The Hibernian Cosmopolis: The Modernities of James Joyce's *Ulysses* and Don DeLillo's Late Novels

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Summary

This thesis provides a comparative reading of Joyce's *Ulysses* and DeLillo's late novels, using contrasting ideas of modernity as a framework. Reading the work of these two writers through economic, temporal and technological prisms provides an overarching view of contrasting visions of modernity, and this thesis pursues these ideas to produce a broader sense of the pressures on modernity in two very different literary and historical periods.

The central contention of this thesis is that modernity is defined by the undecidable relationship between finance capitalism, temporal modulation and rapid technological change; these three facets form an unbreakable knot. The interrelationships of these forces are present in the work of both Joyce and DeLillo, yet they manifest themselves in different ways. Joyce's vision of modernity is an inchoate one, while DeLillo pushes this framework to breaking point, suggesting the condition of modernity is an inherently terminal one, which may give way to entropy or even total atrophy.

By prioritising three different areas of modernity in different parts of the thesis, this project demonstrates the mutual dependency of economic, temporal and technological forces in defining modernity, while also exploring their representation in literature, and their impact on aesthetics. Joyce's work shows this knot tighten, while DeLillo's writing demonstrates the increased pressure on the connections between these forces in an age of acceleration. The conclusion of the thesis demonstrates that although this knot endures, the dominance of technology in DeLillo's recent writing – and in modern life generally – suggests that it is specifically in this area that any crisis of modernity is likely to occur. When taken in conjunction with the environmental crises precipitated by climate

change, the technocentricity of contemporary life threatens to

overthrow the network of forces that comprises modernity.

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Finally, this thesis is dedicated to the memory of my father, Paul Howlett, who died so many years ago, but whose influence is felt in these pages more than he could have imagined.

Abbreviations Used

James Joyce texts:

FW: *Finnegans Wake* (page and line number)

JJA: *The James Joyce Archive* (volume and page number)

L: *Letters of James Joyce* (volume and page number)

OCPW: *Occasional, Critical and Political Writing*

SH: *Stephen Hero*

U: *Ulysses* (chapter and line number)

Don DeLillo texts:

C: *Cosmopolis*

FM: *Falling Man*

'ITROTF': 'In the Ruins of the Future'

PO: *Point Omega*

TBA: *The Body Artist*

TS: *The Silence*

Uw: *Underworld*

WN: *White Noise*

ZK: *Zero K*

The specific editions used are noted in the bibliography.

Introduction

Although James Joyce's *Ulysses* is the ultimate literary depiction of urban modernity for many readers and critics, the Dublin in which it is set is a city in which modernity is inchoate. In fact, the Dublin of 1904 provides a vision of the antediluvian moment before a truly recognisable modernity comes into effect. *Ulysses* depicts a city in flux at a moment where the technological and economic colonisations of modernity exist in a far from complete form. This sense of incompleteness mirrors the historical setting of the novel, predating Irish independence but nevertheless allowing a clear path to be charted to the fate of the city and the country. Don DeLillo's late (post-2000) novels survey similarly fluctuant terrain, inhabiting a world which may be termed postmodern, while also suggesting the imminent shift to another paradigm. Despite the significant differences between these two writers and their respective milieux, the comparison between Joyce and DeLillo opens up a dialogue that allows us to explore the boundaries of modernity as it is depicted in literature, ultimately suggesting that the sense of lateness that is produced in DeLillo's work begins to develop a notion of what may follow a recognisable modernity; this is especially true of *Zero K* and *The Silence*, two speculative novels which explore the afterlives of the contemporary world. Even the earlier *Falling Man* examines the collapse of a particular form of modernity, precipitated by the shocking events of the September 11th attacks.

In this thesis, I will argue that three forces drive modernity: financialisation, the reconfiguration of temporal perception, and the acceleration of technological development. These three factors frequently intersect, making it practically impossible to establish a theoretical framework which convincingly asserts the dominance of one of these forces over the others. The subdivision of this thesis –

into chapters focusing on economics, temporality and technology respectively – is arranged with this difficulty in mind. Each section places the relevant factor at its fore, but inevitably discusses its impact on other defining traits of modernity. Similarly, although this thesis alternates between discussions of Joyce and DeLillo, there are points at which the merging of the two writers becomes unavoidable. DeLillo's debt to modernism, which is often addressed self-consciously, means his work often becomes a deliberate response to Joyce and his contemporaries, meaning the comparative study that takes place within these pages actually develops from DeLillo's own writing. The ironic touches present in DeLillo's response, particularly in *Cosmopolis*'s references to *Ulysses*, make DeLillo's view clear: the modernity depicted by Joyce has been taken to its breaking point, and is being exceeded by the forces of postmodernity. However, these forces themselves originated in the developments seen in *Ulysses*, suggesting modernity is a paradigm which incorporates its own eventual obsolescence within its relentless focus on development. This notion is integral to DeLillo's late aesthetic, but it also appears within the stylistic extremities of *Ulysses*, particularly in chapters such as 'Eumaeus' and 'Ithaca' which take expressive form to absurd lengths, overloading the style established in earlier chapters and rendering it all but obsolete.

Financialisation is often the motor behind technological and temporal developments, but it is also shaped by changes within these domains. For example, the standardisation of time in the nineteenth century was largely driven by economic motives, but the system established by the International Meridian Conference was itself subject to exploitation for monetary gain, often with technological support. This is demonstrated in *Ulysses* through Bloom's suggestion of using telegraphs to bet on English horse races that have already been completed by exploiting the difference in

time between England and Ireland. This example illustrates the inseparable knot of these three factors, even within an inchoate modernity that allows such loopholes to be exploited.

In DeLillo's world, this knot is even tighter. *Cosmopolis* places finance at its centre, with technological and temporal control both symptoms and causes of its extreme financialisation. The financial world in question is one in which trading is conducted electronically, creating virtual worlds that conceal a dense physical infrastructure of servers and cables. These prostheses of the financial imagination have demonstrably altered the perception of time, reducing data latency to such an extent that practically instantaneous transactions may be completed. This sense of speed has seeped far beyond the boundaries of finance to remodel temporality for much of the world.

Alongside this triumvirate of forces, this thesis will consider the continuum of modernities that encompasses the modern and the postmodern within a single framework of development, ultimately showing the same processes at work at different stages. Through the parallel dynamics of literary modernism and postmodernism represented by Joyce and DeLillo, we may begin to understand an overarching sense of the modern as defined by crises and lacunae, evidenced by the uneven development of modernity and postmodernity alike, and the undecidable motor of inseparable forces that drives all modernities.

By placing these two writers – and their concomitant historical periods – in dialogue, I hope to explore these dense connections and begin to untie some of the knots which obfuscate the mechanisms of modernity and postmodernity. Alongside questions of finance, technology and temporality, this leads to historical considerations; I uphold Fredric Jameson's assertion that

> Any ontology of the present needs to be an ideological
> analysis as well as a phenomenological description; and as an
> approach to the cultural logic of a mode of production, or
> even of one of its stages—such as our moment of
> postmodernity, late capitalism, globalization, is—it needs to
> be historical as well (and historically and economically
> comparatist). (Jameson, 'The Aesthetics of Singularity' 101)

As a historical comparison, the future-oriented present depicted by DeLillo contrasts greatly to Joyce's tentatively modernising city, yet both moments show the pressures of modernity and postmodernity on history. Any attempt to historicise postmodernity requires reference to earlier stages of development, and the comparison offered in this thesis achieves this by placing both stages within the same rubric. The shift from modernity to postmodernity involves the intensification of the same forces and this historical comparison allows a reverse-engineering of this process, in which we may discern how the present state of financial, temporal and technological development originated in an earlier form of modernity.

While Jameson is right to assert the importance of economic comparison, I argue that this economic territory overlaps with technological and temporal domains to such an extent that these forms must be explored in their own right, even if attempts to do this frequently return to an economic mode of analysis. It is this undecidability of forms that defines modernity and postmodernity alike, and specifically, it is the intense tightening of this knot that separates postmodernity from earlier modernities. The comparative nature of this study emphasises the historical contiguity of this undecidable form.

The relationship between modernism and postmodernism is a secondary, but parallel, theme in this thesis. These two terms are

amorphous enough that it is not possible to reach general definitions by generalising from the templates set by Joyce and DeLillo but nevertheless, DeLillo's persistent references to earlier writers suggest a relationship between the two fields. Much like the relationship between modernity and postmodernity, these two aesthetic domains exist within the same continuum, with the move from modernism to postmodernism marked by intensification. Modernism's sense of totality is taken to extremes; although postmodernism is often characterised in terms of fragmentation, this fragmentation is encased within an ideological and aesthetic totality that encompasses a plurality of forms. This sense of totality is also heavily informed by the tightening knot of modernity, establishing the relationship between modernities and modernisms. By exploring modernity through the prism of literature, this relationship unfolds throughout this thesis.

An economic-led analysis forms the backbone of the first two chapters of this thesis, which explore modernity and postmodernity through the prism of financialisation. Between Joyce and DeLillo, this charts a path from the development of an increasingly dematerialised finance capitalism at the turn of the twentieth century to the totalised forms of finance-driven economic activity that define the current era.

The economic aspects of *Ulysses* bear a significant relation to questions of materiality; I argue that the physical banknotes and coins of the novel put Joyce in a dialogue with the views of contemporaries such as Ezra Pound, who took a sceptical approach to value in his economic writings, and also later in his *Cantos*. These material concerns are heightened by the presence of postage stamps in *Ulysses*, which emphasise the disconnect between the use and exchange-values of economic instruments. They even appear as

objects of speculation in 'Ithaca', which builds upon an article from *Freeman's Journal* to discuss the economic potential of philately.

On the granular level, Bloom's personal finances are also vital to understanding the economics of *Ulysses*. I situate these finances within an Aristotelian context, noting the distinction between the domestic economy of oikos [οἶκος] and the profit-oriented chrematistikos [χρηματιστική]. Bloom's budget demonstrates his engagement with household finances, yet his fantasies of development display chrematistic tendencies; I argue that the most significant aspect of the budget is the fact that Bloom strives to break even, ultimately situating his economic activities within the domestic realm discussed by Aristotle. This is a significant contrast to the position of the Dedalus family, who suffer domestic financial hardships, epitomised by the failure to provide of Simon Dedalus and the impossibility of reaching a day's budget for his son Stephen.

The nascent consumer culture of the early twentieth century is another significant aspect of *Ulysses*, particularly in its engagement with advertising through Bloom's job. This world of signs is explored through the eyes of Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer, who take a sceptical approach to the blurring of fact and commerce in modern culture. Joyce's depiction of advertising is multifaceted, addressing it from an aesthetic but also an economic standpoint. Some of the advertisements of *Ulysses* are more sophisticated than contemporary examples from the real-world, demonstrating both Joyce's research into contemporary advertising theory, and his attempts to understand this medium with a creative eye. These thoughts are developed in the guise of Gerty MacDowell, a self-conscious figure who understands herself through advertising language and imagery. Through her literal embodiment of commodity fetishism, Joyce develops an understanding of fashion as an intrinsically economic

tool, ultimately demonstrating the degree to which modern subjectivity is defined by economic forces.

The speculatory elements of Bloom's economic views are also addressed in this thesis, which emphasises the increasing abstraction of money that accompanied that trend of financialisation from the nineteenth century onwards. This dehiscence of value from material concerns gives money an increasing reliance on faith rather than objectivity, imbuing the smallest transactions with the logic of finance. This view even filtered into the publication of *Ulysses*, copies of which were promoted as containing the potential for future profit by Joyce and Sylvia Beach. This self-awareness creates a union of form and content, in which the financialised terrain of the world is surveyed in the pages of a book that is itself subject to financial speculation.

DeLillo's work finds financialisation greatly extended, moving from the inchoate form of the world of *Ulysses* to the stage of late capitalism, one defined by crisis and asymmetry. I explain the exigencies of the term 'late capitalism' at length in the second chapter of this thesis, offering a survey of its theoretical usage from Theodor Adorno to Fredric Jameson and Giovanni Arrighi, all of whom exhibit a scepticism towards the alleged moribundity of capitalism. This leads to an establishment of neoliberalism as the specific economic paradigm depicted by DeLillo. Nevertheless, neoliberalism often follows a Thanatic path, driving towards decumulation and loss in order to preserve its self-regulating tendencies; this theme is integral to DeLillo's economic aesthetic. Indeed, neoliberalism is a significant aspect of some theories of the postmodern, as exhibited by the work of Jameson and David Harvey. This theme is at play in DeLillo's work, which explicitly engages with neoliberal economics and politics.

This discussion moves towards the market itself in relation to *Cosmopolis*, DeLillo's most explicit depiction of finance. With the miniature crash of the novel as a guide, I explore the inherent instability of neoliberalism, a form which requires volatility in order to preserve its illusion of endless growth. In the novel, this is manifested in the great swings of profit and loss of Eric Packer, a currency trader who epitomises many of the economic and sociocultural ideas of neoliberalism. Through Packer's quantified existence, the importance of data becomes apparent, as does the degree of abstraction from daily life found in financial markets in which the objects of trading are largely digital, creating a singularity of data and the substance it represents. This in turn leads to a consideration of the aestheticisation of economics, which is examined through Alison Shonkwiler's concept of the financial sublime. This digital, dematerialised form of finance is a far cry from speculation on physical objects such as that which surrounded *Ulysses* after its publication, demonstrating the relationship between abstraction and increasing financialisation.

Behind this digital façade lurks the Thanatos that is so often figured by DeLillo as an economic drive. In *Cosmopolis*, this is made explicit through references to potlatch, a form noted by Georges Bataille for its economic resonance. These quasi-anthropological themes open the novel to connections between money and violence, allowing an exploration of the violent forms of neoliberalism: accumulation by dispossession and, in Packer's view, even by disposal. Ritualised acts of disposal become bizarrely competitive in the novel, as seen in the position of Packer's nemesis, the ascetic Benno Levin. This race to oblivion leads to the hope of an eternal life through virtualised finance, an economically driven space which is only accessible through repudiation of the physical trappings of money.

Themes of violence persist in *Falling Man*, in which the September 11th attacks are brought into an economic context. Although DeLillo's essay 'In the Ruins of the Future' asserts that economic motives were not the primary reason for the attacks, they nevertheless marked a turning point in the development of American – and global – capitalism, reformatting the relationship between the state and the economy. The ensuing period of warfare led to many western countries developing a form of neoliberal state, in which the interests of government and private capital were aligned in order to fund military activities and the expansion of state surveillance. This is developed in *Point Omega*, which makes the relationship between state and economy concrete, albeit while depicting an economic microclimate which is based on austerity. In this locus, the 'real' economic world has already moved to an immaterial plane, barely accessible by the individual.

Ideas of speculation return in relation to *Zero K*, in which the object of speculation is human life itself, turning the body into a derivative and making the soul a fungible instrument. Through the novel's debates on immortality, ideas of singularity are reached, including notions of economic singularity, at which further development collapses into a vacuum. Although the totality of *Zero K* is in many ways a remote one, it demonstrates the danger of reaching a limit, and ultimately, the stasis that ensues. It is only through economic means – the extraordinarily expensive work at the Convergence – that immortality is developed in the novel, yet even this notion of immortality is entirely speculative, dependent on faith. If reached, its potential would raise significant questions for capitalism, perhaps even signifying its outermost limit.

These questions of boundaries and singularities signify a possible conclusion to the economic sphere that is shared by Joyce and DeLillo. This particular form of economic modernity is predicated on

expansion; were this to become impossible, a new system may no longer maintain the same connections between money, time and technology that keep modernity in place. Speculation on what may come to pass in the future is beyond the remit of this thesis, but from this comparative study, one thing which is apparent is that the pressures on modernity have greatly increased over the last century, to the point at which terminal shocks like economic collapse seem plausible and perhaps even likely. A significant aspect of this is environmental crisis, which provides an external limit to economics through the depletion of resources and the acceleration of anthropogenic climate change by means such as the energy-intensive computing required to maintain the digital infrastructure of cryptocurrencies. The prospect of environmental catastrophe is increasingly intruding into economic life, providing an alternative chain that disconnects it from its temporal and technological connections. Despite the continued acceleration of finance, environmental pressures make the current economic system – and perhaps even modernity itself – increasingly unviable.

The temporal link of modernity's knot is defined by the interrelationship of physical time, experiential time, and attempts to control time by economic and political factors, or through technological means. As with financialisation, factors which are evident in an inchoate form in *Ulysses* are greatly expanded by the turn of the new millennium. Through its exploration of temporality, this thesis situates the manipulation of time within broader currents of modernity and postmodernity, in which temporal is both secondary to financial and technological development, and also a driving force behind their expansion. These temporal themes are also greatly important to developing an understanding of the aesthetic changes of modern literature, connecting but also separating the work of Joyce and DeLillo. In both historical paradigms explored in

this thesis, attempts are made to control time: by imperialist and neoliberal forces respectively. Although all of these attempts are doomed to failure, a fact which is treated by both writers with irony, these attempts to capture time have led to technological innovation, economic change and altered perceptions of temporality.

Like economic forces, temporality raises questions of materiality. In *Ulysses*, these are asked frequently, often playing on the contradictions between natural, experiential and political time. These different temporalities are consolidated in the appearance of the time-ball, which is seen as a triangulation between Bloom's subjectivity, the solar time in Dublin and the time difference between Ireland and England as was present in 1904. These different modes raise questions of control; in the context of *Ulysses*, these are tied to imperialism, which I argue intensified the contradictions between different temporal frames by adding a regimented system of time zones which often contradicted solar time. Joyce addresses this through the ironic temporal gaps between Dublin and England, but also in a direct reference to the political debate surrounding Ireland's time zone that appeared after the Easter Rising, an event which emphasised the political potential of time differences for Irish revolutionaries.

In DeLillo's late novels, temporality is also a contested force. The post-September 11th paradigm of *Falling Man* depicts the unwelcome 'return' of history after a period in which the temporal waters appeared to have been stilled. The novel distorts time in a manner that parallels the function of a VCR: pausing and rewinding at the moment of disaster, but skipping ahead through several subsequent years; the analogy of a moribund technology in a novel that was published in 2007 produces its own temporal complication, suggesting something has failed to move beyond the traumatic moment. This is reflected in the novel's more explicit approach to

post-traumatic stress, in which memory reprises trauma, but repetition eases it somewhat.

These ideas are given an artistic offshoot in the work of DeLillo's David Janiak, a performance artist whose tasteless recreations of the event appear in various New York locations for years afterwards. Janiak's performances are contrasted to the still life paintings of Giorgio Morandi, which stop time altogether. In his writing on Morandi, DeLillo produces a similar effect, using ekphrasis to slow the narrative and ultimately, manipulate the timeframe of the novel. *The Body Artist* provides a further exploration of the temporal manipulation of art, unmooring art from external factors through the intense performances of its protagonist, which are said to greatly alter time for her audience. Although DeLillo's writing here is less explicitly ekphrastic, its depiction of the repetitive behaviours undertaken by the artist in preparation for her performance allow a separate, corporeal and artistic timeframe to emerge. I note the similarity of this to work by Alison Knowles, whose year-long performance *Identical Lunch* breached the boundaries of duration, making the notion of an audience or observer obsolete.

Play with duration finds an outlet in Joyce's use of parallax, which I explore at length in relation to 'Wandering Rocks', a chapter which uses the technique to produce a complex montage. Within the imperial context of the viceregal cavalcade, this again demonstrates the counter-discursive power of temporal difference, producing a series of affronts to the viceroy that only become apparent during its final panoramic interpellation, which stitches the chapter's multiple perspectives together in a more linear fashion. Through this use of repetition, the illusion of simultaneity is maintained.

On a personal and political level, the temporality of *Ulysses* often reprises traumatic ghosts. These ideas are particularly potent at

moment when the boundary between past and present collapses, allowing horrible images such as Stephen's vision of his late mother to intrude into the text. Numerous textual motifs bring these images to light, underlining the presence of the past in the present. This is even manifested on a historical level, especially within the heavily embellished histories of 'Cyclops', a chapter which persistently refers to the traumas of colonialism and racism, particularly with the complex traumatic resonances of the 1798 Rebellion and 1916 Easter Rising. The antisemitism of past and present coincide in the treatment of Bloom in the chapter, while its references to the Great Famine emphasise the extensive traumatic legacy of the event, which is so extensive it has even tainted far earlier elements of Irish history. In turn, the subsequent events of the Holocaust give its visions of antisemitism a chilling resonance. These historical ghosts open a parallel timeframe of mourning, in which the potential for alternate timeframes is one which demonstrates the failure to overcome grief and return to a life in the present. Bloom's vision of his son Rudy as a changeling underlines this idea, the submerged belief that in some alternate domain, the person or thing mourned has continued to live.

Failures of mourning are mirrored in the failures of commemoration that pervade the novel. The space of Dublin in 1904 is greatly contested, and the historical figures depicted in monuments are significant in how past and present are viewed. This is seen in the debate around commemorations of Charles Stewart Parnell and Theobald Wolfe Tone, two controversial figures who did not have proper monuments at this time, even though the colonial figure Lord Nelson did. Questions of commemoration are also explored on a more personal level; Paddy Dignam is remembered through the eyes of his grieving son and through a ludicrous vision of a séance, while Bloom's late father is hinted at repeatedly, but the details of his suicide are only explicated in the latter stages of the novel. These

failures of commemoration provide temporal lapses, in which the past is eclipsed by the needs of the present.

This section concludes with a discussion of temporality in the 'Oxen of the Sun' chapter, where language is temporalised through writing. Joyce's parallel timeframes of the birth of Mina Purefoy's child, the development of the English language and foetal gestation are contrasted with the extreme temporal dilation of the chapter, providing a rich example of how literature can create its own temporal paradigm, referring to but ultimate independent of external forces. The linguistic elements of the chapter are further complicated by Joyce's use of numerous anachronisms and the blurring of boundaries between historical styles, making his version of the development of a language far from linear. Despite raising such profound questions for history, this chapter also provides a rare reference to the day's date, demonstrating the temporal fidelity at hand in *Ulysses*, despite its extreme complication of time and history within a literary context.

Beyond artistic means, technology is a significant manipulator of time. In DeLillo's writing, this reaches its zenith in *Zero K*, where the promise of immortality is offered through future technological development. This novel crystallises the notion of lateness, providing what Peter Boxall considers a tautological relationship between endings and potential. In exploring these ideas of the future, I also consider what remains of the past: namely its destruction, in the explicitly ahistorical nature of the future that is imagined. Despite their dependence on science, these ideas are also virtually religious in nature, predicated on faith, on the presumption that humans and their surroundings can and will be perfected.

Religious ideas of time are also present in *Point Omega*, which is named for a concept developed by the Jesuit philosopher Pierre

Teilhard de Chardin. The ideas of de Chardin aim towards a temporal and spatial singularity with the idea that humanity pursues a teleological trajectory, in which spiritual unity is reached through technological and scientific development. Although DeLillo's vision is more limited, the novel's setting in the southwestern American desert removes it from an intelligible timeframe. Ekphrastic factors complicate this, with the novel's framing structure dependent on Douglas Gordon's *24 Hour Psycho*, a work which takes cinematic ideas of duration to an extreme. While Gordon's work is the catalyst for the meeting that defines the novel, I also argue that it refers us back to the domain of clock time, through another potential intertextuality: Christian Marclay's film *The Clock*, which similarly plays with duration but is intended to synchronise with the local time, providing many temporal references on the screen.

Economic and technological factors are deeply embedded in the temporality of *Cosmopolis*, in which all three form an inseparable knot. Despite the accelerated timeframe of the digital in the novel, DeLillo's ironic narration maintains that this particular temporal modality is by no means immutable. The deinterlacing of present and future in the novel paradoxically exhausts the possibilities of the future, by suggesting they are always-already within the present moment, despite the lack of a clear path between the two. This ironic bent is exacerbated by the deceleration of much of the novel, which largely takes place within a traffic jam. I argue that this hints at the obsolescence of modernity, which appears as a depleted force here. This idea is enhanced by references to three earlier artists who manipulated duration: Mark Rothko, Erik Satie and Marcel Proust, all of whom are invoked on an almost mystical level. Despite the hint of the possibilities of quantum physics at the novel's conclusion, its decelerated trajectory ultimately indicates nothing more than the

dominance of history and the inability of the individual subject to escape an overarching temporal frame.

This return to the subject brings the representation of time back to a modernist perspective, in which the relativity of experience is the motor of temporal perception, as well as the catalyst for much literary experimentation. However, DeLillo does not take the opportunity to engage in dialectics of dilation and condensation, instead using this idea to emphasise the exhaustion of experiential time, and the expansion of a technologised temporal frame at the detriment of subjective experience. Although temporality remains a largely uncontrollable force, modernity's attempts at mastery have eroded the subject's potential to assert an autonomous relationship to time.

As perhaps the defining aspect of modernity, technology is vital to this thesis. Modern technologies share a sense a mastery, with the differences between eras of modernity largely hinging on the intensity of development. Nevertheless, the speed of development in the twentieth century means Joyce and DeLillo have come to represent almost unrecognisably different technological worlds. This is largely due to the great abstraction precipitated by the development of virtual worlds. While modern computing exists within the same conceptual frame as earlier technologies, its essence is further obfuscated by the degree to which subjectivity is now embedded within the virtual. This intensifies some of the concerns about alienation that appear in *Ulysses*. By reading Joyce and DeLillo through a technological frame that is largely derived from the sceptical work of Martin Heidegger, I demonstrate the degree to which the intensification of modernity is dependent on technological development.

Although technological advancements make DeLillo's work appear alien in relation to Joyce's, I argue that these developments are chiefly extensions of previous tendencies within technology, taking the form to extremes. This is contextualised by a historical shift towards the virtual which began around the 1970s, with the end of the gold standard suggesting an economic parallel and driving subsequent financial developments which were themselves highly conducive to rapid technological progress. This has continued apace since, creating a seemingly dematerialised world which conceals a hidden physical infrastructure.

Technology appears in *Ulysses* at its essential level – the harnessing of natural resources – and through specific innovations. The essence of technology as the recognition of utility within the world is an idea developed by Martin Heidegger, and it is through this Heideggerian frame that I explore many technological themes. This is developed in relation to Bloom's bourgeois fantasy of Flowerville, which allows us to explore both the potential provided by nature and also its dangers. The intrusion of economic forces complicates this idea, as is seen in Bloom's fears of machine domination, which are intrinsically tied to labour, recalling the work of Karl Marx. Despite moments of worry, Bloom's ideas are fundamentally anthropocentric; even when he is cast as a messiah in 'Circe', his performance of a miracle is fundamentally technological, enacting the four causes as defined by Aristotle and updated by Heidegger, making a miracle through the causa efficiens of a messianic touch.

Stephen's views on technology are typically more cynical than those of Bloom, defined by ontological terror. Despite his name's suggestions of technological development, his views on aquacity suggest an objection to the vital force of world-shaping, rejecting it in favour of mental creativity. The use of the obscure word 'aquacity' is integral to understanding Stephen's problems with technology, and I

explore this in some detail. This ultimately allows Stephen's views to be contrasted with the more developed theories of Bloom, allowing a more technophobic view to be explored.

The presence of technologies such as beekeeping within Flowerville allows us to explore the point at which nature becomes enframed, and the ensuing alienation. Bloom's thoughts on apiculture accord with modern technological and welfare standards but despite this, he also thinks of bees as untameable, and bears the mark of a sting to demonstrate this. As animals which are of great agricultural purpose but which evade more substantial forms of taming, bees demonstrate the difficulty of technologising the natural world; this gives the creatures an uncommon degree of agency here.

I also explore the idea that narratives themselves are technological organs. This is demonstrated through the analogy of the telephone, a device which is used by Joyce to limit perspective. Telephones draw attention to gaps in the narrative, but also provide a means of bridging them. On a broader level, Bloom and Stephen themselves are resources, used by Joyce to achieve his own purposes; indeed, their contrasting views on technology demonstrate this, allowing a panoramic perspective to be achieved via triangulation.

