad* and revisited throughout the *Wake*) is to recount in his sleep "alcoh alcoh alcoharently to the burden of I come, my horse delayed ... the substance of the tale of the evangelical bussybozzy" (40.5-7). We understand, in other words, that he has "resnored" (40.5) under the influence of alcohol, in a stuttering, slurred, (in)coherent manner, the central facts (though not necessarily in the right order) of the already distorted tale told by

a meddling priest. All this he appears to do to the tune of the light-operatic aria ‘The Moon Hath Raised Her Lamp Above’ (or a distortion thereof). Here Joyce seems to suggest that readers should try to conjure internally a particular musical refrain, and synthesise it with the Wakean deformation of the lyric that usually accompanies that refrain (“I come, I come, my heart’s delight”). We are provided with neither the original words nor an indication of their associated melody; and yet Joyce asks us to let play in our minds: his distorted lyric fragment; the original – or perhaps suitably altered – melody; and maybe on top of that the original lyric. Two lyrics and at least one tune are theoretically crammed into one space and time, and a disablement of language, music, or both, seems inevitable.

The dynamic between words and music in *Roaratorio* is clearly very different from this. While in *Finnegans Wake* songs are absent as complete musico-lingual hybrids, in *Roaratorio* the whole hybrid forms of ‘Dark is the colour of my true love’s hair’ and ‘Little red fox’ are heard sung – among seven songs in total – by Joe Heaney. The air of ‘Dark is the colour...’ is also rendered by Matt Malloy on his flute. In this and various other instances of song melodies being played on flute, fiddle, or pipes, an inversion of Joyce’s attempted triggering of intra-auditive melodic apprehension through textual stimuli may be intended.

Though none of this traditional-musical material is in itself distorted, we may perceive a distortion by contextualisation and an obscurance or involution through partial obliteration comparable to the contextual and oblitative lingual distortions of song titles and lyrics in the *Wake*. A “full” appreciation of the melodic-harmonic-rhythmic characteristics of the Irish songs and airs in *Roaratorio* depends on a recognition, if not of the tunes themselves, of the idiom in which they are played. Without this tonal-mensural subjectivity, the “cremoaning and cronauning” of these real-life “whackfolthediddlers” will lack “full” semantic coherency. We might well, however, qualify this by acknowledging that in such an incomplete artwork as *Roaratorio*, any *fullnesses* or *wholenesses* within the overall text may be intended – and operate perfectly well – as semantically partial or ambiguous sub-entities.

The Wakean technique of invoking, obscuring, distorting, and revealing song-related language re-enacts the real-life aesthetic-semantic processes of remembering, forgetting, misremembering, and *unforgetting*. The subconscious involuntary recall, loss, misretention, and misrecollection of thoughts, feelings, and ideas constitute a kind of universal cognitive disability. We find this collective partial consciousness enacted in the *Wake* in hundreds of deformations such as, in I.2: “shall Nohomiah be our place like?” (32.1) and “a halted cockney car” (42.27). The first of these says ‘no homeland’, but incorporates a corruption of the name of Nehemiah, who rebuilt Jerusalem after captivity. The song allusion is to ‘Home,

Sweet Home' ("There's no place like home"). Clearly here both the domestic home and a Jewish as well as an Irish homeland are indicated, longed for, dreamt of, or half recalled in some ineffable combination. The vernacular phatic "like" suggests a socially and educationally disadvantaged or disabled point of view. *Ireland* is also a silent presence in "a halted cockney car", which follows the contours of the song title 'The Irish Jaunting Car'. The mind of the narrative is on both Israel and Ireland, London and Dublin, family and nation, the local and the global; but music and the singing of songs are also, as throughout the book, inescapably present.

Though Cage both actually and conceptually gathered his musical and other found sounds for *Roaratorio* from "all over the world and out into space, physical space and that of the imagination", it is surely Ireland (in all its materiality) that we hear, and an "Ireland" (of the mind) that is evoked. There is a strong parochial strain to the conception of *Roaratorio*, whereby, while it approximates the localism transfigured as universalism in *Finnegans Wake*, it ties itself more closely to those locales, turning toward rather than away from them and not allowing them to transfigure as Joyce does in the *Wake*. As I have suggested, in (de)forming his other Dublin, Cage seems to have dissolved the wrong element of narrative form, principally eroding the crucial Wakean constant of syntax rather than its demoted component of surface semantics. In 1964, citing Boulez, Claude Levi-Strauss compared and contrasted tape collage music and serialism.

Musique concrète may be intoxicated with the illusion that it is saying something; in fact, it is floundering in non-significance. ... Serial music, which keeps firmly to sounds and has a subtle grammar and syntax at its disposal, remains of course within the bounds of music proper and may even be helping to prolong its life. (Levi-Strauss, 1970, p. 23)

Levi-Strauss goes on to perceive similar problems in serialism as he detects in tape collage, and his remarks are highly subjective and contingent on his broader ethnographic argument in *The Raw and the Cooked*; but I think his too sweeping position nonetheless touches on a serious failing in concrete works such as *Roaratorio* that is avoided in serial construction.

Boulez's "street maps" (Black, 1982, p. 189) in the *Third Sonata* acknowledge the vital importance of infrastructure to cities, bodies, works of art, and other systems. Cage's a-syntacticism in *Roaratorio* – in the mesostics, in the irregular placement and duration of found elements, and in his privileging of para-textual factors such as page number and

accidental authorial self-nomination (“James”, “Joyce”) – leaves us, contrastingly, dislocated and disorientated within a nonetheless confining and inflexible space.

This said, one property *Roaratorio* possesses in common with *Finnegans Wake*, which is lacking in the *Third Sonata*, is an immediate relationship between internal formal semantics and external representational semantics (provided by occasions of stylistic familiarity in the musical samples). As mentioned in Chapter 2, very unusually for strictly serial music, Alban Berg’s *Lyric Suite* for string quartet contains an unmistakable near quotation from Wagner’s *Tristan and Isolde* processed expertly through the mechanism of the twelve tone method to distinctly teleological affect. Such overt allusiveness would never be found in the more radical Webern’s works (so inspiring to composers of Boulez’s generation), let alone in a determinedly anti-allusive, influence-defying composition like the *Third Sonata*. This hyper-serialist “purity” has been seen to retard such “directness” as is perceived in works by non-serial modernist composers such as Igor Stravinsky, Béla Bartók, Olivier Messiaen, and others. While I would dispute this, it is clear that a recognisable musical rhythm or note relationship, a familiar chord or scale, lends works a certain cultural approachability. Cage goes beyond quotation and allusion, to a direct transplantation of an existing music from its usual home in pubs/bars and Irish cultural centres to the “high art” spheres of continental Europe and north America. The homely familiarity of Irish traditional music both to people born and raised in Ireland or the British Isles and to many north Americans and other populations of Hiberno-British origin makes an “orientalist” view of that music seem unlikely. But the exoticising frame of new-world social modernity within which Cage places this culture of a time, place, and people *not quite now, here, or ourselves* locates “the old Irish tonality” (D 189) in the past, in the east, and in the minds of the “authentically” Irish musicians Cage employed to play it.

As with many proper-noun-derived deconstructions in the *Wake*, distorted song titles and lyrics often retain their syntax through the allusion process. This helps them to stand out intra-audibly amid the apparent confusion of regular and irregular rhythms all around them. While both undistorted allusions such as “The Secret of Her Birth” (38.34), and distorted examples such as those I discuss below, each tend to be woven into the greater semantic and narrative sense of the text, the distorted instances do not generally bear the distinguishing visual marker of capitalisation.