The political context of technology is explored in relation to notions of domination and autonomy. The Ireland of 1904 was one in which infrastructure projects were significant political and technological forces, and these projects find a resonance in *Ulysses*. Developing on contemporary political debates, Bloom proposes better connections between different modes of transport, allowing better access between cattle farming areas in the Irish Midlands and Dublin Port. This form – combining prior technological advances with new developments – creates a vision in which technology begats technology, ceaselessly building on its previous frameworks.

Although Bloom's views are chiefly designed to benefit humanity, there is also a sense of political domination, which I explore through the work of Adorno and Horkheimer, who assert that nature is mastered through labour; this lays bare the economic requirements for technological development, which are sometimes obfuscated through ideas of "laboursaving apparatuses" (*U*: 15.1391), leading to the inevitable subjugation of humans. Despite the pessimism of this account, however, Adorno's work also provides a salvation through the autonomy of art, specifically modernist art; *Ulysses* achieves something of this autonomy, but this is restricted by its technological frame, creating a relationship where art and technology are inseparable.

The city itself is a technological organ, with the role of urban planning allowing it to be rationalises. However, Joyce undercuts this, with the ironic vision of 'Wandering Rocks' providing an uncontrollable sequence of counterdiscursive responses to forces of control. Despite this potential to challenge the technologization of the city, it is also afforded a universality through infrastructural projects, especially the Vartry development and Dublin's ineffective sewage system. This idea is discussed at length in 'Ithaca', and I focus on the sense of exploitation that is present in these schemes, namely the absurdity of giving water an economic value within this context. Water is itself an instrumental force for development, the basis of Bloom's – and Stephen's – views on technology, but even this most essential force is captured for economic gain in the modern city.

Even more ephemeral forces are subject to technologisation; through photography, memory itself is captured. Although illusory, Roland Barthes notes that the chemical process of photography does capture the light from a particular moment, technically permitting the endurance of this otherwise unrepeatable moment. The importance of photographs to Bloom is explored through Barthes's

work, which ultimately provides a tantalising suggestion that the past itself is the object of this technology. Despite this, *Ulysses* also demonstrates the failure of attempts to technologise memory, such as Bloom's imagining of a poor-quality gramophone recording of a deceased person. This failure to transcend denies it the spectral potency of technologies of recording, instead leaving a morass of white noise.

Cosmopolis explores the connections between finance and technology, connections which trap the subject within a virtual world that remodels the self in a way that devolves notions of subjectivity from the values of the Enlightenment, creating a postmodern subject in the shape of its protagonist. Surveillance technologies are particularly significant in this change to subjectivity, particularly when they are directed towards the self; in *Cosmopolis*, Packer forms a prototypical subject of the quantified self movement. Despite this construction of a virtual self, the novel also supports a tension between progression and regression, allowing us to examine the notion of a technological death drive. Ultimately, many of the developments seen in *Cosmopolis* are treated ironically by DeLillo, with the novel's conclusion effecting a forced return to materiality, rendering many of the technologies of the virtual illusory.

The violence of technology is explored in relation to *Falling Man*, with reference to the environmental disaster seen in *White Noise*. This brings to light the physical consequences of technologies which may appear to exist in a parallel virtual domain. The violence of the September 11th attacks demonstrates this on a massive scale, returning a sense of the real that had been ruptured by virtualisation. The attacks demonstrate a horrific manifestation of the dangers posited by Heidegger, in which technology is used violently against the world that created it. This inverts the notion of saving-power; while Heidegger's warns against alienation from the essence of

technology, the deliberateness of the attacks means they were entirely under human control. This leads to a consideration of the continuum of civilian and military technologies, which demonstrates the latent violence within technology as a category. From a Heideggerian perspective, technology's standing-reserve means it inherently contains the potential for its own destruction.

Military technologies are explored in detail in relation to *Point Omega*, a novel which surveys the position of the American military in relation to the long conflicts of the 2000s and 2010s. This period marked a move towards defensive technologies in warfare, which aimed to mitigate loss through increasing automation; this in turn allowed a degree of counter-technological measures, often using comparatively primitive methods to evade drones and circumvent defences. Within this context, the war advisor Elster lives an ascetic life, yet his attitude is resolutely technological, even believing "sunset was human invention" (*PO*: 22) in a demonstration of extreme anthropocentrism. Similarly, Finley's film uses digital technology to produce an apparently ascetic work, demonstrating some of the contradictions within extreme technological frames. I examine this in relation to several examples of digital film, developing an idea of the technological and aesthetic purposes of this medium.

In the speculative landscape of *Zero K*, human life is subject to technological intervention, based on a teleological framework in which immortality is the goal. Despite these lofty ambitions, the technology of the novel is largely inchoate, existing at the level of thought rather than deed. The setting of the Convergence is itself dependent on technology to survive, supporting a superficially lush landscape within a harsh desert climate, a contrast which underlines the degree to which technologies can support illusions. Although the conquest of time is suggested, it is not effected, and the only

suggestions of its attainability come from faith. Technology here becomes something of a religion, removing it from its practical roots and making it abundantly clear that as much as anything, technology is a philosophy. This creates a tautological relationship between humans and technology, in which humans are both the driving force behind development and also the raw materials for manipulation.

This technological reading of *Zero K* narrows the horizons of the novel, shrinking them into pessimism. This process of recession reaches its zenith in *The Silence*, which imagines a post-technological future. I observe that this silencing of technology is accompanied by a silencing of art, suggesting the degree to which the two forces have become enmeshed. Despite the technological collapse of the novel, it nevertheless demonstrates the degree to which human factors are subordinated to technology, leaving its characters attempting to recreate media technologies on their own. With technology silenced, its autonomy becomes apparent; modern technologies are so complex that they are increasingly incomprehensible to virtually all of humanity and without them, humanity becomes rudderless, existing in a state of entropy. This exhaustion of possibilities underlines the scepticism that defines DeLillo's approach to technology and, more broadly, the degree to which technology rules the worlds of DeLillo and Joyce.

These technological aspects of modernity allow the manipulation of economic and temporal forces, forming a feedback loop with these two areas. The great economic importance of technological corporations in the present era underlines the symbiosis of these forms: technology produces money, which produces technology, in a cycle which continues ad infinitum. This system is dependent on the apparently infinite possibilities for technological expansion, but as with time and money, hard limits do exist. Natural resources and computing power both have absolute boundaries, and reaching

either of these boundaries would lead to a singularity. More than in other areas, technology makes this possibility of depletion apparent, dependent as it is on physical infrastructure. Although these ideas appear remote from Joyce's work, Bloom's anxiety about the sentience of machines is dependent on the existence of a tipping point, at which technology slips beyond human grasp. More literal singularities are seen in DeLillo's recent writing and, as in *The Silence*, his pessimism is one which invokes a post-technological world. This signifies an end point to modernity, a particular historical form which must at some point be exceeded.

These multifaceted visions of modernity may be brought into focus through the comparative methodology of this thesis, which brings the work of Joyce and DeLillo into dialogue. While *Ulysses* depicts a society in which modernity is inchoate, leaving significant gaps, DeLillo's work shows a more expansive modernity in which technological, temporal and economic forces have become inseparable. These forces are particularly immanent in DeLillo's late, post-*Underworld* work; therefore, a comparative reading of these texts alongside *Ulysses* allows the beginnings and perhaps even endings of a recognisable modernity to be discerned and contrasted. If *Ulysses* is understood as depicting an 'early' form of modernity, DeLillo's post-millennial work is its 'late' counterpart, providing a possible conclusion to a notably elusive cultural and historical period. This concept of lateness is integral to understanding DeLillo's post-*Underworld* writing.

The economic consequences of this notion of lateness are explored at length in a chapter on DeLillo and money, but broadly, my use of the term is less a proclamation of the imminent death of capitalism and modernity than a recognition of the condition of permanent crisis that defines the present era. Lateness in this usage follows the "inverted millenarianism" (Jameson, *Postmodernism* 1) of Fredric

Jameson, a post-dialectical materialist concept that acknowledges the totality of modernity in this particular strain. Lateness here is a vector of expansion and totality, a historical paradigm that operates on singular rather than dialectical principles. Therefore, although this thesis does explore what may follow the late, the transition to another form is more likely to be precipitated by enervation than conflict.

A cornerstone of this notion of lateness is neoliberalism, a concept which numerous theorists treat as synonymous with 'late capitalism'. Within this thesis, my usage of the term neoliberalism is guided by the work of David Harvey. In Harvey's terms, neoliberalism is both a historical and theoretical concept; in historical terms, it refers to the intensification of free market capitalism and increasing reliance on financialisation that occurred in many western countries in the 1970s and 1980s, with similar reforms subsequently taking place in China. Applied as a theoretical concept, neoliberalism has remodelled political and social relations across the globe, defined by uneven geographical development, social inequality and a contradictory relationship between the state and capital, in which increasing privatisation has occurred in tandem with many countries expanding their militaries, while the state continues to pursue economic policies that support and even fund financial markets. This reconfiguration of the nation state has occurred alongside extreme globalisation, underlining the sense of a world in thrall to technologised finance capitalism.

The first chapter of this thesis explores the economic forces of *Ulysses*. This discussion invokes Ezra Pound's economic theories to problematise the promissory, immaterial qualities of money, which manifest themselves in forms such as postage stamps while also acting as the cornerstone of finance, an increasingly important area in the early twentieth century; the treatment of *Ulysses* as a

speculative object by Joyce demonstrates the degree to which financial logic began to bleed into modernist art. The microscopic details of money in the novel are also explored, with an exploration of the role of personal finances using Bloom's budget as an example that allows us to take an Aristotelian approach to domestic economics. Bloom's role as an advertising canvasser allows an exploration of the position of advertising in the novel, something which in turn develops an early view of what Adorno and Horkheimer came to term the 'culture industry'. Advertising is also integral to a view of Gerty MacDowell, who self-consciously remakes herself in the image of advertising and commerce. The chapter concludes with a view of the economics of marriage, using a monetary frame to explore Bloom's family situation.

The second chapter discusses DeLillo's writing in relation to money, beginning with an examination of the term 'late capitalism' and an assertion of the conditions of crisis that are integral to DeLillo's depiction of economics. This turns to a vision of the economics of art in *The Body Artist*, in which performance art undercuts the otherwise highly financialised domain on modern art, allowing for a focus on what Walter Benjamin considers the 'auratic' quality of the artwork. This is followed by a more direct engagement with finance in the shape of *Cosmopolis*, a novel which demonstrates the volatility required for neoliberal capitalism to enact its self-regulating tendencies while maintaining the illusion of infinite growth. Through abstraction, this leads to the aestheticisation of finance, which Alison Shonkwiler terms the 'financial sublime'. This quasi-mythical financial sphere also contains the potential for great destruction, which appears in *Cosmopolis* as an impulse towards destruction, a tendency which imbues finance with the logic of potlatch. The notion of destruction is continued with a discussion of the impact of the September 11th attacks, which were not directly aimed at finance but

nevertheless led to a significant reconfiguration of neoliberalism's relationship with the state. These changes are explored alongside the concomitant force of virtualisation. Finally, the chapter concludes with an analysis of *Zero K* that emphasises the financialisation of human life in this speculative novel, which stages the idea of immortality as a fungible asset.

The third chapter explores the temporal dimension of *Ulysses*, beginning with an assertion of the relationship between experiential time, natural time and political time, which problematises the notion of a singular, objective temporality in the novel. This is followed by a discussion of parallax, an idea borrowed by Joyce from astronomical sources which exploits temporal gaps to produce something akin to simultaneity. The temporal collapse of *Ulysses* also has historical effects, with the condensation of past and present bringing previous traumas into the present moment. These personal and political events form persistent motifs in *Ulysses*, ultimately leading to a vision of history that is distorted by post-traumatic memory. The figures of history also appear in the guise of commemoration, specifically monuments, which I argue reflect the currents of historical opinion in determining who should be commemorated and where this commemoration may occur. Commemorations also occur at a more personal level in *Ulysses*, and these are discussed in relation to the temporal distortions precipitated by grief. Finally, this chapter concludes with an exploration of the extreme temporal dilation and condensation of 'Oxen of the Sun', pitting its timelines of gestation and literary history against the clock time at which its events take place.

The fourth chapter looks at DeLillo's temporality, beginning with a discussion of the so-called 'end of history' and its apparent return after the September 11th attacks, which form a rupture in the historical fabric. Individual responses to the attacks bring about

further temporal confusion, as is demonstrated in *Falling Man*, which brings about a relationship between repetition and trauma, creating elliptical timeframes in the wake of horrific events. Similar effects are created by ekphrasis, particularly when the artwork in question reflects trauma. This notion continues in a discussion of *The Body Artist*, which emphasises how the artwork can manipulate and perhaps even halt time for the observer. Technology is also a significant arbiter of time, as is shown in relation to *Zero K*, in which technological potential aims to conquer time altogether. This creates a tautological world in which it is possible to think beyond endings through the development a quasi-religious posthumanism that places ultimate faith in the conquering power of technology. The connection of technology and art is also able to remodel temporality, as is shown by the digital film of *Point Omega*, in which the lines between artistic time and experiential time are blurred. This singularity of timeframes parallels the singular spacetime alluded to in the title of the novel. Finally, finance capitalism is another force for temporal malleability, as is seen in *Cosmopolis*, which subjugates time to money, albeit with an ironic view of the temporal power truly held by finance. Nevertheless, the illusory potential of capital is a key theme of the novel, and it is this illusion that allows Eric Packer to view his own imminent death as a vector of quantum potential.

The fifth chapter examines technology in *Ulysses*, establishing the essential, instrumental telos of technology. Bloom's contradictory thoughts of domination, in which nature may be harnessed for human benefit but machines pose threats of alienation and even subjugation, frame this anthropocentric narrative. Heideggerian and Aristotelean theories of technology develop a context in which it may be defined as a perspective, the moment at which the world presents the possibility of utility. This is followed by a discussion of Stephen's sceptical view, which presents a picture of the onotological issues

posed by technological development. Although Stephen's name casts him as the great artificer of Greek mythology, his hydrophobia and distrust of 'aquacity' demonstrates his rejection of the world-shaping power of technology. These issues are subsequently explored in relation to specific technological instances, beekeeping and telephones demonstrating the literary effects of technology's telos in *Ulysses*. Joyce self-reflexively uses his characters as narrative resources, further underlining the teleological dimension of the novel. This is followed by a discussion of the political aspects of domination and autonomy, supported by Adorno and Horkheimer's work. Although the labour required to produce technological objects is often obfuscated, Adorno's work demonstrates the autonomy afforded to the artist, particularly within a modernist paradigm. The birth of cinema underlines the position of art here, providing a different sense of perspective; this is used by the quasi-cinematic perspective often afforded by Joyce. The city itself is technologised, not least when Joyce surveys it cinematically in 'Wandering Rocks'. This technologised urban space is figured numerous times in *Ulysses*, especially when the subterranean infrastructure of Dublin such as its sewage system comes to light; through his engagement with political discourses around sewage and water provision, Joyce shows the absurdity of treating water as a commodity. The chapter concludes with a discussion of photography, a transcendental force in *Ulysses* that uses chemical means to bring the past into the present. Although this technologises remembrance, the incompleteness of this process only serves to distort the already complicated form of memory, disrupting the temporal imagination.

The final chapter explores the technological resonance of DeLillo's late novels. Paralleling the financial and temporal unmooring of the late twentieth century, DeLillo's work uses technology to demonstrate the rupturing of the real. The virtualisation of finance is

shown in *Cosmopolis*, where a hyperreal financial domain is pitted against the forces of Luddism. Although the novel's linking of haptic and virtual technologies begins to move the self into a cybernetic dimension, its conclusion effects a forced return to materiality. The violence of this return is taken even further in *Falling Man*, which demonstrates the unintended consequences of technological development, namely that technologies can be weaponised against the world that created them. The use of civilian aircraft in the September 11th attacks provides a frightening reminder of the nefarious potential of technology when it is devolved from its utility. The continuum between civilian and military technologies in *Point Omega* develops this idea, demonstrating both the immense power of modern militaries and also the counterdiscursive potential of other, more clandestine technologies to circumvent this. The technologisation of art is also discussed in relation to Jim Finley's digital film, a medium which allows an unprecedented degree of play with duration. In a discussion of *Zero K*, this play with duration develops the potential for eternity, using speculative technologies which make human lives – and bodies – their subject and object. The modulation of subjectivity that results produces powerful effects, in which human life becomes teleological and all aspects of humanity, even language, are treated as technological organs. The chapter concludes with a meditation on the relationship of technology to eschatology, using the disaster at the heart of *The Silence* to examine the degree to which technological limits now set the horizons of human existence. Without the technological forces that frame life, there is an entropic singularity.

"The Money Question": The Economic World of *Ulysses*

"not one demonetised farthing had ever spun or fluctuated across the counter in the semblance of hard coin or liquid cash." (*FW*: 574.28-30)

"The substance of the present is financial." Letter from James to Stanislaus Joyce, 16th August 1906 (*L II*: 149)

The "money question [...] at the back of everything" (*U*: 16.1114-1115) asked in 'Eumaeus' reverberates around the entirety of *Ulysses*. The question takes a number of forms, exploring contemporaneous economic structures while also contemplating the instrumental, metaphysical quality of money, allowing a panoramic view of money which goes from specific details to the broad themes suggested by its very existence. *Ulysses*'s account opens in 'Telemachus,' when Stephen explains that he is due to be paid and Buck Mulligan asks "How much? Four quid? Lend us one." (*U*: 1.294-295) From this point on, the novel maintains a rolling balance sheet of profit and loss, debt and credit. This is literally seen in the finances of its characters (almost immediately after receiving payment – and a lecture on the importance of financial self-sufficiency – from Deasy, Stephen lists various debts owed and realises "The lump I have is useless" (*U*: 2.255-259), but also in the broader narratives of the novel, its cycles of life and death, memory and forgetting, retrieval and loss. This asserts the primacy of a financial mode of operation in a novel where money is a supreme force. Beyond merely addressing money in its narratives, *Ulysses* incorporates the mechanisms of capitalism into its own artistic modus operandi, forming both a critique of capitalism and a mirror of its structures.

The metaphysics of money are explored in the cogitations of Stephen and more obliquely in Bloom's thoughts, but the sheer physicality of coinage also looms large. Meanwhile, the novel runs up its own budgets, with Bloom's personal expenditure calculated in double-entry form. This allows Joyce to explore various economic ideas through the prism of personal and household finances. Additionally, the role of advertising as Bloom's occupation and a significant strand of the novel allows a glimpse of a rapidly commodifying world, in which *Ulysses* as a physical object became an economic commodity, subject to speculation and various forms of advertising. These economic forces are so deeply embedded in *Ulysses* that the novel explores ideas of the homo economicus at least as much as the work of Daniel Defoe. This influence is acknowledged by Joyce, who proclaims *Robinson Crusoe* a "prophetic spell" (*OCPW*: 174) for its depiction of colonial and economic genesis[1]. Unlike Defoe's work, however, *Ulysses* also frequently takes a sceptical tone with regard to the value and form of monetary instruments, as well as their social effects. With its own publication history enmeshed in economic structures, *Ulysses* is perhaps the defining literary representation of economic life.

Promissory Structures

In 'Proteus,' Stephen searches for writing paper in his pocket but only finds "banknotes, blast them." (*U*: 3.404) This confusion

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[1] In a draft of the essay 'Realism and Idealism in English Literature', the connection between Defoe and modern economic modes is made more explicitly (*JJA* 2: 170). Conor Deane translates the relevant passage thus:

> Our century which loves to trace present phenomena back to their origins […] might profitably re-read the tale of Robinson Crusoe and his servant Friday. It would find therein many extremely useful tips for that international industry of our times – the cheap manufacture of the English imperialist type and its sale at knock-down prices (*OCPW*: 332).

confirms the interchangeability of both forms, and also their arbitrariness. As Mark Osteen notes, "Stephen's momentary conflation of money and writing paper symbolizes his Berkeleyean recognition of the arbitrary value and meaning of his own signs, and their tenuous relation to the material world." (Osteen, *The Economy of Ulysses* 66) The metaphysical density of the scene conveys a sense of banknotes as reflecting Stephen's particular ontological concerns. He considers the "manshape ineluctable" of his shadow, wondering "would it be mine, form of my form?" (*U*: 3.413-14) This Aristotelian train of thought places Stephen's essence in the immaterial shadow he casts rather than the physical substance of his body, an idea which obliquely parallels the transfer of meaning from hard currency into materially amorphous forms like banknotes. Banknotes are a promissory form, devoid of the material value of coins. As such, their value is dependent on the honouring of a promise rather than any inherent worth. Given Stephen's insolvency and emotional debts to past promises broken, the immateriality of banknotes is evident to him; Osteen finds it significant that this is the point at which Stephen "rejects Berkeleyean immaterialism and begins to reconsider his own avoidance of materiality." (Osteen, *The Economy of Ulysses* 66) For Stephen, banknotes form a portal from the immaterial into the material world, constituting the crystallisation of promise.

The promissory nature of banknotes reflects anxieties about the very materiality of money. Simon Critchley and Tom McCarthy claim "The transcendent core of money is an act of faith, of belief," (Critchley and McCarthy 247) dependent on faith in the sovereign power that promises the value of money will be fulfilled: "In the godless wasteland of global capitalism, money is our only metaphysics, our only onto-theo-logy, the only transcendent substance in which we truly must have faith." (Ibid. 248) This idea of money as a metaphysical substance that requires total belief makes Stephen's

treatment of the banknote somewhat ironic. While the physical act of writing that follows the appearance of the banknote allows Stephen to switch to the more physical trajectory that he pursues in the latter stages of the novel, the banknote itself does not facilitate this. Indeed, the banknote's modus operandi – conveying its value through a promise rather than its literal physical worth – places it within the same transcendental realm as Stephen's train of thought up to this point.

In his *ABC of Economics*[2], Ezra Pound addresses similar issues of materiality. He notes that

> Capital is generally considered as perdurable, eternal and indestructible. This is probably an error. Gold coin in circulation wears down, whence paper currency, to save attrition. Paper has to be renewed. The expense is trifling but mathematically extant. (Pound, *ABC of Economics* 72*)*

This suggests that even traditional 'hard' currency is not immune from the question of material value, as it physically erodes over time. However, Pound does not necessarily view this as a critique of the financial system; he subsequently states "A further point is that not only particular masses of credit may rot, but that the credit of ANY [sic] economic system, qua system, may rot. Not only may a year's crop fail, but the tree itself may." (Ibid. 73) Therefore, all economic systems are subject to physical disintegrations that can reduce their use-value, not to mention their exchange-value. While this is reasonable, Pound naively presumes it means that "a bit of paper with a 10 on it is no more difficult to provide than a bit of paper with 5 or with 20." (Ibid. 44) While this is technically correct, Pound ignores the broader economic consequences of inflation, claiming

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[2] A book apparently read by Joyce, who purchased two copies in June 1933 (Kotin and Koeser).

"For many people it means merely abandoning the gold standard. Merely having certificates for something other than precious metal." (Ibid. 77) This fails to acknowledge contemporaneous concerns with hyperinflation. While Pound's argument that paper money is essentially immaterial is convincing, his assessment of specific economic factors is somewhat blinkered, not least because his argument quickly descends into antisemitic ranting.

Pound addresses a similar theme in his essay 'Kublai Khan and his Currency', which explores Marco Polo's encounter with banknotes on his voyage through Asia. Pound views banknotes as a means of controlling the economy without resorting to physical goods; he claims

> All the Khan's debts were paid in paper, which he made current legal tender throughout his dominions. Merchants arriving from foreign countries were not allowed to sell gold, silver or jewels to anyone but the Emperor (Pound, *Selected Prose* 174-175).

This would have ensured his economic control, allowing him to pay for physical goods with banknotes. However, these banknotes were devalued by a flood of paper money from China, forcing the Kublai Khan to "issue a new currency, redeeming the old with one new note against *five* of the preceding issues." (Ibid.) This is perhaps a tacit acknowledgement of the issue of hyperinflation that Pound avoids in *ABC of Economics*. Polo was sceptical about paper money, considering it the scam of a tyrant; Pound notes that "The real tyranny resided, of course, in the Khan's control of credit." (Ibid.) This establishes a link between credit and banknotes, in which banknotes act as a symbolic representation of this credit. However, as the devaluation of the Kublai Khan's currency suggests, they are not immune to fluctuations in value depending on money supply.

An alternative historical example of the failure of paper money is provided by Jean-Joseph Goux, who refers to the work of the eighteenth-century financier John Law. As the head of the French Banque Royale, Law encouraged the issue of banknotes, but he ran into difficulty: "When the worried bearers wished to exchange their paper for gold, it became apparent that there was none left in the coffers." (Goux 144) This example demonstrates that there is not necessarily any concrete backing to the promissory structure of paper money. In fact, the promise may be one which cannot be met at all. Despite this, paper money can produce a mirage effect in which it appears to constitute the creation of wealth rather than merely deferring this act of creation. This fallacy is responsible for failures such as those of Law and the Kublai Khan. In response to the illusory effects of paper money, Goux asks "Is the production of mere *signs* of value enough to produce value?" (Ibid.) A true response to this question is a matter of context. If the supporting structure of value is challenged (by someone wishing to exchange paper money for a non-existent physical commodity, for example) then clearly not, but if the conditions allow the illusion to be maintained, a sort of value *is* produced by paper money. However, this value is essentially fictional, fading to nothing if any interested party questions its veracity. In terms of material value, it is perfectly possible for paper money to be entirely baseless.

Of course, not all paper money is equal. The economist Charles Gide (uncle of André, author of *Les Faux-monnayeurs*) identified three types of paper money: representative money, which directly corresponds to (and is backed by) physical coinage, fiduciary money, which is backed by a guarantee of credit and is dependent on the solvency of the creditor, and conventional money, which is issued and guaranteed by the state with no physical backing whatsoever (Gide 214-15). Conventional money is treated sceptically by Gide,

who claims it "is known to be a pure fiction, and everyone is aware that the government will never redeem [it], for it has no money for that purpose." (Ibid.) While he also addresses the question of wear and damage raised by Pound, Gide notes that precious metals retain some utility for industrial purposes even if they are rendered useless as coinage, either by physical damage or demonetisation; by contrast, "If the law demonetises paper money, the holder will retain in his possession nothing but a worthless rag." (Ibid. 216-17) Thus, the value of banknotes is only produced by belief – not by any reference to a physical basis.

In contrast to banknotes, durability is a clear factor in the purpose of coinage, and also the value of other forms of currency. Stephen's allusion to defunct currencies in 'Nestor' gives this sense of permanence; "whelks and money cowries and leopard shells" (*U*: 2.213-214) have all survived the ravages of history and the erosions of littoral and tidal forces. Cowries epitomise an especially ugly economic form: the Atlantic slave trade, within which they were used as currency. As Jan Hogendorn and Marion Johnson state, the shells were ideal for a number of reasons: their supply was limited by "the royal monopoly in the Maldive Islands, their only major source", and they had little use as commodities. Their attributes,

> long-lasting, durable, easy to handle, portable, hard to counterfeit, right unit value for market needs, adequate constraints on supply, and little leakage into other uses – are mentioned by money and banking texts as the properties of the ideal commodity. Cowries, were never the perfect ideal. But for a currency in regions of low income, their advantages were great (Hogendorn and Johnson 7).

Stephen associates the shells with other forms of immoral currency, such as the "tray of Stuart coins" (*U*: 2.201) that is present in Deasy's

office. Anne Marie D'Arcy identifies these as gun money, "emblematic of the broken promises of another old Tory, dirty *Séamus an chaca*, which deliquesce in the light of the sun [3]" (D'Arcy, 'Dindsenchas' 321-322). Despite their permanence, these forms of currency provide a material backing for promises and ideas of little or corrupt substance, degrading their value on a para-economic level, despite their apparent material worth.