As analysed in depth in Chapter 2, the “strings” (Herman, 1994, p. 480n27) “nonation wide hotel” (32.16) and “a nation wants a gaze” (43.21-2) distortively echo both graphically and phonically the song title and lyric ‘A Nation Once Again’. As we saw, the variant “our

maypole once more” (44.4) is more degraded than both of these: the last of the original title’s three iambs is here cut down to a single beat, and of its four words, only “once” is retained. But, as I demonstrated, this tertiary positioning in the sequence of three confers a musico-poetic recognisability. Even without knowledge of this song, the presence of “nation” in the first two variants is likely – for Joyce scholars at any rate – to invoke the topic of The Easter Rising and associated events, and to impart this to the third variant.

Joyce’s recycling of extant music-related lingual material resembles serial derivation (see part 2 of Chapter 2) and post-modernistic cut-up techniques more than it does Cage’s wholesale importation of folksong. Luciano Berio’s layered work *Sinfonia* (1968-9) incorporates: through-composed material; speaking and singing voices in accord and at odds with the underlying score; fragments of extant music transcribed into the core text; the whole of the scherzo from Gustav Mahler’s *Symphony Number 2* overlaid with new instrumental, sung and spoken parts; and choral vowel sounds invoking the phonemes of ‘Martin...Luther...King’. Scott Klein hears Berio’s weaving in of a panoply of existing musical works, from Maurice Ravel’s *La Valse*, to Carl Maria von Weber’s *Introduction to the Dance*, as “not unlike the way Joyce alludes to as many names of world rivers as possible in the *Anna Livia Plurabelle* section of *Finnegans Wake*”. He aligns Joyce with Mahler directly, hearing each as a late nineteenth / early twentieth century importer of traditional forms with the intention of “stretching them in novel directions”. He notes each artist’s “integration of popular music” (in Mahler’s case “the ländler, echoes of klezmer”) into “high art” (Klein, 2004, np).

Though *Sinfonia* shares certain aspects of affect with *Roaratorio*, it is, unlike *Roaratorio*, a work of music rather than of sound art: a formulated, combinatorial, and therefore compositionally unified and whole, entity. Cage’s rejection of syntax ironically moves him further away from Joyce at a textual level than we find Berio (a less self-consciously (post)Joycean artist, who nonetheless created several compositions inspired by Joyce’s works). Cage seems to have identified *Finnegans Wake* as musical, only then to set himself adrift from that “music” by cutting the cord of “grammar” between his own and Joyce’s medium.

The syntax that we do hear in *Roaratorio* (that of the selected songs and wordless song renderings) is that of subjectivity at one remove. This musical subjectivity is neither Cage’s nor ours as listeners. But while Cage the song selector seems to hear Irish traditional music through an attentive diasporic ear, the auditive position in which he places listeners to *Roaratorio* is a remote and only partially attentive one. Pierre Schaeffer’s model of four

kinds of listening (discussed in previous chapters) may be useful here. Where music listening (perhaps song listening in particular) would usually fall under Schaeffer's *comprendre* and/or *entendre*, Cage shifts it closer to *ouïr* or *écouter*. If we translate these terms loosely as 'comprehend sonic-semantically', 'pay subjective attention to', 'hear incidentally', and 'identify by ear', we may see that Cage demotes the comprehension and intentionality of hearing below its immediate and concrete modes. We may also see that he takes a similar approach to the external semantics of *Finnegans Wake*. Where Boulez finds in II.2 a syntactic and meta-syntactic comprehensibility and intentionality, Cage finds in the book as a whole a chaotic spatio-temporal ecology to be passed through, picking out indicators and stimuli partly by chance, and identifying particularities largely according to instinct.

It is of some interest to note, firstly that Schaeffer himself (as the inventor of *musique concrète*) had sought to apprise Cage of the new potential of tape, and secondly that Cage was initially resistant to this medium, favouring the far less flexible, editable, and combinatorial device of vinyl. As Kostelanetz writes: "Cage remembers that when ... Schaeffer first introduced him to audiotape in 1948, he rejected its possibilities; but within a few years, he was working on *Williams Mix* (1953)..." (Kostelanetz, 1993, p. 215).

In contrast with the *Third Sonata* (a work of music whose actual *sound* can feel lost in its abstract, hypothetical nature), *Roaratorio* is a piece as much about the process of recording as it is about Ireland, about space, time, and textuality, and about finding patterns through chance operations. Recording is essentially a kind of electronic remembering or fixing of memory. Rather than having to remember a lyric and/or melody ourselves (as when we read the *Wake*), Cage reminds us of, or introduces us to, a song in its wholeness (though partially obscured). Setting aside the obvious absence of music itself from *Finnegans Wake*, however, the titles and lyrical refrains of songs can be held to exist or subsist in it as whole entities (despite their obscurity) similarly to how songs themselves survive largely intact in *Roaratorio*. In both cases prior knowledge is required for an identification to be made, but in the *Wake* as in *Roaratorio* enough data is readable for recognition to be engaged.

* * *

This brings us by a not so "commodious vicus of recirculation back" to the familiar "Environ" (3.2-3) of this chapter (those of incompleteness and abandonment), and of the previous chapter (those of indeterminacy and chance/choice). What is perhaps most compelling about the Cage-Boulez dichotomy (in relation to Joyce) is its tendency to end up

apparently revealing like qualities or characteristics in these very different musics. Just like *Shemness* and *Shaunness*, the highly egoistic categories of *Cageness* and *Boulezness* butt up against one another like yin and yang (the same but opposite). The superegos of HCE and ALP might be compared to those of Schoenberg and Satie in relation to Boulez and Cage respectively. The mind of the music in each instance contemplates influence and authority, constraint and resistance, control and uncertainty, generation and genealogy.

But, as seen in Chapter 3, there is a distinct, neither Shemish nor Shaunish quality to Boulez's textual compression, as well as to his personal exceptionalism, which leaves him resembling no figure more than the visionary Issy with that "curious abbreviated language of her own" (Gilbert, 1957, p.350). Cage's post-Joycean desire for art no longer to elevate those who make it above those who observe and hear it, meanwhile, led him to a dialogic, symbiotic, "jemmijohns" (268.7) mode. His orchestral piece *Cheap Immitation* (a reworking of Satie's *Socrate*) was, in 1972, the first of several Cage works that took a musical urtext and manipulated it to the *auteur's* own *anti-auteurial* ends. Comparing the *Third Sonata's* rebellious textual innovation to *Roaratorio's* expropriative poetic originality further emphasises the Boulez-Cage dichotomy regarding Joyce's influence.

In the end, it is in some ways more interesting to consider the retrograde or anachronic question of whether Joyce is more "Cagean" or "Boulezian" than it is to pursue the diachronic inquiry of which of Cage and Boulez was more faithful in his Joyceanism. The literary intertextuality neither of *Roaratorio* nor of the *Third Sonata* holds a candle to the radical and thoroughgoing musical intertextuality of *Finnegans Wake* and indeed of *Ulysses*. In the final analysis, I would have to admit that, while Joyce was a hyper-syntactic author, he may well – perhaps as a sound artist rather than a musician per se – have set aside the sublime equations of (a)tonality in favour of a semantically external and obscure sonic textuality. Even if he had possessed the musical acumen and technical knowledge to be a Boulez, could he have borne the airy, giddy altitudes of such abstraction? It seems more likely, based on the expressive musicality of the *Wake*, the musicological analysis woven through *Ulysses*, and the author's musical biography, that Joyce the artist in sound would have pursued some kind of timbral, externally communicative, dramaturgical mode.

I will return to this thought experiment in the overall conclusion to this thesis. For now, however, we might seek (partially) to resolve some of the questions raised in the present chapter concerning Cage's disablist debt of influence to Joyce (in relation to Boulez). These being:

1. Who between Boulez and Cage is the most effective, and the most Joycean, user of abandonment and incompleteness in forming a musical or sonic-art text?
2. How do the methodology and textuality of *Roaratorio* respond meaningfully to, and perhaps shine light on, those of *Finnegans Wake*?
3. What are the issues of human embodiment invoked by the form and (dis)function of *Roaratorio*, the *Wake*, and Boulez's *Third Sonata*?
4. What do the parodic malformation and malfunction of *The Ballad of Persse O'Reilly*, and the procedural deformation and dysfunctionality of *Roaratorio*, teach us about the inherent and elective disabilities of *Finnegans Wake*?
5. How do the hostile environments that Cage and Joyce create for musical instruments and their designation influence the "music" in which they take part?
and
6. To what extent does song exist or subsist in *Roaratorio* and the *Wake*, and how can we understand its obscurance in each instance?

With regard to the first question, I believe that, in comparing Cagean and Boulezian modes of abandonment and incompleteness in relation to Joyce, we cannot elevate one above the other. In the disablist context of this thesis, however, I think that Cage's authorially controlled abandonment and incompleteness display fewer disabled virtues of different form and function than do Boulez's (anti)auteurship and internal-semanticism.

If, in addressing my second question, however, we subordinate this strict disablist criterion to a more general Joycean view of the validity of *Roaratorio*, we can see in Cage what we might identify as a richer response than in Boulez to the surface disorder of the *Wake*.

But these have indeed, as my third question suggests, been a disablist chapter and a disablist thesis, and arguments as to (different) embodiment as they relate across boundaries of text and human corporeality have perhaps reached their apogee with the present consideration of *Roaratorio*. It is hard to separate Joycean from disablist musicality because the former is so infused with the latter. Consequently, we may struggle to disentangle Cagean and disablist Joyceanisms.

Even more challenging is the task of extricating John Cage from *Roaratorio* sufficiently to analyse "text" independently of "author". Cage is *Roaratorio*'s Hosty: he is – as implied by my fourth question – both an imaginary dramatic and a real oratorical presence in the *Circus on Finnegans Wake*, just as the *Ballad*'s author is in the *Wake* itself. Cage and Joyce

inhabit or haunt their works in ways that Boulez does not: Boulez cannot be decoded from his “sonata” as Joyce and Cage can from their “novel” and “ear-play”. Where the latter are organic ecologies, the former is an artificial system dwelt in by its encoder only in a remote trans-humanist sense of data reflecting the partialities of the one who inputs it.

The separation of external from internal semantic rationality in this artificial environment allows, unlike in the other cases, for musical instruments to survive intact. Though sonata form is transfigured and perhaps broken by its processing through Boulez’s piece, the “piano” (the other indicator in the title) remains undamaged. Another kinship between Cage’s *Circus* and Joyce’s *Wake* (identified in my fifth question) is the crushing, twisting, and disabling contexts they are for musical instruments. A piano in *Finnegans Wake* is “badchthumpered” (360.9) (having Bach bad- or ill-temperedly thumped into it), and though Cage “prepared” (or disabled) no piano for *Roaratorio*, his contextual distortion of other instruments, including the fiddle, is distinctly Wakean.

My final question turns to the musical elephant in the room of Joyce studies, namely the presence, absence, or partial presence of music in *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*. As we have seen throughout this thesis, arguments can be made for everything from the utter rational impossibility of any vestige of song or other music subsisting in a literary text, to the provable activity of musical texts (sonic-semantics and all) in the meta-text of *Ulysses* or *Finnegans Wake*. Cage is helpful in this discourse, in that, in de-musicalising tonal music in *Roaratorio* by partially obscuring and denaturing it, he seems to demonstrate or re-enact the absent presence of music in the *Wake*.

In general, I would argue that, while Cage is quantitatively the more Joycean artist of Cage and Boulez, there is a qualitative systematisation and abstraction in Boulez that is lacking in Cage and crucial to Joyce. Cage’s “chaos” is, in an important sense, opposite to Boulez’s and Joyce’s elective disablement. Disabled embodiment – both textual and corporeal – is no more a result of chaos than is normate embodiment. Cage’s “chaos” is knowable and concrete like the shuffling of a pack of cards. The witting disablism of Boulez and Joyce is far more poetically indefinite and semantically artificial than this.

In the end, it is the great partiality and subjectivity of *Roaratorio*’s approach (like that of Burgess’s very different *The Blooms of Dublin*) that limits its textual Joyceanism. If the *hörspiel* of Cage’s *Circus* were, like his *4’33”*, an open score of great flexibility and interpretability, and not such a concrete block of sound, it might come closer to the “score” of *Finnegans Wake*. Indeed, it is ironic that Cage (such a critic of his hero Joyce’s syntactical bondage) should leave his Joycean drama so constrained and, in a sense, “complete”.

CONCLUSION

We will not bring music, modernism, and the word into discourse without some awkwardness, and very likely some destruction arising. The kinaesthesia of rhythm and harmony, the dramatic intoxication of the surreal and absurd, and the disrupted “soundsense and sensesound” (121.15) of our collective modern dyslexia ensure a rather rowdy get-together. If this discourse is focussed – as in the present instance – on literature, then we may lean, or stumble toward the dyslexical before the surreal-absurd or the kinaesthetic. But within the interdependency that our (post)modern cultural disability enforces, our readerly bodies will inevitably wander between these three.

In the song ‘Finnegan’s Wake’, spastic, hallucinogenic, and paralytic influences (broadly connected with the body, the spirit, and the mind) clash to create, not confusion or chaos as such, but a sometimes debilitating eccentricity and ecstasy. The irrational movement of dance, the illusory spectacle of drama, and the quivering stasis of literature interpenetrate dysgenically.

Frank Budgen’s literal “dance” to “the music of Joyce” (see Budgen 1934 in Chapter 1A) demonstrates expressive movement’s relatively uncomplicated relationship with rhythms both musical and lingual. It is when rhythms become polyrhythms, and in particular when tonality and harmony are introduced, that things become more fractious. At *Finnegans Wake*, one may wish to energetically lose oneself in the moment, to take part in the theatre of the occasion, or to talk quietly in a corner or maybe give speeches or tell jokes. But with everything else that’s going on, one’s subjectivity in any of these actions may be sucked into a larger uncontrollable dynamic.

So all the while that Anthony Burgess, Michelle Witen, or the author of this thesis is pronouncing that “music” is, or is not, present in Joyce’s “funforall” (458.22), parts of these apparently discrete monologues are being lost in the synaesthetic fray. Some, like Stuart Gilbert, take such a simplistically monologic view of “the music of Joyce” that a certain clarity in their argument allows it to pierce through. Others, such as Jennie Wang, offer an aesthetic-semantically “polyphonic” reading, while still others find that there is just too much noise for a coherent line – or even matrix – of musical reasoning to be followed.