Influenced by Gide's work, Goux seeks to explore this flimsy notion of value. He associates it with the value of language, claiming:

> The convertibility of paper money, which is merely a form of writing, thus resembles [the] capacity of language to open up an associative dimension providing access to profound, ultimate significations: the treasure of memory seems to guarantee the circulation of signs of values. The law of the State guarantees the existence of these deposits, but does not make them visible (Goux 154-55).

With paper money as with language, the promise at hand may have a backing (stockpiles in in government treasuries, for example), but the transaction is still contingent on the presumption that this backing will not be accessed and no actual exchange will take place. Goux draws an analogy to the soul (the creditor of language in this example). The soul "guarantees the meaning of circulating meaning. It is buried treasure, hidden, lying deep below the surface." (Goux 156) The circulating form is dependent on its own reserves, turning language – and money – into self-referential systems, exclusively supported by immanent forces.

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[3] King James II of England and Ireland and James VII of Scotland; an approximate epithet in English would be 'James the shit'. Despite his Catholicism, James cultivated a form of Tory loyalism amongst those he appointed to rule Ireland, eventually losing power to the Protestant William of Orange, to the detriment of Irish Catholics.

Postage Stamps and the Subversion of Value

Even the materialist Bloom is subject to matters of faith; an even more worthless object than a banknote is feted for its economic potential in 'Ithaca'. When imagining a future windfall, Bloom considers one possibility "The unexpected discovery of an object of great monetary value." (*U*: 17.1678-79) The following list includes precious stones and antiques, but also "valuable adhesive or impressed postage stamps," (*U*: 17.1680) subsequently giving several examples. The value of postage stamps is doubly dependent on faith: firstly, on paying the stated price with the belief that it will be tendered as a valid means of postage but secondly, its value as a collectible item is only determined by how much collectors are willing to pay for it. This is largely based on the scarcity of the item but, like banknotes, stamps may also be forged. Unlike banknotes, the exchange-value of a stamp often significantly increases once its use-value has been depleted, making this a particularly tenuous form of economic exchange. Its value is dependent on the interest of collectors and the belief of speculators; without both of these factors, it would be little more than a worthless curio. As monetary instruments where the face value is disconnected from its material base, postage stamps complicate notions of value; as Julieann Veronica Ulin notes, the presence of stamps "functions throughout *Ulysses* as one way in which Joyce subverts notions of value in the text." (Ulin 58) This philatelic undercurrent allows various notions of value to be interrogated in the novel, calling some of its other economic and social narratives into question.

While specific postal history begins to appear in the latter chapters of *Ulysses*, particularly 'Ithaca', the earliest sense of postage stamps as economic organs emerges in Bloom's letter from Martha. The letter

asks "Why did you enclose the stamps? I am awfully angry with you. I do wish I could punish you for that." (*U*: 6.243-244) The decision to send stamps with his previous letter allows Bloom to insure against the possibility that Martha will be unwilling to reply, effectively buying her response. This treats the stamps as a form of currency; despite their lack of fungibility, their presence allows a form of economic transaction to intrude into the epistolary exchange, strongly encouraging Martha to respond by placing the economic obligation on the sending of this return letter on its recipient, Bloom. Despite the negligible amounts involved in such an exchange, this shifting of the economic balance of the correspondence allows Bloom to assert control over the otherwise dominant partner in the relationship. The efficacy of this move is clear to Bloom. Ulin states that "Bloom's satisfaction at the return yielded by his stamps may be seen in his decision to escalate his enclosure from stamps to a postal order," (Ulin 65) as seen in 'Sirens'. The draft of his reply adds to the increasingly economic exchange: "Is eight about. Say half a crown. My poor little pres: p.o. two and six." (*U*: 11.867-868) Although the monetary value remains small, it is apparent that the presence of any money in this correspondence greatly alters its social dynamics.

The economic manifestations of postage stamps surpass and even undermine their face value, particularly in philately. Although Bloom is not a stamp collector per se, his awareness of this potential exchange value colours his use of stamps. The acquisition of valuable stamps is one of the "rapid but insecure means to opulence" (*U*: 17.1672) that may provide a sudden windfall, allowing the development of the imagined Bloomville estate. Bloom cites three specific examples that offer this potential: "7 schilling, mauve, imperforate, Hamburg, 1866: 4 pence, rose, blue paper, perforate, Great Britain, 1855: 1 franc, stone, official, rouletted, diagonal surcharge, Luxemburg, 1878" (*U*: 17.1680-1683). Curiously, none of

these stamps was of exceptional value, certainly far from enough to have a transformative effect on Bloom's lifestyle. Nevertheless, the details of these three stamps provide a rich critical seam. Ulin even sees an emotional resonance to the very concept of philately, asserting that stamp collections are "filled with ghostly presences, stamps issued by nations or authorities that no longer exist, displaying languages officially silenced, marked with currency denominations replaced and rulers deceased or deposed." (Ulin 70) The fact that the first stamp listed by Bloom is from a defunct state underlines this spectrality, not least because 1866 is the year that Hamburg ceased to exist as a formal territorial entity, with its postage functions subsumed into those of the North German Confederation two years later (Poole 40). The second stamp on the list depicts the late Queen Victoria, an unwelcome presence in 1904 Dublin. Ulin pursues the political connotations of this: "Her ageless philatelic visage circulated within and carried beyond Ireland reminds its senders and recipients of the extent of her rule into the minutest facets of the lives of her subjects." (Ulin 72) Although there is perhaps a redeeming irony to be derived from the potential to profit from an image of the dead 'famine queen', the profile of Victoria that survives on stamps is an inevitable reminder of trauma.

The third stamp's curiosity is largely derived from the overprinting of a "diagonal surcharge" (*U*: 17.1688), another factor which complicates value, underlining the dependence of stamps' worth on currency fluctuations rather than intrinsic material factors. Ulin identifies this stamp as being especially close to the criteria set out by one of Joyce's philatelic sources: an article in the June 16th 1904 edition of the *Freeman's Journal* (Ulin 72). The article discusses the destruction of a large number of special and overprinted stamps by the British authorities, explaining that "such stamps will now have very special values, as in the future it will be impossible to obtain

them at any price." ('By the Way' 5) The specific reference to overprinting is replicated in the Luxembourg stamp. Furthermore, the article and the act of overprinting share the understanding that the value of postage stamp is entirely dependent on the assent of governments and postal authorities. Indeed, the intrusion of extra-postal forces into the realm of stamps is what produces the intrigue in all three cases, depicting a defunct territory, a deceased monarch, and a hastily corrected face value respectively. While the value of banknotes is dependent on the faith of the bearer, the value of stamps is even more volatile, predicated on its relationship to often macroscopic economic and political factors.

Freeman's Journal focuses on the discrepancy between face value and resale value; it notes that the "face value of these official stamps as compared with the price which the philatelist will pay is merely nominal." (Ibid.) The article even goes so far as to suggest that the reason for the destruction of such a large quantity of unused stamps is to prevent their resale at an inflated price, citing the trial of a Mr Richards, who was convicted of illegally selling official stamps, with some "sixpenny parcel official stamps" earning as much as £20 on the collector's market (Ibid.). Although the very idea of postage stamps complicates notions of value, the position of stamp collecting, where the face value is not only arbitrary but entirely disregarded, is a peculiar economic domain that exposes some of the pressures on dematerialised expressions of value. While cash has a promissory structure, this is expressed differently in postage stamps, in which the onus to accept the guarantee of payment is not on the recipient, but the state itself. This reconfigures earlier postal systems, in which the receiver bore the responsibility of payment. In philately, this system of guarantee collapses altogether. As the legal ramifications discussed in the *Freeman's Journal* suggest, stamp collecting may even undercut the authority of the state altogether,

creating an independent economic system that entirely disregards the use-value of stamps.

The pressures on state authority are especially apparent in the territorial changes that frequently add value to stamps on the collector's market. The Luxemburg issue mentioned in 'Ithaca' resonates with the earliest stamps of the Irish Free State: British stamps depicting King George V "overprinted with the inscription *Rialtas Sealadach na hÉireann[4] 1922*" (Ulin 51). In this case, overprinting did not alter the value, but changed the authority underpinning it. The decision to overprint in this instance is not an economic decision but a political one, symbolising the change in power that followed the conclusion of the Irish War of Independence. Although the essential guarantee does not change, the guarantor does.

As work on the latter stages of *Ulysses* – and the drive for Irish independence – intensified, so did the specifics around postage stamps. At the placard stage, the section recording three potentially valuable stamps merely referred to a "black Mauritius postage stamp" (*JJA* 16: 158). The stamp in question could well be a reference to the Mauritius 2d post office stamp, issued in dark blue in 1847. The stamp is extremely rare and in 1904, one sold at auction for a record price of £1450 (Ulin 55); this is a stark contrast to the stamps featured in the final version of 'Ithaca', none of which are exceptionally rare or valuable. Aside from the aforementioned *Freeman's Journal* article, it is unclear where Joyce derived his understanding of stamps and their value, but it is certain that in the final revisions to *Ulysses*, philately was on Joyce's mind. In a November 1921 letter to Frank Budgen, Joyce asked for help with

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[4] 'Provisional Government of Ireland'. One of the companies responsible for the printing was Bloom's former employer Hely's, while another was Thom's, publisher of the eponymous directories.

sourcing books on a number of topics, concluding the letter by asking "if you can find it any little manual of stampcollecting [sic]" (*L I*: 177). In the reconfiguration of stamp themes that occurred in the latter stages of work on *Ulysses*, Bloom's fantasies are modulated. He goes from imagining the improbable discovery of an extremely rare stamp to the more plausible examples of subsequent revisions, but even these managed expectations pose their own problems, namely that they would not provide anywhere near as dramatic a windfall as Bloom hopes.

Finance, Speculation and Literature

Physical currency itself poses a problem for Bloom. His advancing "senescence" leads to a deterioration in eyesight, the consequence of which is "The myopic digital calculation of coins." (*U*: 17.1928) This implicitly problematises the visual dimension of coinage, as for someone in Bloom's state of myopia, coins are more readily identifiable by touch than sight. The shape of coins allows this distinction to be drawn in a state of visual impairment, yet it is not without peril, adding another layer of faith to the use of monetary instruments.

The self-referential logic of money, dependent on faith, opens up the possibility of deception. While the value of paper money is contingent on the promise to pay the bearer the designated sum, this raises the possibility that this promise may be breached. Indeed, the very substance of the promise – the banknote itself – may be a counterfeit. Going beyond even the idea of the counterfeit (considered by Jean Baudrillard to be the dominant mode of reproduction "from the Renaissance to the Industrial Revolution") (Baudrillard, *Symbolic Exchange and Death* 50), forgery works on

money "that has already been abstracted not only from gold, but even from bank notes" (Osteen, *The Economy of Ulysses* 373). While the counterfeit replicates an original, and indeed relies upon the idea that there is an authentic, inviolable original to imitate in the first place, a forgery is a simulacrum of a simulacrum, standing in the place of an original. A forgery's very existence is deceptive, undermining the notion of identity itself.

Although the abstraction of money was greatly accelerated by the demise of the gold standard and fixed exchange rates in the 1970s, money's abstract nature is still evident in *Ulysses*. Indeed, the ultimate loss of the material referent that ushered in neoliberalism was not a sudden traumatic break; it was the culmination of a long process of increasing financial abstraction that began in the nineteenth-century. Capital became free-floating, detaching itself from its "concrete context" before embarking on a path to complete abstraction (Jameson, *The Cultural Turn* 142). The earlier stages of this transition coincide with *Ulysses*.

These movements towards new technologies, increasing abstraction and increasing globalisation are all glimpsed in *Ulysses*, and even in the circumstances of the novel's creation. Discussing the financial backers of modernism, Christopher Kempf claims "much modern art lived and moved and had its being in speculative economies in which conventional modes of patronage were re-fashioned as financial investments, texts and paintings and pottery refigured as stock." (Kempf 24) Joyce was deeply enmeshed in a number of financially dependent relationships, but despite his lifelong money woes, he was incredibly astute when appraising the financial value of his own work, even in the earliest stages of his career. Richard Ellmann notes that, influenced by a similar arrangement forged by Padraic Colum, Joyce offered "to turn himself into a joint-stock company and sell shares, which would increase spectacularly in value as his books

began to appear." (Ellmann 164) The plan failed to generate interest, not least because Joyce was yet to attain a proper publication at the time. Many years later, his relentless promotion of *Ulysses* quickly paid dividends; less than two months after its publication, *Ulysses'* price had risen by 350% in New York. (Kempf 40) In the increasingly finance-driven world of modernism, patronage – and even creation – became a matter of investment. In this climate of art developing an increasingly abstracted relationship with the world of capitalism, it is perhaps not surprising that a drive towards artistic abstraction became one of the defining traits of modernism.

The treatment of *Ulysses* as an investment was hardly a coincidence, but rather a deliberate decision made by Joyce and his patron Sylvia Beach. Lawrence Rainey notes that modernism revolutionised the economics of art. "Literary modernism constitutes a strange and perhaps unprecedented withdrawal from the public sphere of cultural production and debate, a retreat into a divided world of patronage, investment and collecting." (Rainey 75) This self-conscious immersion in the economic networks of art helped writers like Joyce to develop a sense of their own economic worth. Despite Joyce's frequent profligacy, his dealings with the economics of his own work – particularly when allied with the equally savvy Beach – demonstrated an acute eye for business. *Ulysses* was afforded a relatively limited initial print run, but with three different editions offered, printed on paper of varying qualities. The prices varied from 3d 3s to 7d 7s (Ibid. 50), and the first hundred copies were each signed by Joyce (Ibid. 64). This creation of a deluxe edition ensured the book was considered an investment in its own right, and not just a novel. It also allowed Joyce and Beach to target the small but valuable collectors' market, potentially profiting far more than would be possible with a single standard edition, while also providing a test case for the potential legal issues and censorship that could – and

indeed did – follow publication. The cheapest edition sold out very quickly (before March 14th 1922 according to a letter sent by Joyce to Ferdinand Reyher (*L III*: 59-60), leaving only the more expensive editions.

Rainey attributes the commodification of *Ulysses* to two forces: "the collapse of shared confidence in the notion of aesthetic autonomy and the independent coherence of aesthetic value" (Rainey 70) on the one hand, and "the relentless and ever increasing penetration of capitalist relations into every dimension of life" (Rainey 71) on the other. The primary effect of this was that the concept of aesthetic value as an autonomous determiner was now meaningless, surpassed by economic value. Without denying *Ulysses* its extraordinary literary merit, it is fair to recognise the fact that its value as an investment gave a means of quantifying these artistic qualities in a manner that was befitting of the capitalist framework of the day. The interest generated by the intense promotion of *Ulysses* greatly helped the novel to acquire its reputation, despite its relatively limited initial run.

The controversy generated by the novel only led to greater interest in *Ulysses*. In a letter to Harriet Shaw Weaver, Beach expresses her delight at an attack on the novel published in the *Sunday Express* by James Douglas. Beach credits the selling out of the cheaper two editions of *Ulysses* to "all the publicity given the book by Mr Douglas and his confreres." (Beach 92) The view that all publicity for the novel was good publicity seems suspiciously close to the work which was taking place in the emerging field of public relations. Tim Ziaukas examines the role of public relations in the novel (particularly in Bloom's advertising field), describing the deliberate means used to elicit and manipulate public attention (Ziaukas 179). However, it appears the more sophisticated method of utilising negative publicity to create a *succès de scandale* in the manner of *Madame Bovary*, was

applicable not to the contents of *Ulysses* but to its own promotion. The most cunning form of promotion is not attributable to Bloom, but to Beach and Joyce.

Although the commodification of *Ulysses* is most readily apparent in its initial publication, subsequent editions allowed this to continue in its textual afterlife. Robert Spoo's work on the first American edition of *Ulysses* demonstrates the scope of this process in international markets. Spoo notes the "trade courtesy" that defined the process, in which other publishers deferred to Random House despite the fact that "as far as U.S. copyright laws were concerned, [anyone] was free for anyone to publish [it]" (Spoo, 'Without Copyrights' 247). The delicate copyright situation around the novel led to the decision to sell it at an affordable price; as Spoo states, although Joyce urged a $5 price, Bennett Cerf offered $2.50, believing the higher price tag would make it liable to piracy (Ibid. 248). Subsequent negotiations led to a price of $3.50, with a clause that a cheaper edition "with a reduced royalty to Joyce" would be released as soon as a cheap pirated edition emerged (Ibid.). As *Ulysses* made its way into new markets, the exigencies of economic structures and the possibility of piracy continued to drastically alter the forms in which it was available.

On an extreme level, the treatment of *Ulysses* as a commodity and investment constitutes an example of expressive form, placing the novel itself within the economic structures which it depicts. A. Walton Litz notes Joyce's preoccupation with expressive devices, claiming "Joyce was not content until he had exploited their possibilities to the fullest." (Litz, *The Art of James Joyce* 45) While classic examples focus on the way in which expressive form shapes the stylistics of individual chapters of *Ulysses*, the novel is itself an example of expressive form, repeatedly imposing economic structures on its internal content while also occupying a position in

modernism's conjunction of art and capital. This conjunction is particularly prominent in *Ulysses* which, as an item of economic speculation in its own right, transformed literature into a financial instrument.

The financialisation of *Ulysses* is discussed in Kempf's reading, which perceives the "language of flow" (*U*: 11.298) of *Ulysses*'s prose to be analogous to the stock ticker (Kempf 24). *Ulysses* follows a cycle of production and consumption of information, culminating in the vast mass of data that forms 'Ithaca'. This torrent of data resembles the information dispensed on a stock ticker, although the chapter's catechistic format is too fragmented to support the idea of a 'flow' of information. However, a comparison on a stylistic level is much more fruitful. Kempf claims "the novel's language of flow – inspired by speculative flows of financial data – drowns and drowns out the coherent realist subject in tides of sound, currents and eddies of language following their own, never-before-charted course." (Kempf 29) In the context of the novel's aqueous imagery, this is a particularly interesting idea; perhaps, like time, money is "Like holding water in your hand," (*U*: 8.610-611) a slippery substance that is vital to life but impossible to grasp. The novel's flows – between first and third-person, between Stephen and Bloom, between interior and exterior – all reflect the radical distortions of a world being reshaped by finance and technology, and the struggle to grasp the essence of these changes.

Domestic Economies

When the process of creation is put under the spotlight, the text itself becomes an economic organ, predicated on an intertextual network of debit and credit. Joyce's well-documented working

methods can be conceived of as a process of accumulation, gathering information and language in such a manner that it forms an acquisitive process. While this is true of *Ulysses*, particularly with its use of supporting texts such as *Thom's Directory*, this was taken to its extreme in *Finnegans Wake*, which underwent a major stylistic evolution as Joyce accumulated new material. This drive to accumulate makes Joyce's working process a largely chrematistic one, in which his rationale is to accumulate information, sources and textual matter, mirroring the capitalist attitude to wealth. This recalls the economic thought of Aristotle, for whom chrematistics underlines the baseness of usury. Osteen identifies something peculiarly Joycean about Aristotle's critique of usury. He notes:

> [Chrematistics] lacks the dialectical properties of 'true' economics, because money is generated from itself rather than from labor. Paradoxically, however, Aristotle employs the currency of language in a way he defines as illicit when applied to money: in his pun on 'interest' (tokos) no new goods (words) are created, only new wealth (meanings). In condemning monetary usury, he employs a syllepsis that brings together mutually incompatible meanings and thus commits verbal usury (Osteen, *The Economy of Ulysses* 220).

This irony of Aristotle's thought connects him to Joyce, "a verbal usurer" whose art is based on puns (Ibid. 221). As a verbal usurer and linguistic chrematist who condemns literal usury, Joyce delights in the hypocrisy that brings Aristotle close to his own vision.

The inherently cyclical nature of economics places oikos and chrematistics within the same system, blurring the distinctions that were made by Aristotle and his descendants. Jacques Derrida emphasises the importance of returning to economics, describing it

as an Odyssean structure which "would always follow the path of Ulysses." (Derrida, *Given Time* 7) He claims:

> [The circle] stands at the centre of any problematic of *oikonomia*, as it does of any economic field: circular exchange, circulation of goods, products, monetary signs or merchandise, amortization of expenditures, revenues, substitution of use values and exchange values. This motif of circulation can lead one to think that the law of economy is the – circular – return to the point of departure, to the origin, also to the home. (Ibid.)

Oikos is both the start and end of economic activity, much as Bloom's return home allows him to contemplate the entirety of his economic world via his budget, and the more fanciful schemes for investment and profit developed in 'Ithaca'. Bloom's mental departure from his household economic base takes place after his return home, emphasising the circular motions which depart from – and return to – oikos. While this single unit of household economy is enclosed within the domestic domain, it is also inseparable from broader economic forces. This leaves it vulnerable to the same desires of accumulation as any other economic mode.

On a linguistic level, oikos and economics [οικονομια] have shared origins. Comparing Bloom's journey around Dublin to the "commodius vicus of recirculation" (*FW*: 3.1) of *Finnegans Wake*, Osteen notes that "the Latin *vicus*, or 'village', is etymologically related to the Greek *oikos* (house), the root of 'economics.'" (Osteen, *The Economy of Ulysses* 89-90) This places several forces in dialogue: the domestic environment and economy, the broader economy, and the idea of return, are all implicated within the same framework. This allows us to interrogate the idea of oikos as an independent space, instead demonstrating its position within wider economic processes.

The oikos is the smallest unit of economic practice and, therefore, it is subject to forces from every other part of the economic spectrum. With the rupture of oikos, the sense of a limit to accumulation is destroyed. Derrida defines Aristotle's economic dichotomy as creating "an ideal and desirable limit, a limit between the limit and the unlimited, between the true and finite good (the economic) and the illusory and indefinite good (the chrematistic). [...] On the threshold of itself, the family no longer knows its bounds." (Derrida, *Given Time* 158) Therefore, the irruption of a chrematistic logic into the household destroys the notion of a stable family unit.

The unstable opposition between chrematistics and oikos is a continual theme for Joyce. Critchley and McCarthy discuss this in relation to the everted private life of HCE in *Finnegans Wake* (Critchley and McCarthy 253), but it is equally applicable to *Ulysses*. The Dedalus family undergo a similar financial and moral collapse, and Simon Dedalus's financial insolvency leads to the collapse of his oikos. As in seen at Dillon's auctionrooms in 'Wandering Rocks' (*U*: 10.642-716), the contents of hearth and home become objects of economic exchange, making money – rather than a stable home – the main form of provision for Simon Dedalus. This forms a crucial part of his abnegation of fatherly duties, ultimately providing neither wealth nor a satisfactory domestic environment for his children. This demonstrates not only the failure to maintain an oikos, but begins to interrogate the values of paternity.

With these failures comes the rupture of the boundary between public and private. The Dedalus family's furniture is sold at auction, leading to a humiliating situation in which their poverty is obvious to the broader public of Dublin. Likewise, when receiving payment (and a lecture) from Deasy, Stephen experiences the doctrine of laissez-faire capitalism as a trespass on his (and Ireland's) space (*U*: 2.324-25). The sense of limitless accumulation produces a kind of

omnipotence, in which capitalism's logic penetrates the domestic sphere, transcending notions of housekeeping. Under these conditions, private activity is virtually impossible, and all economic activities feed into overarching systems of exchange and value. The material dispossession of poverty leads to a social dispossession, in which the idea of household management is inverted, leaving the poor deprived of a stable domestic environment.

Household management is often treated as the smallest unit of economic management, "for every city is composed of households." (Aris. *Pol*. I.3 1253b1 trans. Reeve) As early as Aristotle, management of an oikos is considered a fundamental starting point of economic activity; this idea is brought into *Ulysses* via Bloom, whose household finances are tabulated throughout the novel, culminating in a budget in 'Ithaca' (*U*: 17.1456-1478). Even at this relatively lowly level of economic activity, there is a level of complexity that has caused much confusion for scholars and editors alike. The format of the budget is itself a curiosity, employing methods that are more conducive to the operation of a business than of a household. The double-entry system runs a left column (debit) against a right column (credit), with the presumption that both sides will match, effectively breaking even. While Bloom's totals of debit and credit do match – at £2 – 19 – 3 each (*U*: 17.1478) – there are still a number of complicating factors. As Mark Osteen notes, it omits Bloom's expenses at Bella Cohen's brothel (Osteen, *The Economy of Ulysses* 410). This is one of a number of errors in the budget[5]; a cake of "Fry's Plain Chocolate" is listed at the implausibly high price of a shilling (*U*: 17.1472). Joyce's revisions changed the cost of the chocolate bar from a shilling (*JJA* 16:132) to a penny (*JJA* 21:89), yet Hans Walter

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[5] Osteen makes his own error here, asserting that Bloom omits his expenses for a coffee and bun in 'Eumaeus' (Osteen, *The Economy of Ulysses* 410). This purchase is actually recorded in the preceding chapter (*U*:16.1699-1700).

Gabler restored the price of a shilling in his revisions, despite this being a historically inaccurate figure[6]. While such inaccuracies may be necessary to allow Bloom to break even (achieving the goal of double-entry bookkeeping), they cause significant problems for a consideration of the budget as an economic organ. To maintain the accuracy of the text, it is difficult to uphold the aims of accountancy; this leads us to question whether the most significant aspect of the budget is its recall of previous episodes, or its fundamental demonstration of Bloom's economic capacities. Ultimately, the budget becomes an idealised version of Bloom's financial and moral core, removing expenses incurred in the brothel while ensuring he may break even.

By contrast, Stephen's budget for the day may not be easily placed in a similar format. Harald Beck and Clive Hart valiantly attempt to produce such a budget, but conclude that "the lack of detailed information about Stephen's expenditure during the day leaves us in ignorance of the denominations of the coins in his pockets." (Beck and Hart 3) Although Bloom's budget itself is an act of fictionalisation – on his part as much as Joyce's – the very fact that such a budget can be reached (and corrected on rational terms by Joyce, as well as later editors and critics) indicates the economic thought that drives Bloom's character. By contrast, Stephen's comparatively careless approach to money leads to omissions and lacunae, making similar questions unanswerable. Within the mimetic terrain of *Ulysses*, only a character deeply engaged in the world of money and concerned with the prospect of financial stability will produce the textual details that allow their own finances to become the subject of such analysis. It is through the relationship between Bloom and Stephen (and of

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[6] In his post-publication errata, Joyce amended Bloom's balance in an attempt to reconcile the budget's issues; "for 0.16.16 read 0.17.5" (*JJA 12*:183). Although this figure produces its own problems, it demonstrates the attention to monetary detail in the budget.

course the contrasts between the two characters) that this fact is most readily apparent.

One of the most curious additions to the budget is Bloom's loan from Stephen. As seen in 'Circe', this is not a loan in any conventional sense of the word, but rather Bloom safeguarding Stephen's money to protect him from profligacy in his inebriated state (*U*: 15.3600-7). Although Stephen gives Bloom £1 6s 11d (*U*: 15.3613), Bloom immediately rounds the figure up to "One pound seven" (Ibid.). Bloom returns "a sum of money (£1-7-0), one pound seven shillings sterling" (*U*: 17.957-58) to Stephen in 'Ithaca', rounding in Stephen's favour, yet this act of generosity is not recorded in the budget, which indicates "£1 – 7 – 0" as the original amount 'loaned' by Stephen (*U*: 17.1460). An acknowledgement of this discrepancy would prevent Bloom's debit and credit columns from equalising; this is the case in the third typescript of the episode, in which the extra penny is acknowledged, albeit in the incorrect column, appearing as a credit rather than a debit and with the loan's figure claimed to be £1-11-0 (*JJA* 16:133).