What this thesis has sought to propose is that perhaps the disabled individuals at this party – besides the dead, reanimated, or half-dead guest of honour himself – might suggest a new and peculiar dance or parlour game or alternative way of cutting through the cacophony. In Chapter 1A/B we saw how modernist narratology sometimes confounds able-normative

channels of communication and opens disablist channels. Chapter 2 demonstrated through the lens of serialist music that parts of *Ulysses* and most of *Finnegans Wake* disable us as readers and are uninterpretable save for in a radically differently-literate way. Boulez's *Third Sonata* provided us in Chapter 3 with a dysauditive medium through which to listen to *Finnegans Wake* II.2, both works emerging as latent with a productive vandalism of earlier modes and a perpetual expansion of musical aesthetics. Though, of course, at the boisterous heart of the revelry in Chapter 4 of this study we found Hosty singing his tin-eared *Ballad of Persse O'Reilly*, it is in the "cellular" mutation of the *Wake* as a whole that we find the otherness of our disabled-readerly bodies most acutely intimated.

As literary readers in general we must accept that we are tin-eared, cloth-eared, tone-deaf, selectively deaf, musically insensible, tonally comatose, two-left-footed, ill-tempered, and inarticulate. Our hyper-literate neurology presents us with a Cagean cornucopia of lexical noises, but none of these relate to each other sonically save for in the most functionally arbitrary way.

1.

[T]he variations played on the phrases of the overture in the narrative of "Sirens" illustrate a kind of rhetorical exercise which becomes increasingly obvious in later chapters that do not have music as their "art." The text as a verbal composition supersedes the text as an imitation of a musical composition. (Lawrence, 1981, p. 90-1)

So we found Karen Lawrence explaining in refreshingly level-headed terms in Chapter 1A. *Take the "spiked and winding seahorn" (U 11.923-4) from your ear, she seems to say, the sound of "Sirens" rings no truer than any other in the book.* Stuart Gilbert had implied in 1930 that, *yes, we may indeed hear the "Sirens" song.* He suggested that episode eleven differed from "most examples of "musical prose"" in that the "meaning" did not "lose" but was rather "intensified by the combination of the two arts". For Gilbert, "sense is not sacrificed to sound" in the Ormond bar, nor sound to sense. Rather, *phronis* and *phthoggos* are so harmonized that, unless our ears, like those of the crew of Odysseus, are bunged up with the residues of past subjectivity, we readers, "hearkening to [*entendre*] "the voice sweet as the honeycomb and having joy thereof"", will resume our journey much the "wiser" (Gilbert, 1955, p. 257).

We found that for Burgess, Joyce is always and everywhere a competent musician. But the key issue facing this relatively early musical Joycean, and all those since, as to the applicability of Joyce's musical competence to the carrying of readers through the paradigmatic straits of the notebooks into calm syntagmatic seas, remains to be resolved. No "verbal technique which turns words into chords and discourse into counterpoint" (Burgess, 1983, p. 146) has yet been convincingly attributed to Joyce.

We have come to understand that Walter Pater's highly ambiguous formulation that "all art constantly aspires towards the condition of music" (Pater, 2010, p. 124) tends to mislead as to the supposed anarchic utopia of the sonic aesthetic and ostensibly spartan ableist realm of words. If I suggest that to confide in this idea is childish, I do not intend this as a derogatory judgement. Children have an acute ear for the sonic aesthetic and are also prodigious linguists. But, crucially, their striving to understand the distinctions between these kinds of noise lead them – as they prepare for adulthood – away from a condition(ality) of musical appreciation toward one of lingual apprehension. Pater's interest in music is at best peripheral. Though his statement is more than metaphorical, it does not represent a practical injunction that *Wake* readers, viewers of the plastic artworks of Giorgione, or any other aesthetes might helpfully follow. I read Pater as saying that aspiration to music's "condition" is a route to understanding sculpture, painting, literature... and not an end in itself. I think that in her at once simplistic and high-flown way, Forster's Margret Schlegel (see T. Martin 1991 in Chapter 1A) has it right. To paraphrase, *what's the point of the ear if it speaks to you in a way to which the eye can aspire, or of the reading eye if it wishes it were a listening ear?* As much as I concur with Witen's rejection of Susan Brown's view of Joyce's musicianship and musical scholarship as "bogus", "sloppy", "incomplete", and "illogical" (Brown, 2007, np), I conceive of its deployment in *Ulysses* as rather disingenuous. One is inevitably caught between the two supposedly opposing states of "belief" and "disbelief" in the "fuga per canonem" and its variants. As regards any overall "music of Joyce", we may be at once susceptible to this idea and sceptical about it.

But, setting these conceptual doubts aside, it has been to the aesthetic analyses of Andreas Fischer, Brad Bucknell, and in particular David Herman that this thesis has turned for some sort of "firm" (though abstract and conditional) musical understanding of Joyce. In this broad musical discourse one has over and over to "begin again [in order] to make soundsense and sensesound kin again" (121.15-6). This being so, Herman is the odd one out in this trio. His questioning of Joyce's "music" leads him to relatively straightforward answers. Fischer and Bucknell each ask open and irresolvable questions that, like Joyce's

pre-textual hint of musicality, direct us uncertainly through confusing philosophical territory. The dynamic proposed by Fischer between the initially sub-semantic fragments at the start of “Sirens” and the semanticising contexts into which they are later placed approximates the syntactical discourse between musical building blocks and their compositional arrangement. But I think that Fischer’s title “Strange Words, Strange Music” may be understood as speaking not only of the strangeness of each medium, but of their estrangement from one another. The mutually estranging, entrapping, and disabling brothers Shem and Shaun may embody this unhappy proximity in their reflexively diddling and pontificating margin notes to *Finnegans Wake* II.2. In an unwittingly disablist characterisation of Joyce’s “cutting and splicing”, Fischer applies the term “severely weakened” (Fischer, 1999, p. 253) not in a negative, but in a dispassionate or even positive sense.

If Chapter 1A demonstrated that the eclecticism of musical responses to Joyce presents a multiguity of subjective equal and opposite understandings, 1B found disablist re-readings of *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* showing so many disabled authorial and textual faces (“multimirror”, multimimetic” (582.20, 267.2-3)) that any sense of a disablist unity of response is lost. The poetry of Tourette’s, queer-disabled temporalities, Deaf eyes, disablist hearing, and crippled eroticism have all helped us to disable Joyce. But, analogous with seeking a discrete disabled character in the works whose disability is not simply a function of narrative conceit, finding one disabled Joyce is ultimately impossible.

This study’s application of “disability aesthetics” (as espoused by Tobin Siebers and Marion Quirici) to the dysgenic but ingenious sonic-semantics of the *Wake* has perhaps tested this paradigm to destruction. While the cognitive disability performed by Paul McCarthy (see Siebers 2006 in Chapter 1B) is apt for Siebers’, as it were, *dys-aesthetical* analysis, the more universalist disability of *Finnegans Wake* is less yielding. So when I proposed that, in pushing *Finnegans Wake* toward a fully disabled mode, Joyce sought to engender the radical materiality of disabled content, textuality, and response as a means of synthesising the subject and object of his work, I may have been wishing a real-world bodily dysmorphia onto the text that it was not quite able to accept. But I feel that what did emerge was a reflexive flexibility in the *Wake* that permits entry to bodies usually excluded from literary textualities.