There is a further omission: a bar of soap purchased in Sweny's chemist in 'Lotus Eaters'. Bloom is indebted to Sweny for the purchase, having agreed to "call later in the day" (*U*: 5.509) to pay and forgetting to do so. Despite the manifestation of Sweny (and the bar of soap itself) as a matter of guilty conscience in 'Circe'[7], this guilt does not extend to a sense of financial obligation on Bloom's behalf. Bloom affords himself ample opportunity to recall the purchase, mentioning his subsequent "Bath and Gratification" (*U*: 17.1460) in the budget, yet it is still absent from the table. Whether this error is based on an inadvertent omission or Bloom's perception of the

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[7] An anthropomorphised version of the bar of soap appears in the chapter, eventually metamorphosing into the face of Sweny (*U*: 15.338-41).

exchange (after all, no money has been exchanged so technically his finances are unchanged), if Bloom does indeed intend to repay Sweny, it should appear in the 'debit' column or at the very least, the corresponding 3s 5d (*U*: 15.343) should be deducted from Bloom's balance, as money already tied up in a transaction.

Even if Bloom's failure to pay Sweny is treated as a moral debt rather than a financial one, there is still a place for this in the double-entry system. To circumvent Christian anxieties about usury, early users of double-entry bookkeeping were encouraged to incorporate signs of Christian faith into their accounts (Gleeson-White 96). Jane Gleeson-White notes the similarity between this and religious confession: "if a merchant confessed – or accounted for – all his worldly activities before God, then perhaps his sins would be absolved." (Ibid.) Although Bloom's generosity to Stephen does not implicate him in the charging of interest, his omissions make his budget far from a congruent economic confession. The fact that most of Bloom's expenses in Nighttown are not mentioned suggests an awareness of this moral dimension to bookkeeping, although this is tinged with the naïve idea that by not mentioning such events, their moral implications can be erased.

Have Ink, Can Sell: The Advertising Gospel

While the industrial capitalism of the early twentieth-century was still chiefly focused on the production of physical goods, autonomisation's effects on capital led to its increasing engagement with the world outside money and materiality. Significantly, this meant that the production of images was becoming a significant function of capitalist production. This gives advertising a particularly interesting role, as something which is simultaneously both an

ideological force and an actuality of production itself. Baudrillard calls advertising "a wall of functional signs made to be decoded, and its effects are exhausted in this decoding." (Baudrillard, *Symbolic Exchange and Death* 79) Thus, advertising at once presents a subversive potential and depletes this potential altogether, feeding back into the networks of capitalism that produced it; however, the gap between encoding and decoding (processes which are never symmetrical) allows a degree of free play (Leonard 575). Although its position as a tool of capitalism cannot be entirely overturned by this modicum of subjectivity, advertising's position connecting capitalism and creativity is hugely significant, as is the effect advertising has on urban space, evidenced by the plethora of physical advertisements seen in *Ulysses*.

The ability to conceive of an advertisement as an autonomous object is inherently questionable. In their *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Theodor Adorno and Max Horkheimer discuss the assimilation of advertising into its surroundings. They contemplate a landscape in which "Advertising becomes art and nothing else [...] l'art pour l'art, advertising for its own sake, a pure representation of social power." (Horkheimer and Adorno 163) Their view of the culture industry promoted by modern capitalism is one in which advertising and editorial content are indistinguishable; "In the most influential American magazines, *Life* and *Fortune*, a quick glance can now scarcely distinguish advertising from editorial picture and text." (Ibid.) Joyce is alert to this synthesis, as is Bloom; this may well account for Bloom's emphasis on the importance of context in advertising. In Joyce's case, *Ulysses* itself is a testament to the idea that advertising is embedded within its textual surroundings. Advertising motifs drift in and out of Bloom's consciousness, integral parts of his mind that are barely separable from the other memories, thoughts and sensations that recur in a similar manner. Even the

Plumtree's advertisement is repeatedly reprised in this manner, becoming memorable because it has such a negative effect on Bloom. The inseparability of these advertising images from Bloom's thoughts – and the text as a whole – exemplifies the permeation of advertising that, for Horkheimer and Adorno, constitutes a crucial element of modern culture.

Joyce parodies the reach of advertising into the everyday lexicon with an imagined conversation in 'Lestrygonians': "Hello, Jones, where are you going? Can't stop, Robinson, I am hastening to purchase the only reliable inkeraser *Kansell* sold by Hely's Ltd, 85 Dame street." (*U*: 8.140-42) This passage reimagines an ordinary conversation in the register of advertising, wryly demonstrating the distance between advertising language and the speech of quotidian life. Jones's apparent repetition of a piece of advertising copy suggests a situation in which linguistic change follows the language of advertising, adopting its tone with absurd effect. Discussing the terrifying ease with which the Nazi government influenced the German language, Horkheimer and Adorno compare this use of language by totalitarian regimes to the language of advertising, claiming:

> this swift appropriation [of] language acquires the coldness which until now it had only on billboards and in the advertisement columns of newspapers. Innumerable people use words and expressions which they have either ceased to understand or employ only because they trigger off controlled reflexes. (Horkheimer and Adorno 165-66)

In Joyce's parody, the linguistic sense of the utterance is less important than its position as an imitation of advertising language. While this example is deliberately ridiculous, it demonstrates the

potential for advertising to insert itself within language, just as it embeds itself within texts and the city.

The name *Kansell* suggests a form of advertising which is structurally intrinsic to the product itself. The name is a multifarious pun, equally suggesting cancel (the function of the product) but also "can sell", promoting the company behind it. An additional resonance may be 'Kanzel', a pulpit in German. This embedded form of advertising discourse does not merely appear *within* the commercial landscape, but it *is* the commercial landscape, naming the products with enough self-referentiality to suggest the broader role of advertising. The gesture towards religion underscores the breadth of the claims implied by the name of the eraser. First added in a handwritten emendation to the V.B.6 typescript (*JJA* 12: 306), this reference supplants the existing advertising themes in *Ulysses* by adding both an absurd dimension (through the stilted language of Jones) and a genuine depth, in the punning name of the eraser which implies a quasi-religious dimension to both the product and the almost alchemical means of selling it. This is done through an uncommonly sophisticated pun that exceeds the simple advertisements used by Hely's in contemporary publications, which often merely stated "Hely's printing is the best" ('Hely's advertisement' 1). Such an overdetermined pun is indicative of the hitherto unrealised potential of advertising, a force which had ascended to the point of ubiquity, but which was yet to maximise its potential for creativity. The Kansell is the pulpit from which the gospel of advertising is preached.

Advertising's reach had grown to such an extent that it had almost supplanted religion as the opium of the people. While cityscapes were once dominated by church steeples, advertisements and tall commercial buildings were beginning to take over; significantly, the turn of the twentieth-century ended a long run of churches and cathedrals holding the title of tallest building in the world. In 1901,

Ulm Minster's title was lost to Philadelphia City Hall. Subsequently, the title of tallest building in the world has only been held by secular buildings. While the architectural dominance of secular capitalism has accelerated slower in Dublin than most western cities, religion's demotion to a position alongside advertising and commerce is seen in *Ulysses*. Bloom smells the aroma of bread baking in Rourke's bakery. The "daily bread" produced in the bakery is turned into an advertisement: "Bread, the staff of life, earn your bread, O tell me where is fancy bread, at Rourke's the baker's it is said." (*U*: 16.55-59) Thus, Bloom views not only the bakery but also the Lord's Prayer as subject to the language of advertising. Placing advertising and Christianity on a level plane demonstrates the contrasting trajectories of capitalism and religion: capitalism ascending, religion falling. In Bloom's mind, they meet in the middle, producing an unholy synthesis embodied in bread that could either stand for the body of Christ, or merely another consumer product. A similar play on the relationship between religion and capitalism appears in 'Ithaca', with the presence of "Epp's massproduct, the creature cocoa." (*U*: 17.369-370) The word 'creature' invokes the Anglican Holy Communion, which includes the receipt of "creatures of bread and wine" (*Book of Common Prayer* 266); the product itself becomes 'mass' on a different level. The creature comforts afforded by cocoa powder are equal to the spiritual benefits of the Holy Communion, placing the transient pleasures of consumer goods in league with the permanence of Anglican sacraments.

Bloom's job allows him to merge his commercial and creative sensibilities, transforming his visual acumen and financial savviness into the products of advertising. In 'Aeolus,' Bloom devises an advertisement for the Keyes wine merchants, invoking a visual pun. "Two crossed keys here. A circle. Then here the name. Alexander Keyes, tea, wine and spirit merchant." (*U*: 7.142-143) There are

several layers to this pun. Firstly, the fairly obvious play on the name of the company, which is translated into the visual motif of the keys. More interestingly, the name of Keyes is turned into "House of Key(e)s" (*U*: 7.146) in the section's heading, suggesting the name of the Isle of Man's devolved parliament. This plays on the Isle of Man's home rule status (a fact noted by Bloom himself (*U*: 7.150), and the position of the *Freeman's Journal* as a nationalist newspaper. Thus, Bloom's advertising techniques show him to be a sophisticated creative thinker, able to attract his audience's subliminal attention by playing on their pre-existing sympathies.

The possibilities of advertising return to the fore of Bloom's mind in 'Ithaca.' Pondering the Keyes advert once again, he contemplates:

> the infinite possibilities hitherto unexploited of the modern art of advertisement if condensed in triliteral monoideal symbols, vertically of maximum visibility (divined), horizontally of maximum legibility (deciphered) and of magnetising efficacy to arrest involuntary attention, to interest, to convince, to decide. (*U*: 17.580-84)

This radical view addresses the subliminal nature of advertising, reducing advertising to its purest visual form. Bloom's view of advertising turns it into a kind of production, and his job becomes that of a producer of images. This prefigures changes in capitalism in post-industrial economies, in which the production of physical goods was surpassed by the production of images and of capital itself. By turning his aesthetic sensibilities into advertising, Bloom unwittingly opens a new path for capitalism to move into.

Unfortunately for Bloom, his aptitude for creating advertisements does not translate into his employment prospects. Matthew Hayward notes that "In the fictional advertising industry of *Ulysses*,

Bloom holds the lowliest of positions." (Hayward, 'The Bloom of Advertising' 50) Despite having a theoretical understanding of advertising that is ahead of its time, Bloom's role is largely to act as liaison between the client and the newspaper printer, with little opportunity for enacting his creative impulses or advancing in the industry (Ibid. 49). Even when submitting an advertisement for the *Freeman's Journal*, Bloom acknowledges the fact that he has no influence over where it will be placed in the newspaper (*U*: 7.188-189). Despite Bloom's lack of cachet or prospects within the advertising industry, he is still engaged in production, albeit in restricted ways. Firstly, although his own ideas are rarely permitted to intrude into the templates used for advertisements, he is still responsible for linking companies with the newspaper, standing between Dublin's economic base and superstructure (Wicke 128), while allowing the advertisements themselves to be produced. Secondly, Bloom's meditations on advertising are productive. His knowledge of the medium allows him to cast a critical eye over other advertisements, while devising his own. Although Bloom's ideas were unlikely to ever see the light of day, particularly in an Edwardian advertising industry which offered little scope for originality, they are hugely significant for prefiguring the importance of images in consumer culture. At the turn of the twentieth-century, advertising was not a sophisticated medium; as Elizabeth Outka notes, "Especially in newspapers, the advertisements – if included at all – had often been squeezed together in cluttered, undistinguished groups." (Outka 82-83) Once later technological developments in printing, cinema and television made Bloom's ideas more viable, they were to become widespread.

While Bloom's job marks him as a producer of advertising, he is also a consumer in his position as a flâneur. Bloom's wanderings across the city lead him to cross paths with numerous advertisements, each

of which invades his space and, subsequently, his consciousness. The most noteworthy instance of this is in 'Lotus Eaters', in which Bloom sees a newspaper advertisement, which states "What is home without Plumtree's Potted Meat? Incomplete. With it an abode of bliss." (*U*: 5.144-147) This seemingly trivial encounter is repeatedly reprised, forming an important motif in the novel. Whether the advertisement's suggestion of an abode of bliss hits a nerve with Bloom (who is, after all, about to read Martha's letter) or merely stimulates his professional sensibilities, it sticks with him for the rest of the day. The motif even recurs in 'Ithaca', when the narrator informs us that for the Blooms, sexual intercourse has been "incomplete" (*U*: 17.2283) since the death of their son Rudy. This advertising earworm is far from voluntary, and is perhaps even unwanted altogether, an invading force within Bloom; when entering his bed in 'Ithaca', he encounters "some flakes of potted meat, recooked," (*U*: 17.2125) presumably eaten by Molly and Boylan in the course of their sexual liaison earlier in the day.

Perhaps the most convincing argument for the advertisement's effect on Bloom is its placement next to the obituaries in the newspaper. This rather tasteless piece of advertising is noted by Bloom, who claims "What a stupid ad! Under the obituary notices they stuck it." (*U*: 8.743-744) This creates a rather unsavoury link between death and food, leading Bloom's thoughts to turn to cannibalism. While it is certainly memorable for it, the advertisement's tactless position gives it an unpleasant association, with the meat of the product reflecting the flesh of the deceased. Given this connection, it is especially cruel that Bloom encounters flakes of potted meat in his bed, considering the bed's association with the death of his sexual life with Molly and, by extension, the death of Rudy.

A similarly unfortunate incident occurs in 'Ithaca' during Bloom and Stephen's discussion of advertising. Stephen constructs an imagined advertisement, featuring "In sloping, upright and backhands: Queen's Hotel, Queen's Hotel, Queen's Hotel. Queen's Ho…" (*U*: 17.619-620) Of course, Bloom's father killed himself in the Queen's Hotel, Ennis; the suggested advertisement leads him into a detailed description of the suicide. (*U*: 17.622-632) While Bloom attributes the reference to mere coincidence (*U*: 17.635), it demonstrates the potential pitfalls of advertising. Although the reference to the hotel is probably an unfortunate coincidence – an explanation Bloom assumes to be correct (*U*: 17.633-635) – Steven Connor considers it a demonstration "of a kinetic incompletion and overdetermination [which] reveals the necessary failure of either art or advertising fully to encompass and arrest economic attention, and to constrain its own meanings and outcomes." (Connor 211) The infinite possibilities of advertising are its greatest strength and also its downfall; the free play afforded by advertising allows infinite interpretation, allowing for the possibility that it can generate unintentional negative consequences. In Bloom's case, two advertisements conjure thoughts of death. The attention that Bloom hopes to arrest in advertising can be a deeply negative thing, depending on the interpretation of the individual.

The specifics of consumption are afforded an unusual significance by Joyce (and Bloom). In 'Oxen of the Sun,' Bloom is seen staring (*U*: 14.1181) at the "ruby and triangled sign" (*U*: 14.1108) of the famous logo for Bass ale. This appearance recalls Édouard Manet's *Un bar aux Folies Bergère*, which prominently features bottles of Bass beer. Noting that Bass was the first brand to register as a trademark in the United Kingdom, Jessica Burstein states "Manet has signed his name and given the date on the corner of the bottle label to the furthest left; the rhyme between modern art and marketing is clearly a point

of remark" (Burstein 150-151). The appearance of the brand logo in the painting – and in Ulysses – emphasises the extraordinary impact of branding and advertising on the urban landscape and even on human psychology. The specific importance of Bass must also be considered; Osteen notes that:

> Since Bass Ale is a British product consumed in large quantities by the Irish (if Ulysses is reliable evidence), one might argue that the drink produces a monoideism – paralysis – engineered by British manufacturers, in which consumption of British products deflects political unrest and elicits stasis in consumers." (Osteen, *The Economy of Ulysses* 137)

This sense of stasis is reflected in the product's position in Ulysses. Although Bloom is a rare figure of sobriety amidst the bacchanalian chaos of the chapter, even he is entranced by the Bass logo, leaving him subject to a different but equally potent form of stasis resulting from the beer. In Bloom's case, it is the mesmeric quality of the logo rather than the alcoholic contents of the bottle that elicits this response.

Advertising Gerty MacDowell

Bloom's awareness of the potency of advertising recurs throughout the novel. In 'Nausicaa,' his voyeuristic masturbation at Gerty MacDowell leads to a contemplation of women's visual sensibilities; Bloom notes "Best place for an ad to catch a woman's eye on a mirror." (*U*: 13.919-920) While Bloom's merging of the commercial and the aesthetic has already been discussed, the context of this statement suggests that Bloom is also engaged in a synthesis of the commercial and the erotic. Considering Bloom may well be aware that Gerty is conscious of his gaze and is even performing for his

benefit, he connects this eroticised idea of feminine self-image with the potential for advertising. While Bloom's consciousness of the possibilities of advertising is not new, the erotic context changes it significantly. Here, advertising and sexuality are entwined, with the erotic perceptions of people (especially women) viewed as fertile ground for advertising. As such, the desires preyed on by advertisers are positioned very close to sexual desires, to such an extent that they are barely distinguishable. This is reflected in Bloom's own sexual fetishism, which revolves around the purchase of hosiery and underwear ("Molly. Why I bought her the violet garters" (*U*: 13.799-800). The fact that the style of 'Nausicaa' recalls the erotica of novels like *Sweets of Sin* places the chapter itself in a context of sexual commodification, close to the novels Bloom purchases for his wife.

The economic conflation of 'Nausicaa' is exemplified by Gerty, who is simultaneously an advertiser, a consumer and a commodity. Gerty is defined by the products she consumes. Even her body is seen in commercial terms, described as "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" (*U*: 13.83-86). Gerty's self-image is glimpsed here, establishing her as driven by consumerism and also the clichéd language of romance novels and advertising. Osteen notes that "Gerty is precisely the kind of person most susceptible to advertising […] [her] labour is consumption, that she works diligently to make herself attractive according to the dictates of fashion magazines." (Osteen, *The Economy of Ulysses* 298) The language – and ideology – of advertising is so embedded in Gerty that she transforms herself into an advertisement, conscious of the effect she will have on those who see her. After catching Bloom looking at her, Gerty "was glad that something told her to put on the transparent stockings thinking Reggy Wylie might be out" (*U*: 13.426), conscious both of the

possibility of encountering a former partner and of other attention she may receive. This self-consciousness feeds into Gerty's fantasy, which imagines Bloom as an exotic object of desire, "the matinée idol" (*U*: 13.417). This shows the duality inherent to Gerty's relationship to advertising: she advertises herself on terms derived from her own exposure to advertising.

Gerty's self-advertising excites Bloom, leading him to engage in a mutual sexual performance. However, the advertising is a ruse; having carefully concealed her limp, Gerty is forced to reveal her defect. Bloom observes her walking slowly, wondering "Tight boots? No. She's lame! O!" (*U*: 13.771) Eventually, she is reduced to her base physical attributes, stripped of the accoutrements of consumerism. Gerty's ultimate commodity is her body, lessened in its value by this imperfection. Although Bloom considers her a "Hot little devil all the same," (*U*: 13.776) his desire is modulated by this discovery. The fantasy becomes a morbid curiosity, a desire for the unknown other "like a nun or a negress or a girl with glasses." (*U*: 13.776-77) Like her attempts to transcend her socioeconomic status with "a languid queenly hauteur" (*U*: 13.97), Gerty's attempts to transcend the conditions of her body only succeed for as long as disbelief can be suspended.

Gerty's desire for commodities (and her ultimate self-commodification) is largely evidenced in her interest in fashion, the ultimate reflection of capitalism. Noting the intrinsic modernity to fashion (which only exists "in a schema of rupture, progress and innovation" (Baudrillard, Symbolic Exchange and Death 89), Baudrillard considers it to be a universal form that runs in tandem to the market; "in fashion, all signs are exchanged just as, on the market, all products come into play as equivalents." (Ibid. 92) This extends the reach of the law of value into the domain of fashion (Ibid. 95). Gerty dresses self-consciously, measuring her own value in

terms of fashion. She is dressed "simply but with the instinctive taste of a votary of Dame Fashion for she felt that there was just a might that he [Wylie] might be out." (*U*: 13.148-149) Gerty's clothing signifies her social and sexual value. While her behaviour in 'Nausicaa' establishes her as a fantasist and a performer hoping to attain a higher level of sexual and social capital, Gerty's interest in fashion also reflects these tendencies. Noting that fashion is directed towards the social, Baudrillard claims "fashion aims for a theatrical sociality, and delights in itself." (Ibid. 94) In her performative fashion, carefully constructed with male observers in mind, Gerty embodies this notion of fashion as a performance.

Early critics often reduced Gerty to a stereotype, the product of the discourses that surround her (Ochoa 783). While Gerty is undoubtedly influenced by the advertising and fashion imagery she sees, a transformative reading of 'Nausicaa' by April Pelt redeems her agency in this regard. Examining Gerty's reference to "Widow Welch's female pills," (*U*: 13.85-86) Pelt notes that the tablets in question were actually an abortifacient, manufactured (and advertised) from 1767 to 1966, (Pelt 42) a year before abortion was legalised in Great Britain. This is a radical challenge to the typical critical view of Gerty as a passive, naïve and even victimised character. An understanding of the nature of the pills introduces the likelihood that Gerty is sexually active; more importantly, it implies that she has taken control of her sexual life and has consciously decided not to have a child. Considering the fatalism held by many characters in Joyce's paralysed Dublin, this decisiveness is an especially strong indicator of Gerty's agency. Furthermore, the very fact that Gerty was capable of obtaining the pills suggests she must have been a skilled reader, capable of deciphering one of the veiled advertisements found for the product.

The illegality of abortion meant that abortifacient advertisements had to be carefully worded. They needed to be subtle enough to circumvent the law, while still indicating their true purpose enough that women could avail of them. While we do not see the advertisement that has presumably led Gerty to purchase the pills, a similar advert is reproduced in a 1907 edition of the British Medical Journal. It describes

> [A] medicine known for over a century as a certain remedy for removing those obstructions to which Young Women are so frequently subject at puberty, and in regulating that function so important to female health up to a certain period of life, and which is apt to become so deranged from such various and slight causes ('The Composition of Certain Secret Remedies' 1654).

This highly veiled advert seems to be more suggestive of an emmenagogue or similar product used to regulate menstruation; the only indication of its true purpose is the reference to 'obstructions,' a euphemism for pregnancy. The success of the product despite the relative opacity of this and other adverts is a testament both to the cunning of marketers and the literacy of readers.

For Gerty, the ambiguity inherent in abortifacient advertisements is part of the appeal. Pelt notes that *"she employs the euphemistic and unstable discourses of advertising in order to narrate her own experiences"* (Pelt 49) Therefore, we do not directly find out that she has induced an abortion, but the ambiguity is deliberate on Gerty's part; it is precisely because of the tight control she has of her own image that so few concrete facts about her can be ascertained, forcing us to infer things from what she allows us to see. It is this adoption of deliberate ambiguity that allows her to conceal her limp from Bloom, while also ensuring neither learns anything about the

other from their encounter. Gerty's decision to conceptualise her sexuality and her body in euphemistic language is not a sign of her naïve acceptance of the discourses of advertising, fashion magazines and cheap romance novels; rather, it shows her mastery of these discourses. Indeed, she is even capable of deliberately violating conventions. Bloom reacts with disappointment that she does not look back towards him as she walks away. (*U*: 13.905) This demonstrates her control over the encounter, leaving Bloom with the sense that "Gerty has violated a prevailing code of male pleasure and power," (Sicker 100) denying him the desired suspension of disbelief as she walks away. She is entirely conscious of the fact that this was an encounter rooted in fantasy.

The ideas of erotic capital established by Gerty's appearance in 'Nausicaa' are taken to their literal extent in 'Circe,' a chapter which is set in the Nighttown red light district and mixes sexual and economic themes. 'Nausicaa' is instantly recalled by the early appearance of Cissy Caffrey (*U*: 15.41); however, the style of 'Circe' sets it apart from anything which precedes (or follows) in the novel. The chapter takes the form of a play script and begins by using phantasmagorical language to depict an otherwise mundane scene. Something as nondescript as a tram siding is "set with skeleton tracks, red and green will-o'-the-wisps and danger signals." (*U*: 15.2-3) This establishes a fantastical economy of phenomena, which rises and falls throughout the chapter. Osteen notes that the chapter "adapts the economy of prostitution as the foundation for its textual economy," (Osteen, *The Economy of Ulysses* 319) pawning its characters and their bodies to a variety of increasingly fantastical ideas, while "mental conditions, memories and words are animated and given material form, and inanimate objects speak." (Ibid. 320) Thus, 'Circe' at once forms a kind of reification that gives a tangible form to the immaterial, while also reducing the material to

abstracted tokens of symbolic circulation. These two seemingly contradictory movements help to accentuate the chaos of a chapter where spatial, social and psychological boundaries all begin to disintegrate.

Although the commodification of bodies inherent in prostitution does not need to be restated here, 'Circe' goes beyond the commodification of prostitutes themselves to develop a bastardised form of this relationship. In the chapter's twin movements of reification and abstraction, the characters become units of circulation, subject to the conditions around them. Bloom is particularly malleable in the chapter, regressing into his youth (*U*: 15.268-290), standing trial for sexual impropriety (*U*: 15.774-1109), becoming a heroic political leader (*U*: 15.1541-1555) and transforming into a feminised, submissive figure (*U*: 15.2776-3225). In this transgressive space, Bloom – evidently the 'consumer' – becomes the commodity. However, Bloom's position is something of an illusion. Noting that Bloom is the originator of this fantasy of submission, Osteen claims that "Perversely, his bondage expresses his freedom to submit himself to a masochistic contract, to circulate his identity and thereby undergo expenditure and achieve balance." (Osteen, *The Economy of Ulysses* 330-331) Despite his degradation, Bloom remains the customer, and is the driving force behind this exchange; his desire is evident in effusive pleas like "Enormously I desiderate your domination" (*U*: 15.2777)*.* Bloom pays to have his body treated as a commodity, but despite her superficial power in the exchange, Bella Cohen remains the actual commodity. Bloom's power enables him to cede both of their bodies to this fantasy, creating an illusion of submission that conceals the genuine power dynamics at play.

The fact that Bloom is perfectly aware of these relations underlines another crucial concept in the economics of *Ulysses*: commodity

fetishism. As Hartmut Böhme claims, the consumer is "disillusioned and under the illusion of commodities at the same time, they have uncovered the illusion and yet they deny the disillusion: this is the commodity fetish's typical structure of *compromise*." (Böhme 265) Bloom's occupation in advertising should make the economic realities of commodities all too obvious and yet despite this exposure to the inner workings of capitalism, he is still the ultimate consumer. Like his encounter with Gerty, Bloom's consumption involves the maintenance of fantasy. Ironically, it is only under the conditions of actual fantasy in 'Circe' that Bloom reveals the illusion to himself. Even this apparent demystification misses several links in the chain of production: notably, Bloom sees the shopkeepers Sweny and Dlugacz (*U*: 15.340-343; 15.986-991), but not the producers of their goods. In fact, the appearance of the bar of soap as a sentient being constitutes its own alienation from production, making the item appear as though it came into being naturally rather than through labour. As one layer of illusion is stripped away, another one is introduced.

Claire Colebrook claims "capitalism exposes the essential reification or articulation of all life and sense [...] modernism manages to extend beyond the limits of capital." (Colebrook, 'Incorporeal Modernism' 229) She continues, stating "If capitalism allows everything to have an exchange value beyond its localized use value, then this is because it is the very possibility of *any thing* including a human being to be considered from the point of view of sense: not as it is here and now, but as it might be beyond its function." (Ibid.) This radical reconfiguration of use-value and exchange-value imbues objects with qualities that go far beyond the 'magic' of commodity fetishism. In a particularly bizarre section, the bar of soap purchased by Bloom earlier in the day is given a line in the chapter's script, before metamorphosing into the image of Sweny, the pharmacist whom

Bloom forgot to pay for it. (*U*: 1 5.340-343) Thus, the financial – and social – significance of this trivial item is rendered literal in the twisted economic logic of the chapter. This inanimate object becomes a talking embodiment of value, guilt and memory. The literal value of the soap, the social value of Sweny, and Bloom's sense of guilt at forgetting to pay for all of his goods at the pharmacy are combined in this reified image.

The Economics of Marriage and the Family

The commodification of everything that is glimpsed in *Ulysses* even extends to its depiction of love and romance. Tim Conley describes the rivalry between Bloom and Boylan as "in a sense, a competition between a canvasser and a billsticker for the consumer [Molly], though it is Blazes Boylan who actually has the four o'clock date." (Conley 528) This places courtship and wooing within the framework of advertising. In turn, romantic anxieties and desires have often been prey to advertisers, turning dating into a consumerist enterprise. As Conley notes, this has also resulted in Joyce's own assimilation into popular romantic culture (Ibid. 524), occupying a peculiar position in popular culture as a signifier of intellectualism, but also of romantic and sexual energy. A similar circulation of ideas is seen in *Ulysses*, particularly in the literature on offer. In 'Wandering Rocks', Stephen thumbs through a book which promises to resolve the question of "How to win a woman's love," (*U*: 10.847) among more practical concerns like the recipe for white wine vinegar and a remedy for chapped hands (*U*: 10.846-47). Folk remedies and magic spells are pledged to resolve romantic matters with the purchase of a book. In the same chapter, Bloom's perusal of a bookstall demonstrates the large market for romantic and erotic literature. His curiosity is piqued by a copy of Sacher-Masoch's *Tales*

of the Ghetto (*U*: 10.591-92), but he eventually decides to purchase *Sweets of Sin* (*U*: 10.639-41), with Molly in mind. The fact that this purchase is chiefly made for his wife connects the market of erotic literature to the marketisation of romantic relationships, the gift attaching itself to the economic aspect of their marriage.

This economic dimension of marriage is clear to Joyce. In *Finnegans Wake*, it is held that "so long as there is a joint deposit account in the two names a mutual obligation is posited." (*FW*: 574.2-4), connecting sexual intercourse and financial ties with the innuendo of a 'deposit'. This definition of marriage depends on shared personal finances instead of a formal legal contract. Joyce's marriage to Nora Barnacle may be invoked in a similar context, largely taking place to secure the issue of inheritance[8] (Ellmann 638). Marital ties may be proven by the mere presence of joint economic interests, yet the formal legal aspect must be completed in order to ensure joint access. The vagueness of these definitions constructs a notion of marriage as something which may encompass (or exclude) virtually anything; what is abundantly clear is that, in a legal sense at least, marriage is largely tied to material, economic obligations. These obligations are seen throughout *Ulysses*, chiefly in Bloom's economic support of Molly but also in his image of her as a signifier of value. In 'Eumaeus', Bloom offers Stephen a glimpse of Molly in the form of a photograph. The risqué image – offering a "liberal display of bosom" (*U*: 16.1430) – is used to buy Stephen's attention in his fatigued state. Stephen Watt considers the photograph to constitute a form of currency, its exchange-value greatly exceeding its use-value. He

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[8] In her article 'Joyce's Will', Carol Loeb Schloss explores the issue of Joyce's inheritance, with a particular focus on how it can be related to Stephen's ideas of family as established in *A Portrait*. Of particular interest is the fact that by marrying in London, Joyce chose to subjugate himself – and his family – to English law, despite his political issues with the country; Schloss attributes this to the fact that English law is "especially forceful in making the distinction between natural and legal progeny." (Schloss 117)

notes that "Prestige is one of the 'values' the photograph bestows, just as possessing Molly […] confers upon Bloom a stature of which few men in this episode can boast." (Watt 767) The economics of marriage allow Bloom to establish a degree of value based on the desirability of his wife.

Marriage is pitched against other economic forces by Joyce. In 'Scylla and Charybdis', Stephen refers to Georgina Johnson (*U*: 9.195), evidently his favourite prostitute. On his later sojourn into Nighttown, Stephen discovers that Johnson is married to a "Mr Lambe from London," (*U*: 15.3636) "dead and married" (*U*: 15.3620) as he puts it. Johnson's dependency on her commercial traveller husband is mutually exclusive with the job of prostitution, taking her from one position of economic dependency on men to another. While Stephen's reaction demonstrates his distaste for the institution of marriage, he also expresses jealousy, despite the purely economic terms of his prior encounters with Georgina Johnson. The transactional nature of a relationship is not enough to prevent it from invoking emotions, as is evidenced by Stephen's reaction here. The commodification of romantic and sexual relationships is such that they are subject to the same forces of obfuscation that are described in typical accounts of commodity fetishism, allowing their latent economic meaning to reside beneath a veil of concealment. In Stephen's case, the severing of an essentially economic tie (with a prostitute) takes on an emotional meaning, appearing as a form of rejection, despite the fact that Georgina Johnson's marriage appears to have nothing to do with him and may well be predicated on similarly economic lines, constituting a pragmatic alternative to prostitution above all else.

Despite this scepticism, Robert Spoo reads the relationship between Bloom and Stephen as a kind of marriage, albeit one which "gestures towards a potential that cannot be realized or fully expressed in the

timeframe of *Ulysses*" (Spoo, 'Teleology, Monocausality, and Marriage in Ulysses' 456), especially considering its importance in the latter, future-oriented episodes of the novel. Spoo claims "Since marriage is a nearly universally accepted *telos*, it is also a common source for teleological metaphors." (Ibid. 457) This metaphorical resonance of marriage places the 'marriage' of Bloom and Stephen within the teleological framework of *Ulysses*, particularly its concluding three chapters. While the entire novel is structured towards a concluding resolution (or at least return), it is not until 'Eumaeus' that its disparate strands begin to entwine. The union between Bloom and Stephen is crucial to this entwining, recalling the tandem, often overlapping, movements of the two men for the entirety of the novel. After 'Ithaca', their courses align, but as Spoo suggests, their fate becomes external to the confines of *Ulysses*. What is glimpsed in the novel is not the culmination of this relationship, but merely its germination.

'Ithaca' conceives of another sort of marriage: Bloom himself as a marriage of opposites. At one particular moment, his economic life is bifurcated, revealing the marriage of the wealthy Bloom and pauper Bloom within. Although his position of relative security is established by his possession of "The endowment policy, the bank passbook, the certificate of the possession of scrip," (*U*: 17.1931-32) the next question in the catechism imagines a future in destitution, produced by the "elimination of all positive values" (*U*: 17.1934) in Bloom's life. Through a series of imagined miseries and recollections of various figures from the preceding chapters, Bloom's descent into poverty culminates in his reduction to an "aged impotent disenfranchised ratesupported moribund lunatic pauper." (*U*: 17.1947) The marriage of his two selves is the economic paradigm that ensures stability, placing chrematist and pauper in balance, allowing Bloom to find a financial middle ground.

The relationship between personal misfortune and financial collapse is by no means straightforward. The presence of insurance makes it possible for one form of loss to provide economic gain. Despite its roots in something akin to gambling, by the nineteenth-century, life insurance was marketed as a "moral prerequisite" (Odih 61). This development necessitated a cultural and economic shift; as Odih notes,

> The development of the life insurance industry in the United States was marked by the struggle between an ideology of altruism that endorses systems of voluntary mutual aid, and a market ideology representing efficiency equity and market relations (Ibid. 64).

This blurring of lines allowed the coexistence of community supports and financial independence, tacitly driving the marketisation of forms of support which had existed since time immemorial.

Bloom's insurance policy is an unusual one, not least because it leaves his daughter rather than his wife as the beneficiary. The policy's complexities are fleshed out in a dense section of 'Ithaca', which details Bloom's financial documents, including

> an endowment assurance policy of £500 in the Scottish Widows' Assurance Society, intestated Millicent (Milly) Bloom, coming into force at 25 years as with profit policy of £430, £462-10-0 and £500 at 60 years or death, 65 years or death and death, respectively, or with profit policy (paidup) of £299-10-0 together with cash payment of £133-10-0 (*U*: 17.1855-1860).

As the 'profit policy' indicates, this particular policy allows Bloom to cash-out at a profit while still alive, changing the dynamics of life insurance significantly; this makes the policy an investment as much

as a safety net for Milly in the event of his death. With this in mind, the policy effectively doubles up as a pension fund with the potential to act as de facto income protection insurance. This complicated policy causes another moral shift in the position of life insurance, allowing Bloom to effectively gamble on his own longevity, but with his own security as much as that of his daughter in mind. The longer his life, the more money he would be entitled to should he choose to cash out; therefore, this policy suggests an onus on personal responsibility, not only to provide for one's family in a crisis, but also in trying to ensure a long life. Although the policy offers strong assurances to Milly in the event of her father's death, it also affords Bloom a rare flexibility in life insurance, with the possibility of a generous return on his payments if needed during his lifetime.

This intricate policy is complicated in moral terms by its effective exclusion of Molly. This detail provides an echo of Shakespeare's infamous will and, by extension, the theories of paternity posited by Stephen in 'Scylla and Charybdis'. The policy prioritises Milly in a way that rarely occurs on a textual level; Katherine Ryan sees this moment as a means of including her within a broader narrative of paternity, directly linking Milly with "Bloom's male lineage" (Ryan 31). Significantly, this link between father and daughter is effected by the exclusion of Molly, who would not directly benefit from the policy held with the ironically-named Scottish Widows. This exclusion suggests its own degree of speculation, namely on the fragility of the marriage, but also indirectly on the mother-daughter relationship, and the presumption that Milly would use such a windfall to assist her mother financially. Therefore, although Milly's position as beneficiary to the policy represents a decisive act on Bloom's part, it also defers a substantial degree of moral responsibility to Milly herself. This incorporation within the Bloom lineage combines

financial and moral inheritance, conferring not just the potential for monetary gain, but also the ethical trappings of money, upon Milly.

The dense knot of factors affecting Bloom's personal finances demonstrate the centrality of money to his family, indeed his whole world. Bloom's management of his oikos is a defining character trait, just as Stephen's profligacy is an integral part of his portrayal. The money questions of *Ulysses* refer back to the broadest themes of the novel, while also nesting those themes within the wider economy. Although Dublin in 1904 is far from the heights reached by capitalism later in the twentieth-century, its inchoate monetary sphere nevertheless allows globalisation to be seen in its infancy, with Bloom and Stephen two of its nascent subjects. The development of these ideas is taken to an extreme by DeLillo, who depicts an economic sphere where finance capitalism has conquered much of the world and is probing its farthest limits, taking the economic values found in an inchoate form in *Ulysses* and demonstrating their ultimate development and even their possible disintegration.

Disaster Capitalism: DeLillo and Money in the Age of Late Capitalism

"It's cyber-capital that creates the future." (*C*: 79).

If the economic dimension of *Ulysses* is defined by the uneven development of modern capitalism in its earliest flickerings, DeLillo's late writing shows the inequalities of an economic world that has developed beyond recognition. While the uneven development of 1904 can be attributed to the novelty of the globalised capitalism, DeLillo depicts a development which has overreached itself to the point of virtual disintegration, leading to a virulent strain of finance capitalism that is precipitated by permanent crisis. The condition of crisis developed in Don DeLillo's late fiction is manifold, but its centrifugal force is financial crisis. This theme is most strongly felt in *Cosmopolis*, which depicts a stock market crash in miniature, but the ripple effects of economic crises are felt throughout DeLillo's oeuvre; this theme is intensified with the aftermath of the 2008 crisis, and subsequent years of economic and political instability in much of the world. With the global economy undergoing turmoil on an unprecedented scale in response to the coronavirus pandemic, the present moment offers an opportunity to reflect on the cultural responses to economic crisis that defined the literary culture of the 2000s and 2010s. As a writer who has always displayed a fascination with the mechanics of capitalism, DeLillo's work over this period provides a valuable window into the relationship between economics and culture as literature moves from a representation of the *effects* of economics to a more direct critical engagement with economic forces.

One of the most prominent themes in twenty-first century economic criticism is the probing of the limits of capitalism, and the reports of its death, which are greatly exaggerated; DeLillo's exploration of capitalism in this period is imbued with Thanatos, seen in a variety of guises, from the economic and corporeal collapse of *Cosmopolis* to the future-oriented state of *Zero K*, in

which the quest for immortality necessitates death and comes at great monetary expense. This often illusory death drive is a defining feature of neoliberalism, an economic ideology which has remade much of culture and society in its image, and which is predicated on extremes of accumulation, inequality and volatility. These Thanatic impulses are a necessary structural feature of capitalism run amok, in which excess must be shed to maintain the illusion of permanent growth; booms require busts, producing the endless oscillations of market volatility that have defined the neoliberal period in economics. By pitting these economic drives against equally strong currents like disasters (in *Falling Man*) and the inevitability of human death (in a number of late novels but especially *Zero K*), DeLillo exposes the weaknesses and flaws in economic structures, perhaps even allowing the death of this particularly virulent strain of capitalism to be glimpsed.

The term 'late capitalism' (and the concomitant concept of 'lateness' within an economic sphere) originated in the work of the Frankfurt School; even Fredric Jameson, who may be credited with introducing the concept into critical theory, acknowledges his debt to the work of earlier theorists such as Theodor Adorno. The persistence of the term is troublesome, not least because capitalism is not necessarily a moribund form. This poses an additional problem in temporalizing the concept of 'late capitalism': when Adorno and Jameson discuss capitalism, they are clearly engaging with two extremely different economic, cultural and political worlds. Nevertheless, despite these issues, the term also allows for a degree of dialogue to be staged between critiques of capitalism from a number of ideological perspectives and historical periods. Through the commonalities formed, a broad-ranging critique of capitalism across several periods of great transformation can begin to be made.

Therefore, while it is difficult to form a generic definition of 'late capitalism', such a definition may still be inferred from the attributes and inflections attached to the term in various uses. Ernest Mandel develops an uncommonly concise understanding of the term, affording it historiographical specificity:

> Late capitalism is the epoch in history of the development of the
> capitalist mode of production in which the contradiction between the
> growth of the forces of production and the survival of the capitalist
> relations of production assumes an explosive form. This contradiction
> leads to a spreading crisis of these relations of production. (Mandel
> 562)

This strain of capitalism is dependent on the supporting structure of contradictions, in which "the contradiction between the increasing objective socialisation of labour and the further continuance of private appropriation" (Ibid. 565) adds another layer of complexity. Mandel's 'lateness' implies a belief that these contradictions are fundamentally unsustainable, yet the intensification of these processes shows no sign of abating. Although post-publication events do not bear any weight on Mandel's theory, they do problematise his terminology, ultimately highlighting one of the foremost shortcomings of Marxist historiography: its tendency to view capitalism as a form which is bound to be superseded. On the contrary, the work of Giovanni Arrighi demonstrates that historical economic forms often develop in a cyclical fashion predicated on the flexibility afforded by technological developments. Although 'late capitalism' is by no means an exclusively Marxist term, this significant critical base is impaired by the implication that lateness equates to moribundity.

In Fredric Jameson's hands, the concept of late capitalism takes on a greater nuance. Jameson takes the term as inherited from the work of Frankfurt School theorists, particularly Theodor Adorno; he notes that Adorno often uses 'late capitalism' in a rather euphemistic way, invoking a sense of totality that is more evocatively rendered through his phrase 'die verwaltete Welt' or 'the managed world' (Jameson, *Late Marxism* 29). This totality is imbued in the style of Adorno's writing, leading Jameson to conclude that "Adorno's 'theories' of late capitalism are inseparable from what we may call the 'totality-effect' in his writing and *Darstellung* [representation]" (Ibid. 31). For Adorno, this totalising quality is the defining feature of late capitalism: in *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Adorno and Horkheimer claim that under late

capitalism, "the enthronement of the means as an end […] is tantamount to open insanity." (Horkheimer and Adorno 54) This capitalism is not necessarily 'late' in temporal terms, but rather in its proximity to a final form that denies any possibility of escape. Later in his career, Adorno began to deploy the term in a slightly different light. In 'Late Capitalism or Industrial Society?' it is used to refer to consumerism as opposed to industrial capitalism, albeit with the cautionary note that the terms are not mutually exclusive, nor are they interchangeable (Adorno, Late Capitalism or Industrial Society?). Discussing the transformation of capitalism in the 1960s, Adorno begins to formulate a critique of proto-neoliberalism, claiming "The model of capitalism [as discussed by Marx] never applied so purely as its liberal apologists wished to think." (Ibid.) The conflict between notions of market independence and the necessity for the state to intervene in a crisis is significant to Adorno's critique. "In interventionism the power of resistance of the system has confirmed itself, indirectly in the theory of economic crisis; the transition to domination independent of market forces is its telos." (Ibid.) This is very close to the central paradox of neoliberalism's relationship to the state. Ultimately, while Adorno does impinge on the specifics of neoliberalism in his definition of late capitalism, his concept of 'lateness' is still anchored to the sense of capitalism reaching a definitive form, even if this does not necessarily lead to a revolutionary postscript.

The weight of Adorno's usage imposes itself in the title of Jameson's most well-known work, *Postmodernism, or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. It is impossible to condense Jameson's argument into a concise form, but the thrust of the text is that the economic and cultural structures of globalisation create the kind of totality that allows for 'late capitalism' to appear. In his historicisation of these conditions, Jameson addresses a very different concept of history to Mandel, discerning an "inverted millenarianism" (Jameson, *Postmodernism* 1) that treads closer to Francis Fukuyama's 'end of history' than to any form of dialectical materialism. Although Jameson is ultimately critical of the theoretical naivety in seeing capitalism as the end point of historical processes, he also strays from premature diagnoses of its

condition as terminal. His exploration of neoliberalism, postmodernism and postmodernity as interlinked and immanent forces begins to crystallise a clearer theoretical concept of lateness that does not make presuppositions about what follows the 'late'.

The September 11th attacks form a significant moment in conceptualising late capitalism, creating a disturbingly literal sense of capitalism as a dying force. Although DeLillo's essay on the subject asserts that the primary target of the attacks "was not the world economy" ('ITROTF'), they still enacted a temporary weakening of the global economy, which returned in a more potent form seven years later. Despite this prelude to the events of 2008 and 2009 forming something of a crash *avant la lettre*, it also opens up the idea of late capitalism to a less speculative and more immanent discourse. The introduction of this spectre of death is different to the Thanatos which has always underpinned economic transactions, producing a direct systemic threat as opposed to the more personal, psychological presence of Thanatic impulses. It is within these shadows that lateness makes itself felt; the totality implied by Jameson and Adorno has now acquired a sense of its own death.

Despite the problems with historicising late capitalism, it possesses a distinctive historical resonance. One of the defining traits of neoliberalism is a tendency towards uneven geographical development, partly because most countries have not adopted neoliberal policies wholesale, but also because of the complexities of history itself. Harvey's example of events in the former Soviet Union after the collapse of communism demonstrates this:

> Wholesale changes in the wake of crises (such as the collapse of the Soviet Union) can be followed by slow reversals as the unpalatable aspects of neoliberalism become more evident. And in the struggle to restore or establish a distinctive upper-class power all manner of twists and turns occur as political powers change hands and as the instruments of influence are weakened here or strengthened there. (Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* 87)

This notion of uneven development is by no means a novel trait; after all, the Dublin of *Ulysses* is a prime example of a city bisected by economic divisions that modulate the experience of modernity, but what is peculiarly neoliberal is the negotiation between global and local politics in shaping this uneven development. Late capitalism occupies a more nuanced position, in which every corner of the globe is open to the profits and losses of neoliberalism, but in which inequalities on class lines are profound. This totalised form of capitalism does not display uneven geographical development as much as uneven social development.

A historical counterpoint to any theory of late capitalism is provided by Arrighi, who places neoliberalism within the same framework of financial expansion that has been repeatedly pursued since the Renaissance.

> The scale, scope, and technical sophistication of the current financial expansion are, of course, much greater than those of previous financial expansions. But the greater scale, scope, and technical sophistication are nothing but the continuation of a well-established tendency of the longue durée of historical capitalism towards the formation of ever more powerful blocs of governmental and business organizations as leading agencies of capital accumulation on a world scale. (Arrighi 309)

This view challenges both classical Marxist notions of an end to capitalism and theories which perceive the present moment to be one of infinity. Nevertheless, there is a strand within Arrighi's argument which develops on themes of totality, not least because the powerful blocs referred to here take on an unprecedently large scale. The premise of expansion is nothing new, but the scale of the expansion dwarfs any previous periods of financialisation, allowing the illusion of totality to appear within the grasp of the current financial system. Consequent threats to exhaust economic and natural resources suggest the possibility of capitalism simply running out of territory for further expansion, bringing 'lateness' within sight.

Through these various connected definitions, late capitalism may be distinguished from neoliberalism. While neoliberalism is strongly associated with the regulation of and response to crises, the intensification of a sense of crisis is a distinctive trait of late capitalism; the "explosive form" (Mandel 562) referred to by Mandel is distinct from the drive towards continuity and perpetual growth held (at least on a theoretical level) by neoliberal doctrine. For Harvey, the appeal of neoliberalism to capitalists and politicians alike is largely derived from its role as a "potential antidote to threats to the capitalist social order and as a solution to capitalism's ills." (Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* 19) This idealistic base – encapsulated in the values of the Mont Pelerin Society[9] (Ibid. 20-21) – has been eroded by the reality of economic turbulence and social conflict, leaving a jaded husk that largely functions to paper over the cracks of capitalism. A similar process has taken place in the cultural and political offshoots of neoliberalism, as Harvey notes: "Any political movement that holds individual freedoms to be sacrosanct is vulnerable to incorporation into the neoliberal fold. […] Values of individual freedom and social justice are not, however, necessarily compatible." (Ibid. 41) Although neoliberalism has subsumed seemingly contradictory political and economic movements, the underlying tensions brought by this process of assimilation have caused the perpetual conflict of late capitalism, jeopardising the future of neoliberalism altogether.

Performance Art on the Market in *The Body Artist*

In each of DeLillo's post-*Underworld* novels, death is a central theme; while I will address this in temporal terms in a subsequent chapter, this focus on death also has clear implications for the economic bent of these novels. Even in *The Body Artist*, the least economically engaged of these works, the possibility of art in the aftermath of death is explored, providing more than a hint of the fecundity of an artistic landscape no longer beholden to

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[9] The group founded in 1947 by Friedrich von Hayek, based on principles of classical liberalism and personal freedom.

neoliberalism. This short novel presents two Thanatic visions: the suicide of Rey Robles and its emotional and artistic aftermath, as seen in the response of his wife Lauren Hartke, who brings her life – and art – on a trajectory towards self-erasure, becoming "a body artist who tries to shake off the body – hers anyway." (*TBA*: 110) This deathward movement is both a parallel of neoliberalism and a rejection of an economically determined way of life. The process of accumulation is reversed in Lauren's dissipation of worldly goods and, eventually, of self: after contemplating her desperate financial state, of "loans outstanding, accounts in arrears and taxes long overdue" (*TBA*: 101), Lauren engages in a similar process of bodily disintegration, beginning "to eat less herself." (Ibid.) By inverting the process of accumulation that defines neoliberalism, an escape mechanism can be constructed, albeit one which runs the risk of personal ruin, either through financial evisceration or, in this case, starvation.

In a novel which renders emotional states concrete through corporeal forms – particularly through Mr Tuttle, a disturbingly odd man whose presence Laura Di Prete considers a "bizarre corporealization of inarticulate grief" (Di Prete 505) – bodily processes of accumulation and dissipation similarly stand for their equivalents in broader realms like economics. This use of the body as a vector for many other forces allows us to consider the economic dimension to *The Body Artist*, not least as there is considerable critical weight supporting the connection between economics and corporeality[10]. DeLillo's sparse prose forms another movement in this direction, reducing the expansivity of *Underworld* to such an avowedly minimalistic novel. This minimalism is figured in the brevity of the novel but also in its style, which David Cowart calls a "weave of repetition-with-incremental-difference," (Cowart, *The Physics of Language* 206) foregrounding problems of language and retreating to a world of silence. The resulting prose is far removed from the excessive,

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[10] A strong example is provided by Georges Bataille, who discussed the consonances between sexual and monetary themes in works such as *The Accursed Share*. Bataille's extended organic analogy treats wealth and accumulation as intrinsically linked to "the play of energy on the surface of the globe" (Bataille 21), a quasi-natural force akin to sexual reproduction (Ibid. 35). This libidinal force drives the concept of luxury and, ultimately, growth. In both sexual and non-sexual terms, Bataille's understanding of economics is largely derived from its relationship to the disjecta of the body.

hyperbolic style of much postmodern writing, instead producing a modality that forms a retreat from the noise, chaos and perpetual motion of the neoliberal age.

DeLillo's aesthetic reach to the postdiluvian moment develops its first notions of lateness or even 'postness', a concept which is glimpsed several times in DeLillo's late work, here. Contact with Mr Tuttle allows Lauren to encounter an extralinguistic state that could even be considered post-language, but which nevertheless facilitates some form of communication:

> She was laughing but he was not. It came out of him nonstop and it wasn't schizophrenic speech or the whoop of rippling bodies shocked by God. He sat pale and still. She watched him. It was pure chant, transparent, or was he saying something to her? She felt an elation that made it hard for her to listen carefully. Was he telling her what it is like to be him, to live in his body and mind? She tried to hear this but could not. The words ran on, sensuous and empty, but she wanted him to laugh with her, to follow her out of herself. (*TBA*: 79)

Lauren's confusion is derived from the apparent lack of semantic content, which nevertheless gestures towards some kind of extralinguistic meaning that she cannot quite comprehend. It is only through the process of artistic creation that Lauren begins to reach some form of understanding, eventually transforming Tuttle's speech and movements into the performance piece *Body Time*. The performance, "sneaked into town for three nights, unadvertised except by word of mouth" (*TBA*: 110), manipulates its source material for artistic rather than commercial gain, avowedly situating itself beyond the bounds of monetised art. Performance art necessarily inhabits a different financial space to painting, sculpture and installation art, its finite duration denying it the opportunity to involved in any exchange, ultimately preventing it from being commodified to the same degree as physical artworks. The necessity for a commodity to endure at least long enough that it may be viably traded is not present in ephemeral acts such as performance art, denying one of the core tenets of the commodity. While this does not

allow performance art to entirely escape economic currents, it at least prevents it from attaining the same degree of economic cachet as painting or sculpture.

The reproduction of performance art faces challenges that in turn prevent performances from becoming physical commodities. This unreproducible quality complicates previous theories of artistic reproduction and commodification such as Walter Benjamin's seminal essay 'The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction', finding a new means of denying the "simultaneous reception by large numbers of people" (Benjamin 249) that Benjamin sees as reconfiguring the public's relationship to the work of art. The physical presence of performance art is dependent on presence in a specific place at a specific time, creating a time-limited version of what Benjamin considers to be the auratic presence of art, the intangible quality that is lost through technological reproduction (Ibid. 233). In the case of *Body Time*, this aura is defined less by the class and economic connotations suggested by Benjamin's rubric, and more by the specific physical presence conveyed in the piece, a presence so dependent on intangible attributes that it could not be accurately conveyed by any representational medium.

In its return to the auratic level, *Body Time* forces its audience to invest emotionally and temporally, rather than financially; in Mariella Chapman's review of the piece, we are told "Hartke clearly wanted her audience to feel time go by, viscerally, even painfully." (*TBA*: 110) This pain is the admission price for a piece which cannot be recorded or purchased in any meaningful way, the ultimate signal that the piece is a means of enacting the decommodification of art by removing it from the anchors of money and language, returning the artwork to a plane of pure feeling that can only be truly felt in one place at one time. The priority afforded to corporeal sensations in *The Body Artist* places art in a domain which cannot be readily colonised by economic forces, creating a pure, irreproducible aura that can only exist in the here and now. The great irony of performance art is that its rise is an adjunct of an intensification of consumerism and the development of digital technologies of replication, allowing art to escape the mechanisms

of capitalism at a time when those means and the ideologies that underpin them appear to be at their zenith.