Joseph Straus makes no mention of Joyce in *Extraordinary Measures*. Though he cites ableist prose narrative textualities in passing, he compares disablist musical narratives to ableist literary ones without considering either “musical” or disablist literary narratives. I concur with his overriding sense that music is non-representational. His is, however, a more conditional reading of music’s illiteracy than my own. Quoting Straus, in Chapter 1B I

expressed my conviction that music can “say” nothing at all: “In short, music does not only not have “a range of descriptive powers”, it has no descriptive powers whatsoever” (S) [1A]. But the joy, or perhaps *jouissance*, or perhaps Joyce-sense of being disabled/disablist/crip entails a bifurcation of self and a fracturing of relationships with the thither side of experience allowing for a confusion or elision of aesthetic-semantic categories. It is perhaps this sensibility more than anything else that disabled critics bring to otherwise ableist critical culture. We found in Chapter 1A that *Finnegans Wake* is a cultural and material construction especially susceptible to illumination through breaching by a disabled body. I hope that this thesis has shown that such an illumination (amplified by the additional factor of music) is viable.

2.

But a disablist study cannot resort solely to synaesthetic and dysfunctionalist models of semantic-aesthetics. It is mutually beneficial for disability critics to employ paradigms and terms that are comprehensible to non-disabled readers and non-disability-studies critics. By this token, it is not enough to hold up the aesthetic surface of Schoenbergian serialist musical works as kindred with the surface of *Ulysses* or *Finnegans Wake*: we must also, indeed principally, show that Joyce and Schoenberg employed paradigms and techniques that unite them with many other art and science practitioners of their time.

Chapter 2 began largely outside of music, turning to the intrinsically disembodied fundamental of syntax as a means of reading Joyce by ear. The primary secondary source for this study, Herman’s “‘Sirens’ after Schoenberg”, finds in that episode of *Ulysses* a sympathy rather with serial musical development than with fugal musical completeness. It is quite likely that Joyce placed little philosophical weight on his designation ‘Work in Progress’ for the early iterations of the *Wake*. But when one is seeking in a work of literature an instability and unfinishedness that might align it with music’s manifestation in “being made” rather than in a state of completion, this self-identification as “in flux” is a useful starting point.

Ironically, the musics of the “atonal” but pre-serial Schoenberg (sometimes drawing on cabaret and early forms of jazz), and of a “atonalist” post-serial composer such as Harrison Birtwhistle, are more compositionally indefinite and indeterminate than are the – to many ears – less regular-sounding works of high serialism. Such logical and coherent modes as dodecaphony and combinatorial prose are, as I pointed out in Chapter 2, frequently understood as producing incomprehensible, dysgenic results. Conforming to conventions

(however arbitrary) is frequently viewed as more indicative of “ability” than are inventive breakings with convention. We correct a child for performing the combinatory action of pluralising “sheep” as “sheeps”, telling her that the plural of “sheep” is – for reasons we cannot provide – “sheep”. The “taste for cretinism of speech” (Quirici, 2016, p. 92) displayed throughout Joyce’s canon, though in part rooted in an aesthetic and anthropological fascination with the contours of dialect and the vernacular, often conceals sophisticated and inventive combinatorial methodologies. So when in the *Wake* we hear “I thinks more of my pottles and ketts” (267.F6) and “it was of him, my wife and I thinks” (336.25-6), we may perceive error and inability rather than a meta-lingual short-circuiting of id, ego, co-dependency, and unity. In the first instance, Issy’s perhaps visionary, perhaps “eccentric”, perhaps psychotic divided sense of self is deftly communicated through this simple pro(s)thetic gesture. The human subject may not wish to think of him or herself as made up of little transferable “sequences or strings” (Herman, 1994, p. 475) of data: s/he may prefer to imagine that large passages of personal narrative have a complete and unique quality all their own. But, as I argued in Chapter 2, the construction both of the work of art and of the body may take place at a “combinatorial” – rather than a linear narrative – level. Nagel and Newman’s definition of “strings” as “finitely long sequences ... of meaningless marks, constructed according to rules for combining the elementary signs of the system into larger wholes” (Herman, 1994, p. 480n27) makes this an infinitely flexible term. Throughout the thesis I have viewed/heard works of music as texts just as printed books are texts, understanding music as “written”, not on paper, but in sound itself, only legible in its fluctuating ephemeral realisation. Similarly, that dynamic and impermanent “genomic text” the human body has been understood as real only in its narrative progress, having no form other than (re)formation. This bodily combinatorial formation has been aligned with that of *Finnegans Wake* through a conditional reading (seeking to reflect Joyce’s conditional writing) that has demoted denotation and promoted internal-semantic interrelation.

As I have shown, Joyce’s transfigurative combinatorial techniques resemble the mirroring, inversion, transposition, and other procedures of serialism. Joyce employs phonemic and lexemic substitutions within motifs such as “A Nation Once Again” to generate inter-phrasal relationships that will be governed not by semantic attribution, but by syntactic articulation. This artificial, non-arbitrary conception of the phrase, chord, sentence, and melody as each a function not of artistic inspiration but of extrapolation from fragmentary initial material disables the ostensible bond between compositional integrity and semantic intelligibility. Serialism shows that it is a lack of intelligence in the dynamic

between composer and audience, not a lack of intelligibility in the work itself, that brings about aesthetic-semantic impairment.

This intelligence may be found (in the cases of both serialism and “Wakeism”) in an ableist-disablist middle ground between Pierre Schaeffer’s “*écouter réduite*” and a complete *reductio ad absurdum* of aesthetic-semantic response. As discussed several times in the thesis, *écouter réduite* (‘reduced listening’) arises from Schaeffer’s auditive mode “*entendre*”. *Entendre* is the mode whereby one focusses on sounds themselves rather than on their arbitrary significations. The “reduction” here is one not of unintelligence or of insensibility, but of intentionality. The sound itself and not the signification is “*intended*” as the object of listening.

Serialism initially held on to a strictly contrapuntal (often fugal or canonical) Bach/Brahmsian aesthetic-semantic. This meant that – in a hangover from “functional harmony” – the chord remained an expression of linear structure. The literary-critical search for counterpoint in *Ulysses* and the *Wake* also perhaps suffers from this hangover (while the works themselves may not). The *écouter réduite* required in *Wake* reading could be akin more to Boulez’s way of hearing chordal dynamics in late serialism than to nineteenth century models of the fugue. While, as we have established, phonemes are not notes, and words are not chords, Wakeisms like the thunder words behave in their context more like the tonal-harmonic-rhythmic-dynamic compounds of integral serialism than like the polyphonic lines and conjunctions of fugue. As previously cited, Boulez explains that,

the chord, having gradually lost its [old] structural functions, has become a sonic aggregate; it is chosen for its own sake, for its internal capacities of tension or relaxation, according to its registral disposition.... Thus its structural function is both diminished and sharpened, which tends to demonstrate that the truly harmonic era of Western European music is at an end. (Boulez, 1991, p. 281)

A whole essay could be written on the utility of this one quotation for auditive readings of modernist literature. It suffices for now to say that terms such as “aggregate”, “internal capacities of tension or relaxation”, and “disposition” have been seen in this thesis to be extremely useful in analysing *Finnegans Wake* (particularly from a disablist sonic perspective).