Through the aesthetic portal opened by Lauren, DeLillo begins to develop a vision of art beyond capitalism. This new world in turn calls for a new critical paradigm, one which builds on the insights of Benjamin's influential essay, but which ultimately develops a post-Benjaminian strand of thought fit to approach an aesthetic field that has exceeded the limitations imposed by capitalism. While Benjamin focuses on the reproduction of paintings and the increasingly dominant position of cinema in the 1920s and 1930s, subsequent media have developed different relationships to capitalism, with television and then digital media advancing forms of consumer culture that were alien to Benjamin. The interactivity of these media offers new possibilities for the democratisation of culture, but it also forces artists, audiences and consumers to inhabit the same space with the same horizons. In his response to Benjamin, Harvey identifies concomitant social formations, namely "the kind of circularity within the cultural mass which brings together producers held in thrall by pure money power on the one hand, and on the other hand relatively affluent consumers" (Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity* 348); this circular formation defines mass culture in postmodernity.

The unadvertised, time-specific nature of *Body Time* forms a counterpoint to this increasing sense of interactivity, demanding its audience attend on the terms of the artwork rather than their own convenience. This uncompromising approach transcends modernism and postmodernism alike, severing the link between art and capital to produce a work that is purely auratic. In this context, it is the shedding of financial and material trappings by the increasingly ascetic Lauren that permits this artistic paradigm to be entered. Her recession of self is a matter of becoming, a process which eventually leads to the creation of *Body Time*: "This was her work, to disappear from all her former venues of aspect and bearing and to become a blankness, a body slate erased of every past resemblance." (*TBA*: 89) The genesis of the piece stems from a long process of dissipation, culminating in an artwork which exists beyond any tangible economic space. Although it is

through *Body Time* that the transcendence of economics is made possible, the relationship between art and capital is a central theme throughout *The Body Artist*. Its earliest scenes of Rey and Lauren sharing breakfast recall Robert Filliou's *Video Breakfasting Together, If You Wish*, a Fluxus video art piece that creates a collective space beyond social and political stratification[11]; the sharing of a newspaper gestures towards a similar theme in DeLillo's novel (*TBA*: 4). Likewise, in Filliou's work, a newspaper is shared between the artist and his implied viewer as a demonstration of solidarity. As Marc James Léger claims, Filliou's piece "enacts in the form of a conversation a shift from political to poetical economy." (Léger 64) A similar theme is appropriated by DeLillo in his own breakfast scene, although this is undercut by the ironic presence of the newspaper, which injects a degree of economic materiality into the relationship, not least because it is noted that "They shared the newspaper but it was actually, unspokenly, hers." (*TBA*: 4)

The move from the economic plane that takes place across the scope of the novel is enacted through Lauren's asceticism, ultimately transcending not just material goods themselves but also the economic relations that they define. Considering the increasing immateriality of economic structures in the age of flexible accumulation, it is significant that Lauren achieves this through an artwork which maintains its physical integrity, rather than working within a digital medium which would be subject to its own commodification. Through its maintenance of the auratic dimension without succumbing to a form which can be commodified, *Body Talk* maintains the autonomy of art.

Financialisation and the Virtual in *Cosmopolis*

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[11] Natilee Harren notes that even at their most material, Fluxus works aim to disrupt commodification:

> As art objects, their preservation is always frustrated by the body's trace. [...] They pose an attack on the commodity that magnetizes use-value and exchange-value and that models – through a deprivileging of materiality that is paradoxically highly material – associative, connective modes of thought (Harren 44).

Cosmopolis provides DeLillo's most sustained engagement with finance. In this novel of the 2008 financial crisis *avant la lettre*, DeLillo addresses a paradigm in which cyber-capital is the dominant mode of financial operation, threatening to drive the entire capitalist system into destruction through its excesses. Published in 2003, *Cosmopolis* advances an economic argument so ahead of its time that it was only in the light of the 2008 market crash that its initially poor critical standing began to be reconsidered (Kavanagh 28). Written in the interstice between the dot-com bubble and September 11th attacks on one hand, and the cataclysm of 2008 on the other, the novel's focus on finance was unfashionable, perhaps even anachronistic, yet DeLillo's remarkable gift for quasi-oracular thought allowed it to return to the fore as a chronicle of the dominant form of finance capitalism in the early twenty-first century.

Like *The Body Artist*, *Cosmopolis* progresses on a path towards immateriality; however, a complicating factor is found in the parallel trajectory of Benno Levin, a disgruntled former employee of Eric Packer who attempts to reconstitute some semblance of a material reality through his increasingly ascetic lifestyle. By acting as a disruptive presence in Packer's life, Levin disrupts a form that is itself predicated on disruption (currency trading that allows Packer to profit from disasters). This in turn reflects the position of technocentric finance capitalism, a bastardised economic form that has ended capitalism's reliance on labour and physical production. This has shifted the epicentre of economic activity from the sphere of production to the market, yet this market space has become increasingly unstable. In the aftermath of the Brexit referendum, for example, the exchange rate of the British pound varied by up to 7.5% within a single month (Georgiadis); volatility of this nature is amplified by the increasing importance of currency markets. It is in this unpredictable area that Packer makes (and loses) his fortune.

Volatility is an intrinsic part of currency markets, and this volatility has only increased over time. Arrighi argues that this move to market instability, precipitated by the end of foreign capital controls in the United States in 1974, actually drove the process of financialisation;

the breakdown of the regime of fixed exchange rates added a new momentum to the financial expansion by increasing the risks and uncertainty of the commercial-industrial activities of corporate capital. Under the regime of fixed exchange rates, corporate capital was already engaged in currency trade and speculation (Arrighi 320).

This propelled the tandem movements of financialisation and globalisation, forcing large companies to engage in currency speculation, eventually diversifying geographically in order to maintain balance on the shifting sands of currency markets (Ibid. 321). The superficial weaknesses of finance capitalism ultimately underline its strengths: its mutability, its ability to transcend boundaries, and its immateriality.

The unpredictability of finance capitalism necessitates a new set of theoretical responses. Byung-Chul Han explains this in relation to classical Marxism:

> Capitalism can always escape into the future precisely because it harbours permanent and inherent contradictions. Accordingly, industrial capitalism has now *mutated* into neoliberalism and financial capitalism, which are implementing a post-industrial, immaterial mode of production – instead of turning into communism. (Han 5)

Extreme mutability is capitalism's greatest strength and with the increasing volatility of markets, its mutations[12] are becoming increasingly frequent in response to internal contradictions and external threats. The speed of change invoked here has created a challenging cultural and critical environment, in which it is virtually impossible for those responding to finance capitalism to react in time; this makes *Cosmopolis* all the more remarkable for its prescience. The sense that finance has exceeded cultural representation is underlined by the speed with which critical responses become obsolete. In *The Condition of Postmodernity*, Harvey notes that "we still live, in the West, in a society where production for profit remains the basic organizing principle

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[12] Jameson uses the analogy of a virus, explaining capitalism's development as "something like an epidemic […] a rash of epidemics, an epidemic of epidemics." (Jameson, *The Cultural Turn* 140)

of economic life." (Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity* 121) At the time of writing (the turn of the 1990s), this truth seemed self-evident, yet the increasing proximity between new technological forms and finance have since rendered this proposition increasingly moribund. Although Harvey's account of change is enclosed within the same economic paradigm as our current world (the domain of financial globalisation opened up by the demise of the gold standard in 1971), fundamental details of Harvey's account like capital's relationship to production and labour have been rendered obsolete, the rapid mutations of finance capitalism creating drastically different landscapes over relatively short periods of time.

This eternally changing, immaterial sphere is the backdrop for Packer's financial activities in *Cosmopolis*. Eric Packer's advisor Vija Kinski underlines the future-oriented temporal arrow of this specific form of capitalism: "It's cyber-capital that creates the future." (*C*: 79) Packer's enormous wealth is the fruit of currency trading, specifically involving Packer's apparent ability to predict political and economic events that will shape the market. On one particularly chaotic day in global events, in which the director of the International Monetary Fund has been assassinated (*C*: 33), the sheer volatility of this modus operandi is immediately clear. What separates Packer from most later participants in the arena of cyber trading is that his decisions are made by himself and a small group of advisors, rather than the algorithmic methods used by many traders. With his trades conducted through a mobile phone, "the roll and flip of data on a screen […] figural diagrams that [bring] organic patterns into play" (*C*: 24) connect Packer to his money, a human connection that has since been severed by the dominance of high-frequency trading, when "markets left bustling exchange floors for computer data centres," (Meyer, Bullock and Rennison) reducing trading to a series of algorithms capable of moving significant investments in a matter of nanoseconds and pushing traders into an arms-race where technological improvements allowed reductions in latency, bringing enormous dividends. Although Packer is not a high-frequency trader, his work is so imbued in the relationship between time, technology and finance that his operations allow a

glimpse of current, digital trends in an early, inchoate form. Of particular significance here is the link between speed and volatility, identified by the *Financial Times* as a connection which peaked around the 2008 crisis, with "furious price swings" (Ibid.); as in Packer's life, dramatic gains necessitate the possibility of equally dramatic losses. This is finance capitalism at its most plastic: creating the illusion of endless possibilities through the second-by-second reshaping of the market, while maintaining enough of a threat of loss to prevent its outer limits from ever being truly reached.

Data produces a thin illusion of democracy, a renewed horizon of possibility that is predicated by technology. The democracy offered by statistics is an idea that was also attractive to Enlightenment thinkers like Rousseau. However, as Han indicates, this impulse was quickly killed off by Romanticism, and the democracy it provides is one "without discourse or communication." (Han 74) *Cosmopolis* presents a sense of the stores of data that drive neoliberalism's engine. The novel quickly establishes the "Patterns, ratios, indexes, whole maps of information" that imbue "meaning in the world." (*C*: 14) This range of financial data forms the graphical representation of dematerialised economies; the 'meaning' conferred is only useful inasmuch as belief is maintained in the phantasmagorical world of finance. This illusion of meaning is debunked by Han, who claims data is "blind to the event" and "blind to the future too." (Han 76) Therefore, while data may be useful in representing patterns, it has no relation to actual events, or to the possible changes of the future. This blindness becomes apparent as the financial crisis of *Cosmopolis* unfolds.

As a writer focused on the event and noted for bringing significant moments in modern American history into the frame of his fiction, DeLillo creates a means to circumvent this blindness. John Marks compares DeLillo to the film director Michelangelo Antonioni, claiming in the work of both "The actual event, the incident that occurred, can be dispensed with, in favour of a sort of immanent event which is contained in the waiting, the boredom, the emptiness of the landscape." (Marks 83-84) While the visualisations of financial capitalism are blind to the events that they attempt to represent,

DeLillo focuses on the microscopic details of events, particularly in their build-up, allowing them to play in slow motion. The comparison to Antonioni, a director noted for his slow-paced films, is apt; Antonioni addresses finance in *L'eclisse*, in which a stockbroker's lust for money and material goods puts pressure on his relationship[13]. In response to the pace of financial life, the film's final statement is one of silence. A similar effect of deceleration and close focus is achieved in *Cosmopolis*. Despite the novel's events unfolding rapidly, almost in the manner of a news ticker, it is interspersed with sections narrated by Benno Levin, a would-be assassin who attempts to alter the temporal frame of the world around him. Levin's eye for minute details is such that he believes he "could spend weeks trying to describe" (*C*: 55) a small sound made by Eric Packer. He considers recording every detail of "the literature of a life awake and asleep […] all the pitiful habits and concealments." (*C*: 61) All of these barely perceptible acts form a part of the immanent pre-event described by Marks.

The difficulty of conceptualising this distinctly immaterial form in concrete terms has marred not only attempts at constructing an economically-based critique of contemporary finance capitalism, but also at its representation in literature. Shonkwiler uses the term 'financial sublime' to refer to the aestheticization of finance that complicates this highly abstracted domain, the "range of mystifications of capital - technological, political, and otherwise - that make it difficult or impossible to distinguish the actuality of money from the increasing unreality of global capitalism." (Shonkwiler, 'Don DeLillo's Financial Sublime' 249) *Cosmopolis* is perhaps the canonical example of the financial sublime in literary action;

> Yet however ironic this representation of the sublime in DeLillo's text, it cannot be easily de-abstracted or otherwise unmasked, since it stands in for precisely those virtual systems that, in a global

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[13] The film concludes with a long, wordless sequence that shows the deserted streets of Rome, including numerous shots of the modernist EUR district, punctuated with natural imagery like trickling water and the wind whistling through trees.

information economy, increasingly evade recognition or accountability. (Ibid. 250)

Although Packer's position as a synecdoche for finance makes the metaphorical implications clear within the novel, as Shonkwiler suggests, there is a core of abstraction that cannot be fully tamed by DeLillo's ironic style. The specific dynamics of currency trading – money in one form standing in for money in another form – underline the difficulty of reifying this abstraction into literature (or any other form of representation for that matter). Finance capitalism cannot be readily transformed into any aesthetic form because it is already extremely aestheticised.

The heavily metaphorical language used to describe Packer's relationship to finance often invokes nature; in one nested section, graphic representations of markets appear to him as "birdwing and chambered shell […] The heave of the biosphere. Our bodies and oceans were here, knowable and whole." (*C*: 24) These organic analogies are somewhat jarring in the context of such a digitalised domain, but aside from creating a warped poetry out of Packer's chrematistic obsession, they ultimately underscore the difficulty of representing forces which are by definition unrepresentable. Packer is so entrenched in the world without end of finance capitalism that the data which represent money are symbiotic with nature in his internal mythology, the borders between finance and the world (and, by extension, representation and the thing represented) having been entirely eroded.

The collapse of metaphor and reference into a singularity reflects the 'transeconomics' alluded to by Baudrillard in his essay 'After the Orgy', a piece which bleakly declares the end of possibility with the conclusion of the 'orgy' of postmodernity falling into a state of "total metonymy" (Baudrillard, *The Transparency of Evil* 8), where everything is collapsed into a porous, aestheticized singularity. This defines the fourth – viral – stage added to Baudrillard's system of value, progressing beyond the previous model of use-value, exchange-value, and sign-value, allowing this new, transeconomic domain to be considered at a remove from symbolic exchange. This collapsed,

totalising metonymy is evident in Packer's life and language, accounting for the often peculiar analogies drawn between nature, data, technology and finance in *Cosmopolis*.

With the possibilities of metaphor seemingly exhausted (despite their ubiquity), art finds itself in a similar position, ultimately defined by its relationship to an increasingly amorphous capitalism. For Baudrillard, the aestheticisation of all life is paralleled by the subordination of art to economic structures.

> It is often said that the West's great undertaking is the commercialization of the whole world, the hitching of the fate of everything to the fate of the commodity. That great undertaking will turn out rather to have been the aestheticization of the whole world - its cosmopolitan spectacularization, its transformation into images, its semiological organization. What we are witnessing, beyond the materialist rule of the commodity, is a semio-urgy of everything by means of advertising, the media, or images. No matter how marginal, or banal, or even obscene it may be, everything is subject to aestheticization, culturalization, museumification. Everything is said, everything is exposed, everything acquires the force, or the manner, of a sign. The system runs less on the surplus-value of the commodity than on the aesthetic surplus-value of the sign (Ibid. 16).

In *Cosmopolis*, the aestheticised world of finance collides with the financialised world of aesthetics in Packer's prominent display of his tastes: the minimalism of Erik Satie, the muted abstraction of Marc Rothko, and the Sufi-influenced music of the fictional rapper Brutha Fez. Rothko forms the apex point between capital and art in the novel, in Packer's ludicrous ambition to purchase the Rothko Chapel, a secular haven located in Texas and containing multiple Rothko paintings. Despite the clear logistical issues, Packer wishes to purchase the Chapel and move it intact to his New York apartment (*C*: 27) Although this is an impossible task, the proximity of art and money in Packer's life make it seem almost viable; if it is possible to perceive

an aesthetics of finance, is it also possible to invert this process and turn any artwork into a commodity? The crude reduction of a work of such intangible brilliance to its arbitrary monetary value reflects Baudrillard's assertion: everything is called into signification and, ultimately, into a system of value.

These aesthetic considerations shape the world of *Cosmopolis*, which Shonkwiler sees as less a critique of neoliberalism than

> the withering of these frames of critique in the face of this new cognition of the market [...] As wealth comes and goes in the blink of a cursor, DeLillo suggests, our representational techniques may be limited to historicizing the forms of alienation that are produced by such contemporary cultural fantasies of global technocapitalism (Shonkwiler, 'Don DeLillo's Financial Sublime' 254-255).

The mutations of capitalism have left little for critical perspectives to grasp, the amorphousness of its form evading critical capture. This parallels the artistic shifts suggested by Baudrillard; as Kinski states, "Money has lost its narrative quality the way painting did once upon a time. Money is talking to itself." (*C*: 77) This almost aphoristic quote touches on the movement towards abstraction that reconciles both art and finance. Mark Rothko, whose abstract work marked a break with figurative expressionism, is a useful touchstone here; although Packer's interest in art is largely predicated on its economic worth, it is suggestive that he chooses to pursue the work of a key figure in abstract painting. The break with narrative suggested by Kinski is also significant, not least as it can be used to understand the position of *Cosmopolis* within DeLillo's oeuvre. After the publication of *Underworld* in 1998, DeLillo's work shifted to produce short, self-contained novels; the historical conditions that allowed for an epic like *Underworld* to be produced had changed so radically by the dawn of the new millennium that the narrative potential of history had withered away to nothing, leaving only the moment. The sense of immediacy provided by *Cosmopolis* barely allows the pressure of history to be palpated, instead locating its events within an eternal present.

The rise of abstract art and eventual abstraction of history play a part in a cycle which ultimately hinges on the abstraction of money. In many respects, abstraction and financialisation are one and the same. In his discussion of financialisation, Campbell Jones sees this in ontological terms:

> The worlding of the world in terms of finance involves a process in which there is an indexing of 'all that is the case' around a transcendental that provides both measure and count. This ontological process of worlding takes place in the most mundane and practical measures or, more precisely, this is a world in which the mundane is also highly theoretical. Mathematical code and ideological presupposition are combined and recombined in new ways, calling into question the very value of their distinction. (C. Jones 31)

To structure a novel on economic lines, then, is to parallel this process, to collapse the distinction between data and ideology within a literary framework. Although *Cosmopolis* is suffused with irony, its structure is predicated on these terms. This is readily apparent in the parallel trajectories of Packer and his antagonist Levin, a hermetic figure who seeks to rid himself of all worldly goods; although Packer is originally aligned to a chrematistic path, he falls in step with Levin, joining his Thanatic trajectory to the novel's conclusion. Although the conclusion of the novel sees both men attempting to escape the domain of finance, albeit temporarily in Packer's case, the inevitability of death that intrudes at the end of the narrative is still subordinated to the economic losses suffered by Packer throughout the course of the day; it is only after Packer tells his wife "I lost all your money" (*C*: 177) that he returns to the corporeal level, first through sexual intercourse and then through violence. The conceit of money is needed to escape the economic, meaning even attempts to leave the world of finance are subject to financialisation, predicated on the trajectory of the market. For Packer, ontology itself is dependent on a relationship to finance.

The financial structure of Packer's life is seen in the way he uses data to attempt to quantify his own existence. Defined by his "asymmetrical prostate"

(*C*: 8) and "six percent body fat" (*C*: 111), Packer's reduction to the physical level is itself reduced to the representation of his body in statistical terms. This is hardly conducive to forming a stable narrative of self; as Han states, "Data and numbers are not narrative; they are additive. Meaning, on the other hand, is based on narration. Data simply fills up the senseless void." (Han 59) The emptied shell of a quantified body becomes a pure surface, containing the illusory depths created by statistics but no real interiority. Packer is reduced to his component parts, which somehow form a whole that is less than their sum. There is a striking irony here: the dematerialised realm of finance reduces individuals to their purely physical attributes, returning the focus to the physical materiality of the body, albeit through its representation in analogous terms to financial abstraction. This construction of a relationship between the corporeal viscera of life on one hand and the quantification of everything on the other establishes a theme of capitalism's capture of the body that has defined subsequent DeLillo novels, particularly the transcendental *Zero K*.

Like the technologies used to quantify Packer's self, this relationship is shown in an inchoate form in *Cosmopolis*, an antecedent of the later 'Quantified Self' movement, which is discussed in relation to the technological implications of *Cosmopolis* in another chapter. With the rest of existence almost completely colonised by capital and even resources like water commodified, the body is the last remaining battle ground. It is no coincidence that in Packer's attempts to regain a semblance of feeling, he aims to induce corporeal sensations, ultimately setting his trajectory towards sex, violence and ultimately death. It is only through the body that nature has a means of driving finance, rather than the other way around. In his confrontation with Packer, Levin explains this idea:

> You should have listened to your prostate. […] You tried to predict movements in the yen by drawing on patterns from nature. […] The way signals from a pulsar in deepest space follow classical number sequences, which in turn can describe the fluctuations of a given stock or currency. You showed me this. How market cycles can be

interchangeable with the time cycles of grasshopper breeding, wheat harvesting. You made this form of analysis horribly and sadistically precise. But you forgot something along the way. [...] The importance of the lopsided, the thing that's skewed a little. You were looking for balance, equal parts, equal sides. I know this. I know you. But you should have been tracking the yen in its tics and quirks. The little quirk. The misshape. (*C*: 199-200)

If the organic analogies that tether finance to mathematical and natural principles hold true, financial rules are subject to the same degree of aberration and mutation as any natural phenomenon. Levin's rebuke underlines the naivety of quantification, particularly when it presumes a degree of rationality or symmetry to forces which are inherently difficult or impossible to predict. The mathematics underpinning Packer's ontological economy are false, depending on presumptions rather than facts, as is underlined by the asymmetry which lurks within his own body. Like the body, financial systems contain inherent imperfections that cannot be mitigated by quantification.

While the shallowness of neoliberalism creates a singularity of data and the abstract substance it represents, the depths of the body attain a more mythical register in Packer's mind. His prostate issue invokes fear and fascination in equal measure: "His real doctor, Nevius, had used the word once, in palpation, without elaborating. He saw Nevius nearly every day but had never asked what the word implied." (*C*: 52) Without a diagnostic purpose, the knowledge that his prostate is asymmetrical denies Packer any true insight into his medical condition. This lack of knowledge propels Packer's obsession with his prostate:

> He felt a certain perverse reverence toward the word [asymmetry]. A fear of, a distance from. When he heard the word spoken in a context of urine and semen and when he thought of the word in the shadow of pissed pants, one, and limp-dick desolation, two, he was haunted to the point of superstitious silence. (*C*: 52-53)

With only imagined consequences to go by, the information is useless. In a financialised world where data is used to define and guide decision making, the incoherence produced by the knowledge of his prostate's asymmetry denies Packer anything other than a condemnation to worry. In this instance, knowledge does not confer power, instead confirming the primacy of uncontrollable natural forces. Although his body may be quantified, its physical properties are still largely beyond his control.

The return to the body effected in *Cosmopolis* complicates the understanding of financialisation as an inherently dematerialising process, raising the question of whether the inherently material qualities of the body provide a means of circumventing financialisation or merely connect it to the necessary physical infrastructure that is required to support any economic system. Christopher Breu argues for a materialist understanding of neoliberal capitalism. While acknowledging finance's retreat to the virtual, Breu emphasises the endurance of use-value throughout capitalism, arguing that

> the category of use value is resolutely material; indeed it inheres in the very physical body of the stuff we produce. The activities and products of financialization are as material, in this sense, as any other activity, even as we may have to distinguish between softer (say, digits on a computer screen) and more obdurate (say, the production of the built environment) forms of materiality as they relate to different forms of production. (Breu 170)

This in turn would permit a return to material considerations of the subject in relation to economic factors, as well as a move "toward considering the what that is after or beyond the subject." (Ibid. 171) In this attempt to reconfigure Marxian dialectics for the current phase of capitalism, the abstraction of finance is a complicating factor; Breu notes the "need to distinguish between forms of financialization that enable forms of production that satisfy more valuable human desires and needs and those that produce merely more money for the moneyed classes" (Ibid. 172), but this distinction does not account for the ties between consumerism and the proceeds of finance in this

system, nor the sheer scale of finance, which now overwhelmingly exceeds the capitalisation of trade in physical commodities. To fully explore the position of the subject in this system, these factors must be taken into account alongside the material substrate that has persisted from archaic capitalisms.

The figure of Packer allows the condensation of consumerist tendencies with the abstraction of financialisation, further complicating this attempt to return to dialectical materialism. Packer obsesses over the virtual, delighting in an economic system that has largely unmoored itself from physical reality, but he uses the fruits of this to participate in physical economies. The motif of Packer's limousine acts as a symbol of his wealth, connecting the gains in the immaterial sphere to finance to the physical goods they are used to purchase. Andrew Strombeck believes it is crucial to understand how subjects "borrow agency from the limousine and other material objects, particularly when such discourses seek to describe systems at a vast scale." (Strombeck 147-148) Through the cliched formulation of the limousine, DeLillo "ensures that much of the novel occurs on a very small scale, a move that seems designed […] to contrast with the vast world of cybercapitalism." (Ibid. 156) This play with scale ironically undercuts both the apparent omnipresence of finance and Packer's own agency. As Strombeck argues,

> The limousine, by virtue of its social prestige, ability to accommodate face-to-face conversations, technological sophistication, and physical separation from the driver (such that Packer can forget he exists), enables the authority Packer believes he possesses. Packer negotiates his identity within, through, and around the limousine. The limousine, then, serves as a constant reminder that Packer is not the abstracted being he claims to be; his agency is defined in relation to the car, and it may be that in some sense Packer only exists in relation to the car, his employees, and the financial instruments provided by the car's computers (Ibid. 157).

The limousine, therefore, is a vector for authority, but also a reminder of the materiality that capitalism still depends on.

Packer's overreliance on the limousine for communication, security and transport purposes reduces his autonomy; he requires this prothesis to make full use of the power conferred by his wealth. Similarly, the car forcefully makes the point that even the most immaterial financial structures are dependent on physical infrastructure. Even phenomena like high-frequency trading are predicated on technological developments, such as the development of fibre optic cables that allow almost instantaneous data transmission. With this in mind, there is a tight knot between physical production and immaterial finance, in which financial pressures drive the physical world, but finance ultimately requires that world to construct and support the technological basis for its existence. Despite the clear significance of the limousine as the embodiment of these forces, it is also an object that is mutable according to its geographic and ideological surroundings;

> [*Cosmopolis*] shows that there is nothing inevitable about the processing and distribution of the ideas in the limousine or elsewhere in DeLillo's work; the novel, with its focus on Packer's team and its detailed account of the limousine, suggests how much work is necessary for the kind of movements in scale propagated by Kinski and Packer. (Ibid. 158)

The underlying ideological, physical and mental labour of the novel is condensed in the limousine. This is particularly significant when Packer decides to follow it to its nocturnal storage space, wondering "Where are they parked at night?" (*C*: 171) The fiction of a fleet of limousines lying in a permanent state of readiness for wealthy individuals like Packer is unmasked at this point, leaving the stark reality: the limousine remains in an underground car park in Manhattan, while the driver returns home through "the stinking tunnel." (Ibid.) This childish question allows Packer to begin to interrogate the material disjecta that enables finance to exist, unveiling some of the fetishistic falsehoods of capitalism as they appear to him, a cossetted

billionaire living much of his life in a virtual kingdom of his own making. This unveiling is necessary for his entrance into the material existence that takes over the closing pages of the novel.

Virtual Potlatch: Money and Thanatos

In the renewed state of materiality of the novel's conclusion, Packer manages to effect a more permanent inversion of his chrematism, instead sending his fortune – and himself – on a path to obliteration. Even on this course, however, the logic of finance is intact. In his terminal conversation with Levin, Packer's thoughts take on a quasi-anthropological tone: "Even when you self-destruct, you want to fail more, lose more, die more than others, stink more than others. In the old tribes the chief who destroyed more of his property than the other chiefs was the most powerful." (*C*: 193-194) The process of decumulation that is effected in the loss of Packer's fortune is now extended to his physical form, a literal embodiment of Thanatos, albeit one which forms a prosthesis of Packer's self as constructed through accumulation. By tethering this to economic giving, Packer appears to be alluding to the concept of potlatch as described by Bataille in *The Accursed Share*:

> The sovereign was merely the richest, but everyone according to his worth and his image – the rich, the nobles, the 'merchants' – had to answer to the same expectation. The festivals were an outpouring not only of blood but also of wealth in general. Each one contributed in proportion to his power and each one was offered the occasion to display his power (Bataille 64).

This Aztec ritual is linked to ideas of blood sacrifice, creating the connection between decumulation and death postulated by Packer. The performative disposal of wealth seen in potlatch takes place in a twenty-first century form in *Cosmopolis*, which sees a bonfire of immaterial assets that precedes the ultimate destruction of Packer's physical form. The extension of this

destructive framework to finance capitalism places it within a historical context that has a very long reach into the past, allowing the 'primitive' tendencies of earlier economic forms to be discerned beneath the digital gloss of finance.

In conjunction with his thoughts on potlatch, Packer contemplates the symbols of violence glimpsed in his everyday existence. A number of minor characters in the novel bear physical scars, as he observes.

> He was thinking of the bodyguard with the scarred face and air of close combat and the hard squat Slavic name, Danko, who'd fought in wars of ancestral blood. He was thinking of the Sikh with the missing finger, the driver he'd glimpsed when he shared a taxi with Elise, briefly, much earlier in the day, in the life, a time beyond memory nearly. He was thinking of Ibrahim Hamadou, his own driver, tortured for politics or religion or clan hatreds, a victim of rooted violence driven by the spirits of his enemies' forebears (*C*: 194).

Each of these men bears the hallmarks of past violence; in each of these cases, the process of corporeal decumulation has already begun. Although money is not cited as a driving force behind violence in these cases, the relationship between physical violence and economic dominance has already been alluded to in Packer's reference to potlatch. In Bataille's discussion, violence is central to ideas of accumulation and decumulation, and even to the display of wealth itself, evidenced by his suggestion that, at one point of Aztec history, the "cycle of sacrifices" culminated in the self-immolation of the sovereign (Bataille 63). This is destruction as performance, a competitive ritual which parallels the intensely competitive world of economic accumulation.

Despite the destruction imbued within certain forms of potlatch, Bataille notes that it operates on fundamentally economic principles, "acquisition is […] its ultimate purpose" (Ibid. 72). This works on several levels: in some instances, "what is appropriated in the squander is the prestige it gives to the squanderer", but in others "rank in society […] can be appropriated in the same way as a tool or a field." In the third kind, when there is a surplus of

resources in a given society, "the squandering of this surplus itself becomes an object of appropriation." (Ibid.) The exigencies of potlatch in an age of abundance are clearly significant to the events of *Cosmopolis*; if Packer gains anything from his downward trajectory, perhaps this third form of potlatch, appropriation via disposal of a surplus, accounts for what is earned.

Within this quasi-anthropological discourse, a sense of imperialism emerges. The Aztec rites discussed by Bataille were destroyed by Spanish colonialism and within *Cosmopolis*, all of the mutilated men are immigrants from non-western countries. It is within the context of a globalised finance capitalism that he engages in practices that resemble potlatch, significantly altering the cultural dynamics at play. With a certain degree of irony, DeLillo extends an anthropological field typically focused on pre-Columbian North and Central American civilisations to the lives of contemporary Americans, placing late capitalism in league with the moribund Aztec civilisation. Although it may be a stretch to attach the same connotations of imminent collapse to finance here, the comparison is nonetheless significant; both forms demonstrate the consequences of a society predicated on abundance, and the ultimate necessity of disposal as a means of regulating resources. In capitalism, this constitutes a ritualised form of the self-regulating tendencies required to ensure growth is sustainable, while providing the illusion of infinity.

For financial expansion to work, there must be territory to expand into; as with colonisation, some terrain must remain unconquered in order to preserve the possibility of further expansion. In the almost completely financialised world of *Cosmopolis*, the physical processes of life and death (and accompanying practices like funeral rites) stand for this sense of possibility, the unconquered territory that is required to create the future. This is explained concisely by Harvey, who states that capital has "to produce the conditions for its own continued expansion in advance of that expansion" (Harvey, *The Enigma of Capital* 67). Thus, the assertion of the physical realities of existence and death as the next barriers to be conquered suggests the next area for capitalism to hone in on. This is borne out in DeLillo's subsequent work, particularly *Zero K*, which shows the creation of a highly economically

valuable facility aimed at cryogenically freezing and ultimately reanimating the corpses of extremely wealthy individuals. Across DeLillo's late oeuvre, the broader movements of finance capitalism may be discerned, the tendencies seeded in one novel bearing fruit in another. Within *Cosmopolis*, the conditions that allow the transcendence of its own territory may already be discerned.

Although the pushing of boundaries remains integral to the framework of financialisation, neoliberalism introduces another means of achieving conquest, via what Harvey terms accumulation by dispossession. This sinister term covers the recession of rights as used to provoke the acquisition of material and even cultural property by the body of capitalism. Although Harvey's use of this term can be applied to numerous aspects of neoliberalism, it plays a particularly significant role in regulating crises; on a grand scale, this trait has been used to hold developing countries in debt, in turn redistributing money, power and resources to wealthier nations. This process is in effect in *Cosmopolis*, not least because of the presence of those physically damaged figures who have moved from the developing world to escape violence but have ended up servicing Eric Packer's needs, engaging in another kind of violence in the process.

Considering the violent forces which underpin globalisation, the *Cosmopolis* of the novel's title is one which is less an organically multicultural society than one based on forcible uprootings, on cultural imperialism and ultimately, on accumulation by dispossession. DeLillo's New York is strangely barren, barely papering over the cracks of inequality. Despite being resolutely rooted in the metropolis, the geographic terms of the novel are vague; for example, "The car crossed the avenue into the West Side and had to slow down at once, moving through the crosswalk against the light, shedding waves of pedestrians." (*C*: 63) Although it can be reasonably assumed that the avenue in question is Eighth Avenue or possibly Broadway, allowing some semblance of topographical specificity to be introduced, the lack of discernible landmarks empties the city of its character, reducing it to its grid structure, which itself is emptied of its defining names. All that remains is a faceless mass of

pedestrians walking aimlessly across the grid, reduced to tidal forces that are no match for the power of the automobile. In this neoliberal city, the impact of the limousine on the streetscape is such that its mere presence is enough to eviscerate its surroundings, asserting the dominance of the machine and its occupants over the dehumanised mass outside.

The evacuated streets and their dehumanised inhabitants reflect both the residue of previous forms of capitalism in the city and also of the underclass produced by uneven development. Fredric Jameson discusses how

> the totalizing account of the postmodern always included a space for various forms of oppositional culture: those of marginal groups, those of radically distinct residual or emergent cultural languages, their existence being already predicated by the necessarily uneven development of late capitalism, whose First World produces a Third World within itself by its own inner dynamic (Jameson, *Postmodernism* 159).

This creates a strong connection between the scenes of faceless crowds and the presence of migrants who bear the scars of distant warzones, two elements which ultimately derive from the structures required for people like Packer to attain such extremes of wealth. The presence of Benno Levin also brings this dynamic into play, albeit through Levin's deliberate attempts to remove himself from the economic domain altogether. These attempts extend to some oblique means of extracting himself from western culture altogether, diagnosing himself with culturally-specific syndromes, one of which "is agitated behaviour and extreme confusion. This is known in Haiti and East Africa as delirious gusts in translation." (*C*: 60) In this crass attempt to escape, however, Levin finds himself returned to globalised currents, claiming "When I try to suppress my anger, I suffer spells of *hwabyung* (Korea). This is cultural panic mainly, which I caught on the internet." (*C*: 56) It is only through the ultimate space of globalisation, the virtual world, that Levin is able to make such claims about himself, underlining the collapse of cultural boundaries precipitated by the internet. Even in his attempts to

transcend ideas of postmodernity altogether, Levin is a defining example of the postmodern subject, glued to the logic of neoliberalism.

Levin sheds his monetary and material skin in a manner that recalls both potlatch and its contemporary equivalents. Although his goal is to escape the economic, cultural and social terrain established by neoliberalism and postmodernity, as with his attempts at self-diagnosis, his behaviour only underlines the extent to which he is trapped within the logic of these systems. His Thanatic drive mirrors the path taken by Packer in the latter stages of the novel, a trajectory towards a permanent decumulation which decouples the self from its moorings in a financialised, virtual capitalism. Even within the management of his ever-dwindling resources, this logic is evident. Levin writes

> I still have my bank that I visit systematically to look at the last literal dollars remaining in my account. I do this for the ongoing psychology of it, to know I have money in an institution. And because cash machines have a charisma that still speaks to me (*C*: 60).

The money in question is caught between its physical substance and virtual referent; while the 'literal' dollars in question refer to hard cash, the 'charisma' of the ATM is conferred by its status on the boundary between physical and virtual. The physical presence of the object synecdochally represents the world of virtual capital it is used to access. At the same time, there is an anachronism to the cash machine that recalls its position in an earlier DeLillo novel: *White Noise*, which is notable for containing one of the earliest depictions of an ATM in literature. In *White Noise*, Jack Gladney senses "something of deep personal value, but not money, not that at all, had been authenticated and confirmed" (*WN*: 46) when using the machine.

Despite its role in measuring his collapse, Levin's use of the ATM ensures he is still engaged with finance capitalism, even in some form of labour in the act of checking his bank balance. The need to view this number through the prism of electronically-relayed data maintains his connection to broader structures, even allowing his view of the world to remain clouded by the logic of finance. He even maintains an unwitting role in the process of circulation, claiming "I

used to keep a roll of bills wrapped in a blue rubber-band that was stamped California Asparagus. That money is in circulation now, hand to hand, unsanitized." (*C*: 152) The seemingly endless recirculation of money ensures this part of Levin's life will continue to pass through many hands long after his death, conferring an economic immortality that outlasts the self. This outcome is the exact opposite of the immortality through obliteration desired by Packer, and a contradiction of the economic starvation Levin hopes to enact. The very fact that Levin's decline can be quantified demonstrates the degree to which his life remains anchored to the financial system.

The conclusion of *Cosmopolis* stages Packer's attempts to achieve an escape velocity that will see him leave this all-encompassing system, mirroring Levin's similar path to obliteration. For Packer, even this attempt to escape retains the logic of finance, encoded within its contradictory promise of death through immortality, a promise disrupted by the persistence of his corporeal form: "his pain interfered with his immortality." (C: 207) The ultimate ambition of Packer to transcend the physical is explained here:

> He'd always wanted to become quantum dust, transcending his body mass, the soft tissue over the bones, the muscle and fat. The idea was to live outside the given limits, in a chip, on a disk, as data, in whirl, in radiant spin, a consciousness saved from void. [...] It is happening now, an evolutionary advance that needed only the practical mapping of the nervous system onto digital memory. It would be the master thrust of cyber-capital, to extend the human experience toward infinity as a medium for corporate growth and investment, for the accumulation of profits and vigorous reinvestment (*C*: 206-207).

At first glance, Packer's decumulation appears to be a riposte to the financial system but as his thoughts of immortality develop, it becomes increasingly apparent that his ambition is to become something resembling the virtual forms of cyber-capital, an abstract entity. DeLillo returns to similar themes in *Zero K* with a closer focus on scientific potential, but within *Cosmopolis*, these ideas of transcendence are intrinsically tied to finance.

The move to abstraction seen in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries is manifold, characterised by Jameson as "the finance-capital moment of globalized society, the abstractions brought with it by cybernetic technology", but accompanied by "the expanded realm of cultural production" (Jameson, *The Cultural Turn* 143). This creates a triumvirate of technological, financial and cultural development, where the role of finance is prioritised, arguably driving the other two forces. In *Cosmopolis*, this abstracted domain is extended to encompass life itself, in this case through imagined technological advances and dubious interpretations of quantum physics that emphasise the potential for some form of human immortality outside the body. While these ideas are taken to deliberately absurd ends here, it is logically consistent that finance capitalism would eventually wish to push the boundaries of life itself. However, this comes with the substantial caveat that the expansions of finance are often illusory ones, mitigated by losses which ensure limits are never actually tested; the emergence of a significant financial crisis in the novel (largely driven by Packer's own actions) underlines the difficulty of getting to the stage where the conquest of finance is so complete, it is able to territorialise the field of human life itself.

The final line of the novel shows Packer "dead inside the crystal of his watch but still alive in original space, waiting for the shot [of Levin's gun] to sound." (*C*: 209) The temporal implications of this are addressed in another chapter but in economic terms, this conclusion ultimately relates the failure of financial conquest. Although a sense of quantum possibility is preserved, on the physical level, Packer is dead, unable to transcend the hard substance which constitutes his watch and, by extension, his connection to the world. What is retained in the *possibility* of immortality is not available to Packer, who simply does not have access to the physical or technological means necessary. Even within the highly abstract realm of finance capitalism, an underlying physical substrate is required to facilitate the construction and maintenance of abstract worlds. Without this, all finance can offer is illusory possibilities. The overdependence of financial markets on real-world events and products is a terminal weakness that is hard to overcome; even in the

intensely abstracted domain of currency trading, Packer's decisions are shaped by geopolitical factors and matters of literal life and death. The economic destruction wrought by the coronavirus pandemic demonstrates this: ultimately, finance is subordinate to natural forces, to such an extent that even a simple organism like a virus can wreak havoc on its abstract systems. Given this fragility, the grand ambitions of transcendence and immortality through the rules of finance are extremely unlikely to ever be realised.

Imagining the End of Capitalism: *Falling Man* and *Point Omega*

The September 11th attacks caused a seismic shift in the global order, demolishing the 'end of history' that was declared by Fukuyama during the collapse of Eastern European communism. The human effects of a disaster that caused thousands of deaths cannot be understated, but the economic implications of the attacks were also significant. In his earliest response to the attacks, 'In the Ruins of the Future', DeLillo views them as a terminal point for the permanent future of finance, ending the paradigm in which "Multinational corporations have come to seem more vital and influential than governments. The dramatic climb of the Dow and the speed of the internet summoned us all to live permanently in the future." ('ITROTF') Although the subsequent two decades have seen the intensification of the economic mode described here, the attacks have still shaped this process. The ensuing conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq saw governmental action take centre stage once again, eventually consolidating the relationship between neoliberalism and nation-states, while on a macroscopic level, the apparent invulnerability of the capitalist system was challenged by the sight of one of its totems being destroyed by terrorists. The New York skyline that had been made in the image of finance was permanently altered by forces of violence.

Within *Falling Man*, American identity is constructed in economic terms. One of the attackers, Hammad, attempts to adopt a stereotypically American lifestyle in order to better conceal his intentions. Although his language and

flying skills are imperfect, he manages to become "invisible" through his assimilation into the country's economic paradigm: "He had his Visa card, his frequent-flyer number. He had the use of the Mitsubishi." (*FM*: 171) The reconstruction of his identity as a consumer, passenger and motorist allows Hammad to hide in plain sight, invisible to civilians and security forces alike, even though this necessitates the use of readily traceable forms of identification such as credit cards. Hammad's attempt to assimilate by economic means inverts the conclusion of *Cosmopolis*, despite the fact that his role as a suicide attacker ultimately places him on an even more extreme trajectory than that of Levin and Packer.

The operation of terrorist organisations within the late capitalist system underlines the apparent total conquest achieved by neoliberalism. Despite the symbolism of the attacks, DeLillo understands September 11th in cultural rather than economic terms:

> the primary target of the men who attacked the Pentagon and the World Trade Centre was not the global economy. It was America that drew their fury. It was the high gloss of our modernity. It was the thrust of our technology. It was our perceived godlessness. It was the blunt force of our foreign policy. It was the power of American culture to penetrate every wall, home, life and mind ('ITROTF').

The particular modernity implied here is by no means devolved from economic factors, but nor is it a mere cipher for late capitalism. By drawing the distinction between the global economy and the specifically American qualities of modernity, DeLillo bifurcates the economic machinery of late capitalism from its cultural and political extensions, allowing a separation of late capitalism and postmodernity (or just 'modernity' in DeLillo's terms). This separation, however, comes with the significant caveat that the boundaries between economics, culture and politics are inherently porous in late capitalism; the relationship between the state and neoliberalism highlights this.

Harvey defines the theoretical role of the neoliberal state as favouring "strong individual private property rights, the rule of law, and the institutions of freely functioning markets and free trade." (Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* 64) Although this necessitates an internationalist approach, Harvey also notes the potential for alliances between neoliberals and nationalists (Ibid. 86), relationships which manifested themselves as neoconservatism and, more recently, in the so-called alt-right. For Harvey, the September 11th attacks were a defining moment in the course of this political development, leading to "the declaration of a permanent 'war on terror' that demanded militarization both at home and abroad to guarantee the security of the nation." (Ibid. 83) This naturally calls for an expanded role of the state, albeit within the global economic structure of neoliberalism. Within this sometimes awkward relationship between the national and international, then, to attack a symbol of global economic power within the world's biggest cultural, economic and political powerhouse is to situate the attack within the broad structures of late capitalism even if they are not the primary target.

In this post-September 11th revision of the neoliberal state, the state's display of military strength allows the process of financialisation to continue at an increased pace. Within this structural reshuffle, there was much unease. *Falling Man* depicts an anti-war protest in New York as a means of counteracting this new order. At the protest, Nina considers what has changed in the position of America:

> There is a word in German. *Gedankenübertragung*. This is the broadcasting of thoughts. We are all beginning to have this thought, of American irrelevance. It's a little bit like telepathy. Soon the day is coming when nobody has to think about America except for the danger it brings. It is losing the center. It becomes the center of its own shit. This is the only center it occupies (*FM*: 191).

This new position occupied by America does not indicate its retreat from the economic sphere but rather the absolute consolidation of economics into a

globalised mass, leaving the nation state to conduct its activities through the medium of warfare.

The economic undercurrents of the attack's aftermath are shifted away from New York by DeLillo; the parallel presence of Las Vegas as a gambling Mecca hints at the continuation of finance, its relentless cycles of gain and loss continuing unabated. In the latter stages of the novel, Terry and Keith encounter each other in a casino. Life in the casino is rooted to the logic of digital capitalism; as Terry says, "I'm in their computer. Everything's in their computer. Everything's entered. If you lift an item from the minibar and don't return it inside sixty seconds it's charged directly and simultaneously to your account." (*FM*: 199) The homogenised space encompassing hotel and casino allows for entire lives to be lived within this framework, quantified and financialised. The sheer regimentation of this world is a means of restoring structure after the singular trauma of the attacks, but it also indicates the survival of finance, recalling the 'managed world' that defines late capitalism for Adorno.

Gambling and finance act as parallel forces, not least because within DeLillo's aesthetic, both indicate extremes of accumulation and decumulation. This again reflects the "total metonymy" (Baudrillard, *The Transparency of Evil* 8) described by Baudrillard, the collapse of analogies into themselves; in this case, gambling *becomes* finance, not least because for Terry, it constitutes a professional endeavour, leaving him "finally making money, quiet amounts that began to show consistency." (*FM*: 197) Compared to the volatility seen in *Cosmopolis*, gambling may even form a more stable means of employment than trading, in Terry's case at least, producing a steady income. Nevertheless, more dangerous shadow worlds lurk beneath the high gloss of Las Vegas. Terry discusses "an underground game, private game, high stakes, select cities. It's like a forbidden religion springing up again." (*FM*: 202) This black-market version of poker negates the stability of the controlled environment provided by the casino, allowing for a greater potential for loss and gain, but also acting as a means of transcending the numbness of the casino. Keith's descent into gambling further underlines the controlled

atmosphere of the casino. Living his days in a cycle of "check-and-raise, wake-and-sleep", he wonders if "he was becoming a self-operating mechanism, like a humanoid robot that understands two hundred voice commands, far-seeing, touch-sensitive but totally, rigidly controllable." (*FM*: 226) It is the economic rationale of life in the casino that places Keith in this mechanical mindset, his post-traumatic ennui merging with the timeless, emotionless domain of money.

The change in economics after the attacks is largely a tonal shift, an intensification of seriousness, but also of automation, virtualisation and seemingly less human factors. Furthermore, the increasingly complex relationship between a militarised state and a globalised economy defined much of the 2000s in economics and politics, at least until the 2008 collapse. Less directly engaged with finance than *Falling Man*, *Point Omega* addresses the political implications of this with its focus on the former 'war advisor' Richard Elster. The most minimalist of DeLillo's late novels, *Point Omega* follows Elster far beyond the corridors of power to an austere retirement in the American South West. Despite its formal novelty in DeLillo's oeuvre, even surpassing *The Body Artist* in the asceticism of its prose; the conjunction of minimalism and political introspection puts it in league with earlier works such as *The Names* and *White Noise*, novels which Andrew Hoberek sees as using minimalism to explore the failures of modernisation and American foreign policy (Hoberek 102). This feeds into a narrative of societal and political decline, but also one of economic austerity in the post-2008 world.

Elster asserts the deficiency of representation, claiming "true life is not reducible to words spoken or written, not by anyone, ever." (*PO*: 21) This treats representation as a conversion, in which there is inherently a substantial loss of material; the substance of life is only ever truly glimpsed within the domain of lived experience. This early assertion immediately places Elster beyond any economic paradigm, considering the dependency of any form of economics – even something as fundamental as bartering – on the exchangeability of one substance with another. However, considering Elster's background as a military intellectual, his thoughts on the primacy of life do

not necessarily square with his own work. He notes that "War creates a closed world and not only for those in combat but for the plotters, the strategists. Except their war is acronyms, projections, contingencies, methodologies." (*PO*: 35) Despite the closed circuit of military thought, this also creates abstract possibilities: "There were times when no map existed to match the reality we were trying to create." (*PO* 36) This abstract dimension where the map and territory do not necessarily match parallels the illusory creations of finance, where materialisation and dematerialisation occur in tandem.

The questions of representation that preoccupy DeLillo and his characters throughout the novel underline the abstract, often unrepresentable world produced by financialisation. As in *Cosmopolis*, these issues are figured in terms of asymmetry, in this case through Elster's daughter Jessie.

> I reached over and took her hand, not sure why. I liked thinking of her with those old people, three innocents searching rooms for hours. She let me do it, giving no sign that she'd noticed. It was part of her asymmetry, the limp hand, blank face, and it did not necessarily make me think the moment might be extended to include other gestures, more intimate. (*PO*: 88)

Jessie's presence in the novel is haunting, cryptic and unknowable in the eyes of Elster and Finley, an unquantifiable mystery in the same vein as Packer's asymmetrical prostate. Aesthetically, this attempt to buck the logic of quantification is paralleled by DeLillo's ekphrastic writing on Douglas Gordon's *24 Hour Psycho*, which bookends the novel. David Cowart asserts that "DeLillo's fascination with the Gordon work begins with its repudiation of the twenty-four-frames-per-second straitjacket" (Cowart, 'The Lady Vanishes' 36), a gesture which opens cinema up to realms of perception that subvert the form, obliterating the narrative of Hitchcock's film to focus on "the depths that were possible in the slowing of motion," (*PO*: 16) the thoughts and ideas that slip through the cracks of cinematic form. The appearance of a figure who may be Jessie at a screening of *24 Hour Psycho* consolidates these two

mysteries at the novel's conclusion, providing a number of alternative paths that short-circuit the logic of neoliberalism.

Play with scale and speed are integral to *Point Omega*. The presence of *24 Hour Psycho* demonstrates an artistic commitment to temporal distortion, but the scale of the novel also acts as a counterpoint to the density of late capitalism and many of its aesthetic products. One of the shortest of DeLillo's late novels, David James considers it to be a 'crystalline novel', a term borrowed from Iris Murdoch, who used it in opposition to what she considered 'journalistic' fiction (James 847). James explores this term in relation to more recent writing, with *Point Omega* as a defining example:

> crystalline fiction is not so much being revived as transformed by postmillennial writers, simulating as they do the recognition of critical potential in the experiential immediacy and momentum of ordinary life. Dramatizing this kind of latent potentiality in quotidian actions and encounters entails in turn a significant refusal of demonstrative self-irony (Ibid. 849).

This willingness to challenge and even refuse self-irony places the crystalline novel in a difficult relationship to postmodern literature as a whole, returning instead to a counter-narrative of the quotidian that is heavily influenced by modernist writing, particularly *Ulysses*. What acted as a counterbalance to the forces of economic and political control in Joyce's Dublin achieves a similar effect in DeLillo's United States, an effective nullification through focus on the details of everyday life. The focus on the aftermath of the attacks distinguishes DeLillo from some of his counterparts in contemporary American literature: to give but two examples, Thomas Pynchon's *Bleeding Edge* contextualises September 11th within a broader narrative of violence, while Ottessa Moshfegh's *My Year of Rest and Relaxation* uses the attacks to symbolise its protagonist's re-entry into the world after a year of near-hibernation. These considered literary responses do not dwell on the ripple effects of trauma in the same way as DeLillo's account. In addition, broader cultural and theoretical responses may seem comparatively heavy-handed,

from the aggressive political analyses of Baudrillard and Žižek to televisual and cinematic representations, which usually either involved incorporating the World Trade Centre into a blunt symbolism, or simply removing it from extant footage.

While *Cosmopolis* shows the flaws in the financial system by ironically undercutting its protagonist, *Point Omega* bypasses these currents altogether by switching to a focus on what Murdoch and James term 'opacity' (Ibid. 861). This opacity – presented in *Point Omega* as the detachment of cause and effect – breaks down broader systems, forcing literature to operate on the molecular level. Despite its horrific reach into the world of warfare, even Elster's work has this detachment. Finley discusses 'Renditions', an essay by Elster which apparently discusses the extraordinary rendition of suspected terrorists. The conclusion of the essay imagines a future in which individuals listen "to secret tapes of the administration's crimes while others study electronic records on computer screens," (*PO*: 41-42) poring over the documentation of this brutal regime. For Elster and Finley, however, the fascination with this image does not lie in its wide-ranging political consequences or the human tragedy of "caged men being subjected to severe physical pain" (*PO*: 42), but in the etymology of the essay's title; "What lay between these sentences was a study of the word *rendition*, with references to Middle English, Old French, Vulgar Latin and other sources and origins." (Ibid.) Although this establishes a base of knowledge derived from linguistic studies, even this is compromised by Elster's comparison of "the evolution of a word to that of organic matter. […] He pointed out that words were not necessary to one's experience of the true life." (*PO*: 43) The arbitrariness of language allows a close focus on its details without any real insight into broader ideas necessarily being gleamed; Elster's discussion of semantics is a diversion, shifting the focus from questions of politics and morality to esoteric and unknowable musings on the nature of language.

The anti-epistemological turn of *Point Omega* complicates the relationship between art and finance. With quantification reigning supreme in finance

capitalism, it is reasonable to assume similar artistic currents forging parallel paths; in Jameson's terms,

> with the speculative turn, something like a realism returns to art: it is the realism of the image, however, the realism of the photograph and of so-called 'spectacle society'. This is now second-degree abstraction with a vengeance, in which only the simulacra of things can be called upon to take their place and offer their appearance. (Jameson, 'The Aesthetics of Singularity' 116)

This realism itself, however, is a highly malleable substance. While the primacy of language in *Point Omega* supports the relationship to simulacra posited by Jameson, Elster's suggestion of an extralinguistic means of viewing lived experience is more difficult to reconcile to this schema, transcending the inherent necessity of representation that defines finance capitalism. Jameson finds a financial basis for this transformation, based on the

> mutation of traditional insurance investment into what is called the derivative. This is indeed a true mutation, the transformation of the old futures market—a remnant of an agricultural sector even more archaic than heavy industries—into something not only rich and strange but also incomprehensible (Ibid. 117).

This investment necessitates a shift to the domain of fictitious capital, which Jameson sees as a purposefully confusing term that "shares with other such terms, like the imaginary, the ontological mystery of something which at the same time both is and is not: that is, it shares the mystery of the future" (Ibid. 118). Much as Elster conceives of fundamental concepts in terms of their linguistic position according to indeterminable pasts and futures, the derivative depends on its unknowable future attributes to attain its value. Despite their world-shaping abilities, both language and capital are located within the intangible here.