Herman’s five incorporations of the fragment “well-formed” in such constructions as “the well-formed atonal musical phrase” (Herman, 1994, p. 480) find him incognisant of the

potency of this term for disabled consumers of art (even when it is applied dispassionately to pure form). I have sought to be more conscious of this power than Herman, and in deed more subjective toward it. Discordant critical reactions to *Ulysses* that found it ill-formed, or with no meaningful form, may, as I have already hypothesised, have roused Joyce to create a genuinely formally “monstrous” work, leading to the writing of *Finnegans Wake*. A similar interaction between conservatism and the radical is observable in the cases of works by among many others Erik Satie, Edgard Varese, Gertrude Stein, Pablo Picasso, John Cage, William Burrows, Ornette Coleman, Samuel Beckett, Karlheinz Stockhausen, , Jimi Hendrix, and in recent times a great range of quickly assimilated and normalised spasms of artistic difference.

3.

In Chapter 3 I conceived of a period in the mid twentieth century during which modernism and post-modern eclecticism seemed set to become one side of a new normal (with a homogeneous entertainment culture based around television constituting the other side). Unalloyed realism in literary fiction and “legitimate” theatre, and traditional tonality in music, seemed to have been pushed out of high art into the new space of universal *hyper-popular* culture. Versions of surrealist and absurdist narrative and theatre, and what might broadly be called “modern jazz”, became strikingly prominent components of the “mainstream” art scene. This was the world into which Boulez introduced his integral serialism, which had been so influenced by proto-modernist and modernist literatures. On this understanding, we might say that no art could really have been “disabled” in this context. But the complacency with which anti-traditionality had been absorbed if anything rendered it even more incomprehensible for those unwilling to study its foundational principles. This was the period in which an unthinking sense that Pierre Boulez or Cecil Taylor or John Cage or Eric Dolphy was simply defying logic and rationality in order to shake up sonic-aesthetic culture in some aggressive and indiscriminate way began to take hold. As with *Finnegans Wake*, many listeners only perceived the results of combinatory and aleatory methods, ignoring their operation. Here again is that lack of intelligence (not intelligibility) between composer and audience.

I demonstrated in Chapter 3 that, while with the *Wake* and the *Third Sonata* Joyce and Boulez each gave up aspects of compositional determination to a sort of procedural anarchy, meaning that each had only a “faint idea of the “final work”” (Crispi, 2007, p. 228), in both

instances an “extremely controlled” (Nattiez, 1993, p. 112) execution ensured the integrity of that work.

We considered in this chapter the potential of serial and other combinatorial arts to express – if obliquely – the personalities of their composers. The eclecticism of serial musics – from the scholastic early works of Schoenberg, through Webern’s free verse tone paintings and Alban Berg’s Wagnerian psycho dramas, to popular serialisms in the cinema including the post-Romantic dodecaphony of Hanns Eisler and the Tom and Jerry scores of Scott Bradley – prove the flexibility of this mode. But the “American century” within which this very European medium developed may be seen to have limited its communicative potential. Each unashamedly playing to European art’s strengths of density and opacity, Joyce and Boulez both defied calls for modernism to be toned down while nonetheless speaking eloquently to the condition of mid-twentieth-century Western existence.

One crucial aspect of this post-First/Second-World-War condition was a personal, communal, and meta-experiential disability. I would strongly assert that, despite the liberal and socially inclusive manifestos of Cage and the Beat poets, it was the Eurocentric narrative and meta-textual inventiveness of figures like Joyce and Boulez that most effectively communicated “abject embodiment” (Quirici, 2016, p. 104).

The systematic yet partially indeterminate dynamic between Joyce’s working draft, his notes and sketches, and his exterior life, in a period when his iritis was causing him pain and partial blindness and his daughter’s mental health was degenerating, produces a compelling disarticulated narrative. The perception we adopted in Chapter 3, of a rational dysfunctionality and coherent deformativity in the composition of II.2, contrasts with misapprehensions of irrationality, incoherence, and ultimately chaos. But Joyce’s debatable status as “disabled” author is not crucial to an understanding of the later work as disabled, and a reading of *Finnegans Wake* as textualising cognitive disorder does not depend on a diagnosis of Lucia’s particular cognitive disorder. Indeed, a (de)formalist analysis of the *Wake*, and an alignment of the *Wake* and the *Third Sonata* on this basis, arises first and foremost from a displacement of the *author-composer’s ego, will, and subjectivity* within the composition process. Some critics have viewed authorial failure, error, and misjudgement as having led in parts of *Finnegans Wake* to compositional and textual weakness. I would suggest that we in fact find here a textual integrity arising from a compositional coherence that to a large extent precludes authorial error. If an author can ensure that a work’s “form arises [in large part] from the given material” (Peysner, 1980, p. 64), that work can become free from the ableist and otherwise normative preconditioning of its author. While Cage

sought to achieve this by creating a division between his own likes and dislikes and the eventual experience of his audience, neither Boulez nor Joyce resorted to absolute chance or indeterminacy, each favouring a sort of negotiation with chance redolent of high-functioning disability. Unlike in the case of Boulez, it is understandable that critics of Joyce might perceive a poor control of chance slipping into the methodology. Harriet Weaver's concerns about the "Safety Pun Factory" (Ellmann, 1982, p. 590) of Joyce's late style, and such remarks of Joyce's as his proposition (when writing to Weaver about the notion of James Stephens completing the new project) that "If ... I showed him the threads he could finish the design" (Ellmann, 1982, p. 591-2), belie the meticulous nature of the *work in progress*.

It might be conceived that while Joyce employed convoluted techniques to attain obscure results, Boulez used highly distilled methods to achieve results that were extremely transparent. As I proposed in Chapter 3, sounds in the *Third Sonata* are no more than what we make of them. Schaeffer's mode of listening *entendre* and his principle of reduced listening provide a paradigm through which the – as it were – *intentional* "reading" of the *Sonata* might permit a composer-listener intelligence not reliant on knowledge of integral serialism. While a similar dynamic may apply with *Finnegans Wake*, such readerly intentionality is strictly limited here by language's external-semantic imperative as well as by the deliberate non-transparency of the textual surface. Here we return to the impression and reality that (in their different ways) "sonata" and "novel" negotiate their "disability" status with their reader-listeners. That is to say that, as interactions between disabled bodies and abled bodies tend to result in disabling rather than normative dynamics, so all readers of the *Wake* and listeners to the *Third Sonata* are both disabled by and disabling of the respective texts.

The parallel between *FW* II.2 and the *Third Sonata* as regards the radical interaction of human disorder, internal/external semantics, and artistic form/aesthetics is particularly pronounced in Issy's footnotes as they correspond on a meta-narrative level to her gestures in her mirror. We may read Issy's abbreviated actions (of limb, of mouth, and of pen) as equating to bodily activity suggestive of disorder or dysfunction, of artistry, but also perhaps of paranormality. Seeing Boulez's *Third Sonata* performed emphasises the sometimes uncanny relationship between the sonic-semantic and its silent and illegible kinetic origins. The distorting mirrors at which Issy, Joyce, and Boulez sit partially deafen and mute them, the symbolic and iconic figures they see there so defying simple articulation that the symbols and icons themselves dominate the reader/listener's attention and signification is demoted.

4.

Conversely, in the musico-verbal collage of Cage's *Roaratorio*, nothing is symbolic and all is concrete. Everything is – at a certain level – quite as it seems to be. Cage feeds the *Wake* into his aleatory verse-producing device, and the reciter's voice emerges amid an agglomeration of representational sounds (*écouter*). Schaeffer's mode *écouter* is, as mentioned in previous chapters, inextricably linked to Husserl's notion of "the natural attitude", in which "sounds are heard immediately as indices of objects and events in the world" (Kane, 2012, p. 440). But while things are as they seem (objects, events, and persons are represented by sounds), those sounds neither "mean" what they ordinarily "mean" nor is their "meaning" subject to the intentions of their listener (so circumscribed are they within Cage's poetic construct). With the non-lingual elements of *Roaratorio*, as well as with the re-natured *Wake* material, Cage impairs intentional and comprehensive modes of hearing and enhances immediate and concrete modes. While Boulez discerns in the text a meta-syntactic comprehensibility and intentionality, Cage sees an entropic spacetime to be rummaged through for miscellaneous sound objects.

As suggested above, the meeting of disability and ability (such as in the bodies of the blind stripling and Leopold Bloom, or of *Finnegans Wake* and any reader) will result in disablement not ablement. But another way of expressing this is to say that: in all individual bodies and texts, and in the world as a whole, there is a constant discourse between ability and disability. The disabled cultural subject is the same as any other cultural subject in every way save that the former is assigned and assigns him or herself the label "disabled". Degenerative disabilities (of sensory, cognitive, and other kinds) are accompanied by processes of coming to understand oneself as "disabled". The very cultural and social nature of these processes clearly identifies disability as a communal space rather than a discrete state of being. This is shown by the moral-aesthetic-semantic formulations of disability that are imposed on characters within the *Wake* narrative universe. It is the broadly ableist Shaun, and not Shem himself, who identifies the "abject" half of the twinly co-dependency as possessing

an adze of a skull, an eight of a larkseye, the whoel of a nose, one numb arm up a sleeve, fortytwo hairs off his uncrown, eighteen to his mock lip, a trio of barbels from his megageg chin (sowman's son), the wrong shoulder higher than the right, all ears, an artificial tongue with a natural curl, not a foot to stand on, a handful of thumbs, a blind stomach, a deaf heart... (169.11-17)

Again not wishing to overstress this mutuality or collectivity (some persons are at a given moment practically impaired and others are not), I find that *Finnegans Wake* evokes the ineffable and mutable nature of corporeal dysfunction.

We have seen that Wakean techniques of invocation, obscurance, distortion, and revelation approximate the real-world experience of memory, amnesia, misconception, and comprehension. The *Wake* in a sense does not discriminate between remembering, forgetting, recalling, and misrecalling. The distortion and plurifurcation of song-related texts in particular speaks of a sort of musical irrationality in aestheticized language that in external life would be considered disordered. As in “Sirens”, the absent presence of music in the language of the *Wake* (through allusion, description, and invocation) evokes an at once riotous and melancholy vision of the semantic as mute and anaesthetic. The flashes of recognition we receive from Joyce’s titular and lyrical wordplay highlight our silent and mono-linear path as readers. While it is possible to store mentally in an intact form the title or lyrics of a song, music itself inheres only in its production and, unlike language, does not connect neatly with the hither side of comprehension or intelligence: that is, its semantics are intrinsic rather than extrinsic.

With *Roaratorio* Cage perhaps sought to dissolve this distinction by both de-semanticising language and de-aestheticising music. If, as in *Roaratorio*, language is not required to be indicative or memorable, nor music to be pleasing or beautiful, then the two may find a common denominator in the noise of their production. Joyce (like all creative writers) uses syntax aesthetically to make the quantitative and phatic noise of language beautiful. Boulez (like all musicians) employs syntax semantically to render the quantitative and phatic noise of music meaningful. By removing – or disabling – syntax, Cage performs the opposite procedure in each instance.

I began to consider in Chapter 4 the question of, if Joyce were in some imaginary world a musician, or can be on some level held to have been a musician in his writing, would he be (or was he) more a Boulezian or a Cagean musician. It can be read from Chapter 2 that a Schoenbergian model for Joycean musicality is both too Romantic and too baldly axiomatic to hold. In Webern we hear something like the expressionistic and yet peculiarly disarticulated quality of ALP’s monologue and other similarly lyrical passages in the *Wake*. The sheer tangled or interwoven compositional quality of Boulez’s integral serial works seems to take us closer to a Wakean sonic-semantics.

It has been the central struggle of this thesis to define quite what this “music” (which may impinge upon works of literature) is. Is it a highly logical factor? A highly irrational factor? Or both? Music itself (outside of literature) is certainly both logical and irrational: logical in construction, irrational in purpose. But the inevitable reduction of music’s nature that occurs in its attempted elision with literature tends to diminish either its logical or its irrational qualities. In her reading of “Sirens” as musical, Michelle Witen focusses on music’s logical composition. Brad Bucknell seeks in his musical reading a sort of mutual obscurity of music and language, a confusion of sound and sense that finds each of these constants present in its absence. And Anthony Burgess believes in a sort of amicable co-existence for the two media. At variance to each of these analyses, the present thesis see-hears music and language as mutually disabling entities.

Joyce’s hyper-syntacticism and hypo-semanticism (typical tendencies in the high modernist period) seem to paint him as an artist leaning toward abstraction. His onomatopoeic and iconic stylistics, however, see demonstrative (rather than descriptive) prose rendering content into form, thus abstracting content but concretising form. Far from taking external reality out of his art, Joyce forces reality and artifice together to create uncanny hybrids of image and word. Because of this, it is difficult to determine whether Joyce the imagined or practising “musical composer” uses as his fundamental materials images of reality or non-signifying elements in a system. We might hear Joyce’s mash-ups as like Boulez’s mid-twentieth-century chord, which had lost its old structural functions and ceased to be simply a result/enabler of melody (as in fugue), becoming a sonic-aesthetic aggregate in its own right, and existing “for its own sake”. Of course, this music is still “tonal”; these aggregates are still conjunctions of notes chosen from the twelve tempered tones of Bach and Mozart. Likewise, Joyce’s lexemic aggregates remain conjunctions of sound-meanings: their sense is retained despite the oddity of their sound.

In a sense, all sounds are aggregates: all tones have overtones and white noise is at once a single sound and all sound. Cage determined that not only were triads and dyads, tonic and dominant, no longer special or important to the sonic-aesthetic, but that no sound (tonal or otherwise) was more worthy of interest than any other, and indeed perhaps “aesthetic” was no longer the apt term. Is “Joyce the composer” perhaps more like this? After all, like Cage’s, Joyce’s fundamentals are globally inexhaustible where Boulez’s are finite. It could be that this “musical Joyce” is, as I suggested in Chapter 4, more a sound artist than a musician per se, more inclined toward a concrete, theatrical mode than to the abstract mathematics of (a)tonality.

I have tried to show from the beginning of this thesis and throughout that various analytic paradigms for identifying “the music of Joyce” provide revealing ways of understanding the lingual operation of Joyce’s prose. Conceptions vary from a sense of complete impossibility as regards song or other music inhering in a literary text, to one of implicit belief in the activity of music in the “deaf heart” of *Ulysses* or *Finnegans Wake*. We have conceived of *Finnegans Wake* as both a “human body” and a cultural “space”. If we take these conceits seriously, we must I think at least *hypothesise* the possibility of music entering that body and operating within that cultural space. Both the most firmly musical and the most confirmedly anti-musical readings of Joyce allow – in their best moments – for a simultaneous presence and absence of music in the texts. It is no exaggeration to say that the presence of music in literature is as esoteric and as metaphysical a proposition as the presence of God in the universe. It may also be confidently supposed that the post-Yeatsian Joyce, who believed in epiphany and in the clairvoyance of his daughter’s cognitive disability, may have understood music as neither present nor absent in either the world or the word, or both present and absent in both.

All four chapters of this thesis have illustrated how the Penelopean (dysfunctional) meticulousness with which Joyce weaves, reweaves, interweaves, and unweaves plot, persona, and place in the *Wake* can sensitise a sub- or extra-linguistic oral faculty in readers akin – but not identical – to that activated in listening to polyphonic music. It is this prodigiously disablent process of (hyper)sensitisation rather than any formal inherence of music in Joyce that this thesis has sought to establish.

APPENDIX.

Annotation of Pierre Boulez's *Third Sonata* for piano,
as recorded by Paavali Jumppanen

1 (Paavali Jumppanen) Parenthèse. Nettement au-dessous de Lent, 2 33.

long low A₂ flat

3 steps, hesitation (G grace note up to c with B flat bass note resolving to short A)

bright ping of major 14th interval (7th + octave, D C sharp), then bass E flat added creating triadic inversion of 3 consecutive semitones

3 steps (descending C A G + harmonies) to portentous crash with up octave F sharp at top sequential removal of tones from chord

hop skip and faltering jump up to Reservedly optimistic jazzy upward cadence

sequential removal of tones from chord

B grace note + C C sharp creating another triadic inversion of 3 consecutive semitones this time diminished ninths

gentle swung 3-step gesture with mid-high piano note added

high pianissimo isolated note (G)

sequence of 4 boisterously dualistic leitmotivic gestures, last quieter

short isolated note (mid F)

pause

2 gentle diads mid and high, then louder higher single note subverting tonality

high grace note to jazzy dys-chord built in 2 steps mid then higher

thunder crash built up of 4 rapidly consecutive overlapping sub-claps, a little like opening of Messiaen *Vingt Regards 2, Watch of the Star*

3 limping steps forming quiet ominous chord from diad note note

discordant lightbulb or lightning flash

grace diad then remarkable scattering or Ligeti-like shower of pebbles or hailstones with Messiaen-like Divine profundity

hop skip longer jump, plop, plip, quiet deep echo

3-step chord chord chord compound, similar 3-fold responding pattern (slower)

pause

2 sad chords

isolated high pianissimo note (G again)

4 slow quiet hesitant steps as along woodland path, point interval interval point
pause

short-mid isolated note (mid F)

15 bars of awkward syncopated waltz, steady but increasingly vaguely stressed

2 pairs of 2 cautious steps

clumsy 7-fold jazz drum gesture

held inert chord, quick 4-step building of ambiguously affirmative chord

4 Quizzical steps, hesitation before last which is held

2 (Paavali Jumppanen) Glose. Lent, 1 26.

6-fold syncopated pattern in bass, scalar/arpeggionic psequence in time or scattering of
various-length notes in space, hard to discern notes until final held mid C

higher 2-step then still higher 4-fold skipping gesture

6 faltering steps leading to stumbling

10 high dissonant clusters played in sharp rhythm forte, quieter short cluster

mysterious or impressionistic arpeggio, a little like opening of Messiaen *Vingt Regards 2*,
Watch of the Star, then syncopated toying with this material

brief grumble in bass

extended trill resolving in 3 stepwise points (notes)

quiet staccato chord with bass note sustained [staccato = 'detached', staccato and legato in
Wake]

upward leaping arpeggio from mid bass to high, , lower harmony added to top note

more faltering skipping, tripping, stuttering resolving in thoughtful open chord

4 very discordant chords/clusters, 5 staccato steps

answering series of short grumbles in bass

dancing syncopation of multiple voices

extended double trill leading to scattering of a few notes in bass treble and middle

gentle triad arpeggio then sharp dissonant diad and broken tonally ambiguous cluster

2 clearly phrased jittering oscillating gestures

sustained E Mostly obliterated by short chord in mid and sustained chord in bass

(simultaneously struck)

more stumbling capering skipping leading to hesitancy then laughing collapse and bump to
the ground

cloudy quiet cluster in bass, brief rumble of thunder, louder denser (closer but still distant)

thunder in bass

2 bass steps leading to loud but not forte articulated/ staggered dissonant thunder claps in mid-bass then louder in mid

brief rhythmic grumbling then mid-high broken ding dong cadence

2 steps in bass leading to 2 or more high arpeggiated lines or scatterings of points, sparce, pittering out

a sense of spent energy

3 (Paavali Jumppanen) Commentaire. Nettement moins lent, 2 20.

series of strange opposing diads, triads and points, becoming increasingly playful, peekaboo, plink plonk, *a little like Schoenberg Pierrot Lunaire*, Messiaen *Vingt Regards 5, Watch of the Son over the Son*

(rhythm and articulation more important than tonality, Messiaen's influence)

ominous (or perhaps pompous) cadence

2 short steps, low mid D, mid G.

sparce scattering of various points and small agrigates, intimate 2/3-way discourse

4 descending tightly broken chords, a little like opening of Messiaen *Vingt Regards 3, Exchange*, slipping into reverie or losing concentration

staccato stirring and arousal

descending steps in 4/5 pairs before scamper and 5 syllable knocking at door in mid bass more 2/3-way discourse, longer than before, more agitated, halting and starting, perhaps Shem and Shaun briefly interrupted by high-pitched Issy

slightly boystrous outburst calming down to brief desultory exchange

pause

series of 6 leitmotivic pairs of chords

pause

leap into tentative lightly jumping dance of intervals and chords, settling into irregular halting pacing

soft light leaps towards brief gentle rising pattern

more hesitant pacing, light leaping, building to briefly joyous cadence of dance then final leap as afterthought

quick resumption of sparse dialogue, now focussed, studious, points and intervals, then petulantly frustrated flamed chords saying “I don’t know”

pause

sustained contented dialogue pivoting on one beat flare of frustration, but mostly understanding, comprehension

pause

cloudy chord + brief high diad and 4 syllable utterance then extended bass trill and decisive crescendo

4 (Paavali Jumppanen) Texte. Presque lent, 1 21.

strange little broken triad of D C sharp and E, plaintive, inquiring

gently instructive reply

soft diadic “ping” like light coming on, held

1-2-1 toggle

series of chordal steps with hesitations and high points interrupting

brief Scampering hither and thither, pittering out with light scribble

brusque scrawl before 2 expansive multi-tonal overlapping broken chords

sequential removal of notes from compound chord

pause followed by sustained note + another, then third shorter note making triad (E - B flat tri tone + major 7th Ay)

brief skitter, hesitation, full stop

pause before isolated quiet high broken diad then unevenly cumulative solemn chord

quick steps away

assertive held grace note and abrupt withdrawn chord

high airy broken triad over previous grace note then added muddy notes in bass

all tones (6 or more) removed sequentially at regular short intervals

pair of arrhythmic arpeggionic gestures, quieter arrhythmic scalar gesture, full stop in bass

pause followed by 3 highish quietish points then some small aggregates then denser tightly broken chord

flicker out

ABBREVIATIONS

D James Joyce, *Dubliners*. Robert Scholes (Ed.). London: Granada Publishing, 1985.

FW James Joyce, *Finnegans Wake*. Robbert-Jan Henkes, Erik Bindervoet and Finn Fordham (Eds.). Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.

JJ Richard Ellmann, *James Joyce: New and Revised Edition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982.

U James Joyce, *Ulysses*. London: The Bodley Head, 2008.

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