The dependence of *Point Omega*'s narrative on mystery is foregrounded, a constant metatextual backdrop: "Mystery had its truth, all the deeper for

being shapeless, an elusive meaning that might spare him [Elster] whatever explicit details would otherwise come to mind." (*PO*: 104) This mystery without truth is paralleled in the presence of *24 Hour Psycho*, which slows Hitchcock's film down to such a degree that its plot is virtually incomprehensible, reduced to its individual components. What DeLillo lays bare is that the almost alchemical workings of neoliberalism (and its concomitant socio-political forms) produce mysterious depths in order to divert attention from ugly details – in Elster's case, the human cost of the Iraq War, and his troubled relationship with his daughter. The ability to circumvent memory in order to create such mystery reflects the effects of economic and temporal singularity, suggested by Jameson as "the death of historicity; or to be more precise, the weakening of our phenomenological experience of past and future, the reduction of our temporality to the present of the body." (Jameson, 'The Aesthetics of Singularity' 128) A similar retreat to corporeality takes place in *Cosmopolis*, but it is only in *Point Omega* that DeLillo begins to explore the relationship between this physicality and more mysterious modes, presented in the disappearance of Jessie, whose apparent return at the novel's climax produces an unsolvable mystery. Rather than producing an effective mystery narrative, however, the novel serves to demonstrate the supporting illusion of mystery that is necessary to maintain financialised structures.

To return to Jameson's parallel, the derivative form is a useful way of considering what is concealed in the maintenance of this illusion. Derivatives do not even necessitate ownership of a particular asset; only "ownership of exposure to some quantifiable attribute of an asset" (Bryan and Rafferty 18). Given this peculiar position, Dick Bryan and Michael Rafferty explore derivatives as perhaps the defining financial medium of late capitalism and a driving force of market volatility. Despite the huge capitalisation of derivative markets, "Until recently, finance theory had cast derivatives in marginal terms" (Ibid. 61), their growth taking place under the radar of conventional economic theories. Furthermore, they pose problems given their role as fictional instruments:

The apparent unreality of financial derivatives is particularly associated with the notion of derivatives as duplicate or fictitious capital – that they are just multiple recordings of asset values that net to zero. This notion of fictitious capital builds on the understanding that derivatives markets are separated from trade in real markets, and are an unnecessary distraction from the real economy (Bryan and Rafferty 62).

This immateriality combined the increasing importance of derivatives since the 1980s underlines the dematerialisation of late capitalism. The ability to engage in a system at such a remove is reminiscent of Elster's squeamishness about war; despite laying the intellectual framework for conflict, he claims "I hate violence. I fear the thought of it, won't watch violent movies, turn away from news reports on television that show dead or wounded people." (*PO*: 63) This contradiction arises from the role of the virtual in mediating between bystanders in warfare and its actual combatants; a similar barrier exists as a bulwark between fictional capital and the real economy, yet in both cases, there is considerable potential for spillage. Much as derivatives have a significant impact on all forms of economic activity, Elster's remote decisions are a matter of life and death for many people.

With the lines blurred between physical reality and the virtual world, the prospect of an economically-driven movement towards singularity looms large. In Jameson's view, the temporal collapse brought about by the capitalisation of the future means this singularity has already been reached. As he explains,

> Today we no longer speak of monopolies but of transnational corporations, and our robber barons have mutated into the great financiers and bankers, themselves de-individualized by the massive institutions they manage. This is why, as our system becomes ever more abstract, it is appropriate to substitute a more abstract diagnosis, namely the displacement of time by space as a systemic dominant, and the effacement of traditional temporality by those

multiple forms of spatiality we call globalization. This is the framework
in which we can now review the fortunes of singularity as a cultural
and psychological experience, before passing on to its ultimate
realization in politics today (Jameson, 'The Aesthetics of Singularity'
128).

Point Omega exists at the apex point where this cultural and psychological
phenomenon begins to bleed into political consciousness. Elster's
dematerialised experience of bloody wars provides one means of looking at
this new political reality, a totalised discourse where the naval-gazing of an
American intellectual can unleash forces of violence on the other side of the
world. This is the ultimate consequence of the political and economic
paradigm precipitated by the September 11th attacks, a globalised, virtualised,
world where the obliteration of future and past has led to an eternal present,
beholden to the logic of finance capitalism in its most insidious form.

World Without End: Speculative Immortality in *Zero K*

If *Point Omega* constitutes DeLillo's earliest contact with ideas of singularity,
Zero K intensifies these thoughts to imagine a collapse of temporality that
permits immortality. While the implications of this novel are wide-ranging,
and the temporal and technological effects are addressed in other chapters, it
is important to understand how these notions of immortality and temporal
modulation are intrinsically tied to a financial framework. From its outset,
Zero K places money at its centre, not least because of the vast sums required
to access the cryogenic freezing facility that is at its heart. Given its
dependence on technologies that do not currently exist, the facility depends
on speculation, paralleling the mechanisms of finance in neoliberalism.

The goal of the process depicted in *Zero K* is the indefinite preservation of
bodies, allowing for subsequent technological developments to permit
reanimation. Despite taking place on the physical level, this process itself

constitutes a form of dematerialisation; this is made clear by a Joycean allusion:

> "And the real Artis? Where is she"
>
> "Drifting into the body of a baby boy. The son of local shepherders."
>
> "The word is *metempsychosis*." (*ZK*: 48)

Most of the process of preservation relies on unknowns, partially on the presumption of future technological advances, but also in terms of what would remain of subjectivity after a long period in suspended animation. The comparison to metempsychosis (a word used more accurately by DeLillo than Joyce) is an apt one, raising the question of what is lost and what is transferred in such a process. The broader ontological questions raised here fall beyond the remit of this thesis, but the notion of an intangible substance having some degree of transferable value duplicates the raison d'être of finance, particularly in areas of trading such as derivatives where physical commodities are absent even as a referential base.

Within the internal market of *Zero K*, the ultimate derivative refers to the survival of the body and the fungibility of the soul, not to any actual physical markers per se but to their potential. Despite the use of the body as the main vessel for achieving immortality in the novel, the body itself is largely a vector for more significant forces; as Artis says, "the optic nerve is not telling the full truth. We're seeing only imitations." (*ZK*: 45) The body is a flawed means of exploring the full breadth of consciousness and existence, lying in wait to be completed by protheses. This supplantation of human life and reality itself gives *Zero K* a mystical quality that complicates its technological and scientific bent. However, this sense of mysticism is itself an indicator of how deeply financialised the logic of the novel is, dependent on a blind faith in the future that has no material basis in the present moment. This quasi-religious element is laid bare by the presence of monastic cells and people wearing "monk's cloaks" (*ZK*: 43) in the Convergence, a gesture which makes the facility appear less a scientific enterprise than a cult.

Apparently stateless, the Convergence exists on the border between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan (*ZK*: 29), but is evidently a law unto itself, free of the obligations of nation states. The role of an autonomous corporation transcending state boundaries seems to indicate a new phase of capitalism. Bryan and Rafferty note that "The rise of the national economy as a discrete unit of accumulation and object of national policy […] gradually became incompatible with privileging the stability and scale of the global financial system" (Bryan and Rafferty 111), a problem which was resolved by the demise of the gold standard, creating a new approach where "Exchange rates were now the swing mechanism of national adjustment." (Ibid. 118) Paradoxical as it may seem, the age of financialisation that greatly intensified globalisation was actually ushered in by an increasing focus on the role of the state in finance. The disregard for this in the Convergence places it in a new system, where capitalism has abolished national boundaries altogether, leaving shadowy entities with apparent carte blanche to make their own rules. The activities in the Convergence take this idea to an absurd extent, attempting to transcend the rules of biology as if they were merely a matter of inconvenient bureaucracy.

The unspoken financial commitments required to attain access to the Convergence are apparent; it is not insignificant that Ross Lockhart's status as a billionaire gives him the rare power to privately enact world-shaping ideas. Lockhart is what is often pejoratively termed a disaster capitalist, having made his fortune "analysing the profit impact of natural disasters" (*ZK*: 14); this distinctively DeLillian detail acknowledges the fact that in some ways, human life is already dwarfed by the power of money. With this in mind, it is easy to see how someone of Lockhart's standing could begin to imagine that the power of money could also conquer death. This financialised approach to matters of life and death is most apparent when healthy individuals choose "to be taken early" (*ZK*: 140), essentially engaging in a form of speculation in which they hope that an early death will grant them future life. This is financialisation at its most extreme: human lives traded as instruments of speculation in a gamble with unimaginably high stakes.

With the body entirely captured by the logic of finance, *Zero K* concludes an engagement with the limits of corporeality that has marked much of DeLillo's career. As Laura Barrett puts it, "the Convergence maintains a sense of uncanny disorientation and insecurity through the intersection of reality and artifice." (Barrett 110) Despite the possibilities of transcendence offered by the Convergence, it is also a space where bodies are aestheticized and objectified. Preserved bodies are rendered as symbols (or "heralds" (*ZK*: 141) in the facility's internal language), shaved bare and turned into eerie figures that Jeff compares to "mannequins" (*ZK*: 232). The rise of the posthuman (or at least enhanced human) as a speculative asset has devalued living human bodies to such an extent that they become mere objects, devoid of their individuality or personality in the barren space of the Convergence.

In response to the transcendence offered by the Convergence, Barrett suggests that "Jeff and Artis seem to express two responses to the insecurity of being human" (Barrett 113), Jeff choosing to continue on his apparently rudderless path while Artis puts her faith in the possibilities offered by technology. Barrett views the dichotomy between the two in terms of scepticism; perhaps surprisingly, she concludes that Artis is the sceptic, given that her "discontentment with the transience and imperfections of life compels her to seek transcendence," (Ibid.) a position ultimately dependent on dissatisfaction with what Artis views as the artificial limits imposed on the human condition. By contrast, Jeff's refusal to entertain ideas of reanimation "is less a symptom of skepticism than an acceptance of the limits of the human condition" (Ibid. 114).

The blurred lines of scepticism and faith reflect some of the most pressing concerns around the relationship between technology and speculation. In its financial manifestation, this relationship has sometimes had disastrous consequences, such as the 'Flash Crash' of 2010, when "the largest and fastest swing ever" took place in the Dow Jones index, largely precipitated by high-frequency trading algorithms (Bridle 121). Although the cause of the crash is not fully understood, it is established that algorithmic trading was a significant part of it; as James Bridle explains,

regulators inspecting the records of the crash found that high-frequency traders massively exacerbated the price swings. […] While experienced market players might have been able to stabilise the crash by playing a longer game, the machines, faced with uncertainty, got out as soon as possible (Ibid. 122).

As this example from finance demonstrates, speculating on the abilities of technology requires a leap of faith that may not be rewarded. Despite the agency required to decide to cede power to technological forces, the subsequent unknowns ensure that this agency stops here. In *Zero K*, this leads to the development of reanimation technologies as a form of gambling on the future that actually undercuts human control in its attempts to assert the human domination of natural forces like death. As in finance, the potential of failure leaves the possibility of disastrous consequences ahead.

The possibilities (and limits) of life and finance exist in close proximity in the Convergence. When Ross toys with the idea of preserving his (healthy) body in order to join his (ill) wife Artis, his son considers the potential ulterior motives behind his wish to die. "Enormous frauds. Doesn't this happen all the time in your line of work? Investors get swindled. What else? Enormous sums of money get transferred illegally. What else? I don't know. But these are reasons, right, for a man to disappear." (*ZK*: 112) For Jeff Lockhart, these attempts to corrupt biological systems are in league with financial corruption, white collar crimes against nature. On the level of analogy, there is a degree of fluidity between biology and finance, reflecting the sheer flexibility of neoliberalism. However, while these forces are comparable on the metaphorical level, the physical realities of nature prevent life from ever truly attaining the status of a fungible asset.

Despite these problems, the ethos of *Zero K* is dependent on the commensurability of human life. This in turn puts it in league with the position of derivatives in the financial system. Explaining the central role of derivatives in the post-gold standard economy, Bryan and Rafferty state that:

The process of commensuration, in which spatial and temporal continuity in the measured value of capital is constructed, is the raison d'être for modern financial derivatives. Prices are anchored through the network of financial derivatives. And in so doing they help to provide continuity in the value of capital by trading a diverse range of contracts designed to specify or delimit the rate of conversion of one 'bit' of capital value (whether it be money or commodity and whatever its currency denomination and time specification) into another (Bryan and Rafferty 131).

Therefore, to facilitate the speculation that defines *Zero K*, there has to be a degree to which human life can be constructed, or at least reconstructed, allowing this spatial and temporal modulation to be played out on a biological level.

As in finance, the means by which this commensurability is achieved are numerical. Contemplating the "numbered levels" of the building that houses Zero K (*ZK*: 151), Jeff thinks of prime numbers, attempting to recall their definition. "My father was in a waking state of mindlapse, in retreat from his pain. I thought, Prime number. A positive integer not divisible. But what was the rest of it? What else about primes? What else about integers?" (Ibid.) Prime numbers are quirks in the numerical system, inbuilt aberrations that act as reminders of the baroque complexities of mathematical structures. The aesthetic application of prime numbers is often a gesture towards totality; for example, Olivier Messiaen's use of primes in assisting his compositional technique in pieces such as *Quatuor pour la fin du Temps* symbolises "the presence of God in creation" (Fallon 127). For DeLillo, similar themes (such as the presence of Teilhard de Chardin's Jesuit theology in *Point Omega*, which I will explore in a later chapter) gesture less towards the logic of creation than the singularity wrought by the ultimate expansion of finance. In *Zero K*, this expansion is so great that even the natural structures of mathematics are entwined with the logic of finance.

Outside the Convergence, the ubiquity of finance manifests itself in different ways. In New York, Jeff uses an ATM. The ATM is a force for maintaining order in the domain of money, despite bypassing the physical infrastructure of a bank. Jeff is perturbed by the fact that the machine dispenses his banknotes unevenly, leaving him turning some "upside down and others back to front to regularize the stack." (*ZK*: 197) For an automated process, this lack of symmetry is unacceptable to Jeff. He believes that the ATM "should deliver the money, my money, in an orderly format, ten bills, twenty dollars each bill, all bills face forward, face up, unsmudged money, sanitary money." (Ibid.) In lieu of this, the cash dispensed demonstrates the relatively chaotic workings of the monetary system to Jeff, particularly in that through their implicitly smudged and unsanitary nature, it is apparent that the banknotes have already passed through many hands. Through an act as simple as handling banknotes, the nature of money as exchangeable, promissory and ultimately transient, is laid bare. The money question in *Zero K* extends to imagining a future of speculation through the body yet despite this extension to speculative futures, the eternal issues of money as an ephemeral substance remain. The promissory qualities of money have not been modified by late capitalism; what has changed is the extension of monetary organs to enclose the whole world, and even immaterial forces, within their reach.

"Holding Water in your Hand": The Temporalities of *Ulysses*

"Language is the only thing capable of stopping the flow of time, because it exists in time, is made of time, yet it is eternal – or can be." Rachel Cusk, *Second Place* (Cusk 142)

"Proust returned to the *temps perdu*. Joyce never left them." Wyndham Lewis, *Time and Western Man* (Lewis 109)

Offering a unique perspective on the passage of time over one day in one city, *Ulysses* is perhaps the defining novel of modernist temporality. The curious historical position of *Ulysses* – set in 1904 but strongly influenced by developments which occurred right up to its publication in 1922 – allows it to occupy an unorthodox temporality, acting as something of a historical novel but also providing a sense of the contemporary world at the time of its publication. Although the news stories of June 16th 1904 loom large in the novel, it also contains spectral resonances of subsequent events, from the First World War to Ireland's struggle for independence. The enormous technological and economic changes that occurred in the eighteen-year gap between setting and publication also resonate in the pages of *Ulysses*, making it the chronicle of a hugely significant period in the development of a recognisably modern world. Despite this sense of development, the complex relationship between the novel's lengthy writing process and its historical setting has led to a number of anachronisms, gaps and omissions, all of which contribute to the temporal dimension opened up within its pages.

Time was increasingly contested in the early twentieth century, evading the grasp of physics, politics and philosophy alike as the distinctions between experiential time, natural time and official time became more apparent. Although the 1884 International Meridian Conference led to the development of an international standard of time zones centred on the Greenwich Meridian, this step towards uniformity only emphasised the ever-widening gap between the astronomical determinants of time and its manipulation to fit the neat

boundaries of political geography. Despite the conference's intention to simplify the practical application of time in relation to evolving technologies like telegraph and railway systems, the bifurcation of time on lines of natural time and clock time led to an increasing focus on the more elusive domain of experiential time, one of the defining features of modernist writing. While Joyce is no exception to this theme, his focus on experiential time is met by an awareness of alternative means of addressing temporality, and is often contrasted with natural time or clock time. One of the central means of approaching this conflict is through Joyce's references to the unusual temporal situation of Ireland, which maintained its own time zone until 1916.

Within *Ulysses*, this distorted temporal frame is greatly explored through the lens of parallax, a narrative technique which allows Joyce to play with notions of synchronicity and simultaneity while also engaging with notions of temporal contraction and dilation that demonstrate the subjectivity of time in experiential terms. In turn, this is filtered into the novel's dealings with memory and history, two strands which run throughout the text, creating numerous motifs and recurring images. This idea is developed to an especially strong degree when the personal and political traumas of Joyce's characters – and Ireland – are discussed, allowing an exploration of the relationship between trauma and temporality, particularly in the afterlife of devastating events such as bereavements, massacres and famines.

The presence of history in *Ulysses* takes place in both spectral and concrete terms, with ghostly resonances sharing a space with the statues that commemorate historical figures and events. This leads to a contestation of history and time that is enacted across the scope of Dublin, and even language itself, in the novel. Finally, as a significant case study in Joyce's experiments with temporal mimesis, 'Oxen of the Sun' must be considered. The chapter runs on two parallel timeframes: the literal birth of Mina Purefoy's baby and a metaphorical gestation of language that incorporates hundreds of years of literature. These events take place in the context of extreme temporal compression, demonstrating the fraught relationship between language, literary history and time.

Political Time, Natural Time, Experiential Time

The issues presented by the control of time in *Ulysses* reflect the importance of time in capitalist development. Christoph Asendorf argues that "The mechanical measurement of time by means of a clock is an expression of an abstraction in the perception of time. The organic cycle of natural movements has been taken up into that of the mechanical clockwork." (Asendorf 140) Although this process of abstraction has slowly advanced since the late medieval period, the new forms of labour and commerce created by industrialisation made it necessary to bring this framework "into general applicability." (Ibid. 141) These developments are intrinsically tied to the use of machines, both in the creation of newer, more accurate timekeeping methods and in their acceleration of work, producing leisure time "and turning the time won into disposable labour time." (Ibid. 144) The boundary between labour time and leisure time is eroded in Leopold Bloom's day; having been seen at work in 'Aeolus', he quickly switches his attentions to food in 'Lestrygonians', and he is not seen working again. Nevertheless, work returns in his thoughts almost immediately with the sight of the Hely's advertising men (*U*: 8.123-154). This indicates that, despite the division of time precipitated by industrialisation, time had acquired a certain fluidity by the beginning of the twentieth century. Indeed, Asendorf claims that "At the end of the first century of homogenized time [nineteenth century], there therefore comes a renewed deterioration of the idea of time; subjective experiential time (*Erlebniszeit*) and mechanical time stand in irreconcilable opposition." (Asendorf 152) This opposition is already beginning to erode by *Ulysses*, as is evidenced by the collapse of the work/leisure distinction in Bloom's day.

Asendorf uses Marcel Proust as an example of a writer who explores experiential time, treating time as an individual and sensory experience that constitutes the "sole guarantee of the memory of experiences." (Ibid.) Proust's time is bound not to the clock but to the experiences of his narrator Marcel; in the famous opening line of "Longtemps, je me suis couché de bonne heure,"

(Proust, *Du côté de chez Swann* 11) the time in question is completely generic and non-specific in terms of clock time, but is deeply revealing in terms of Marcel's personal timeframe[14]. For him, time is not delimited by the clock or the sun, but by his own store of memories. The primacy of experience that runs through the multiple volumes that follow is already asserted here in the fact that time is tied to individual memory, rather than mechanical or natural processes. This experience is, in turn, affected by its own temporal progressions; having experienced time differently in the seaside resort Balbec, Marcel says, "We are tireless redesigners of the space we live in; gradually […] habit relieves us of the need to experience." (Proust, *In the Shadow of Young Girls in Flower* 502) The rhythms of experience and habit produce their own temporal dimension.

Proust's experiential temporal frame is sometimes even directly contrasted with the increasingly rationalised timeframe of modernity:

> Since the existence of railways, the necessity of not missing the train has taught us to reckon the minutes, whereas among the ancient Romans, whose astronomy was not only more perfunctory but whose lives were less hurried, the notion, not of minutes but even of fixed hours of the day, scarcely existed (Proust, *Sodom and Gomorrah* 225).

For Proust, the regimentation of time is a facet of a historical and cultural specificity, while experience produces an alternative means of viewing time. These factors are underlined by the issues translators of Proust have faced, problems which begin with the deliberate ambiguity of his novel cycle's opening sentence. As Terence Kilmartin explains, "The choice of the perfect tense, what in French is called the passé composé, the most familiar and immediate form of the past, seems deliberately ambiguous; it leaves the reader in a state of uncertainty as to the narrator's position in time." (Kilmartin 136)

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[14] "For a long time, I went to bed early" (Proust, *The Way by Swann's* 7); the use of passé composé in the original presents a greater sense of temporal ambiguity and distortion than is evidenced in English translations.

This grammatical quirk allows the primacy of experience to become immediately apparent.

Although experience is also an important facet of *Ulysses*, it is frequently shaped by clock time. Various methods of telling the time intrude in the characters' consciousness. The use of a time-ball, a device which helped to spread standardised time, is identified by Bloom as one of them; in 'Lestrygonians', he notes "After one. Timeball on the ballastoffice is down. Dunsink time." (*U*: 8.109) Even with this mechanical method of timekeeping, Bloom identifies a degree of subjectivity. His awareness of the parameters of Dunsink time indicates that this particular time is bound to the local time zone and is not universal. When Bloom subsequently recalls that the ball actually falls "at Greenwich time," (*U*: 8.571) the distinction between local time and London time is made even more apparent. Danius claims "To move from Proust to Joyce, then, is to bear witness to a dialectical leap […] the forms of historical change that Proust's work reflects upon make themselves felt in the formal aspects of Joyce's novel." (Danius 183) While Proust *reflects* on the individual experience of time and memory, *Ulysses* presents the direct experience of time passing. In the quotidian minutiae of the novel, we see the unmediated experience of a day of life, rather than this experience being mediated through reflection. Marcel Brion explains this thus: "If time remains external to Proust, if he gives it an existence apart, isolated from his characters, for Joyce, on the contrary, it remains the inseparable factor, the primary element at the base of his work." (Brion 28-29) It is this immanence that defines the temporal sense of *Ulysses*.

The Ballast Office has an early resonance in Joyce's work: an appearance in *Stephen Hero*, in which the timepiece allows Stephen to contemplate the nature of quidditas, producing an epiphany.

> Imagine my glimpses at that clock as the gropings of a spiritual eye which seeks to adjust its vision to an exact focus. The moment the focus is reached the object is epiphanised. It is just in this epiphany that I find the third, the supreme quality of beauty (*SH*: 211).

Noting the peculiarity of applying such high aesthetic ideals to a mundane object, Hugh Kenner claims the clock "was perhaps the most looked-at object in all Dublin," an object so familiar to Dubliners that its physical qualities were all but indiscernible to them (Kenner 72). As a purely functional item, the clock does not easily acquire the aesthetic dimension established by Stephen; it is only once its form can be separated from its function that his epiphany becomes possible. Instead of looking for the time, Stephen looks at the clock as an autonomous object, independent of its context. This is the "intense instant of imagination," (*U*: 9.381) which Stephen sees as condensing future, present and past. The clock's timekeeping functions are subordinated to an aesthetic paradigm that produces its own transcendental time.

The time-ball's history demonstrates a shift in the perception of time. Although Bloom correctly recalls that the time-ball operates based on Greenwich Mean Time, this was not always the case. As Deborah Warner explains, at the start of its existence, the time-ball "dropped every day at 1:00 P.M., mean solar time as determined at the Dunsink Observatory." (Warner 861) This was modified in 1914, so an electric signal from the observatory relayed Greenwich Mean Time to the time-ball (Ibid. 862). Although the former circumstance is closer to local natural time, there is a still a discrepancy: Dunsink's location outside the city meant there was an offset of nineteen seconds between Dunsink time and solar time in Central Dublin (Ibid.). Even when a direct relationship to solar time is attempted, timekeeping measures are still a mere representation, susceptible to error and omission, and inherently an abstraction of natural phenomena.

The political control of time is linked to both imperial domination and economic control. In 'Aeolus', Professor MacHugh proclaims "I speak the tongue of a race the acme of whose mentality is the maxim: time is money. Material domination." (*U*: 7.555-57) Despite MacHugh's pomposity, his synthesis of British imperialism, capitalism and temporal control is extremely perceptive. Vanessa Ogle postulates a similar link. Discussing Britain's attempts to introduce a standardised time zone in colonial India, she notes the effect this change had on working hours. "While the Indian 'clerks' arrived daily between 10:00 and 11:00 a.m., their British 'officers' seldom showed up before 2:00 or

3:00 p.m." (Ogle 113) For the British Empire, time certainly was money, but it also acted as a force which could be used to suppress and control potentially rebellious local populations in order to maintain the political and economic status quo. Therefore, despite the overwrought tone of his rhetoric, MacHugh is right to emphasise the fact that mastery of time and material domination are intrinsically linked.

There is an acute political dimension to temporality, particularly in its standardised form. The rationalised system of time zones established by the International Meridian Conference handed political control of time to the western powers, implicitly subordinating other temporal experiences. Adam Barrows claims "With the advent of Greenwich time social temporality is degraded to a second-order reality, while the abstract, neutral, universal constant of Greenwich-based time is projected as an immutable law." (Barrows 30) In this assertion of a political time governed by western ideas of reason (and political mastery), colonial societies are forced to operate by the imperial rules of the clock.

The implications for Ireland are complex, and even among nationalists, there were a multitude of responses to the new ground of temporality precipitated by changes in the measurement and use of time. What is evident in many responses is the sense of inconvenience produced by time differences. Discussing the conference, *The Times* uses an apocryphal story of an Irishman to illustrate a wider point about temporal discrepancies. Having travelled to Liverpool on business and arrived late for an appointment, the man

> exhibited his watch in evidence of his punctuality, and when it was explained to him that he had local time, and that the sun rose half-an-hour later in Ireland than in England, he bitterly protested against the arrangement as another injustice to his bleeding country ('The conference which assembled yesterday' 9).

The man conflates the political control of time with natural time, despite the fact that his story is used to justify the politically-motivated standardisation of time. Furthermore, the International Meridian Conference's outcome did not

immediately change Ireland's time zone, and Dunsink time remained in force until 1916. While subject to imperial control, Ireland was denied the convenience of the prime meridian system. Although the Statutes (Definition of Time) Act 1880 had already provided for a singular British time zone based on Greenwich mean time and a singular Irish time zone based on Dunsink time, Ireland's temporal position remained problematic, particularly as it did not adequately reflect the lived experience of Irish people.

Joyce is acutely aware of the differences between natural time, clock time and experiential time. Bloom's time-ball error demonstrates the dichotomy between the British regime and the experience of Dubliners, creating a distorted temporal parallax that allows Britain and Ireland to play out two parallel but asynchronous timeframes. The sense of parallax is enhanced on a personal level by Bloom's subsequent exclamation "O rocks!" (*U*: 8.113) paralleling Molly's identical expression in 'Calypso' (*U*: 4.343). The abstraction of time by timepieces is also seen in *Ulysses*, to the extent that they sometimes cease to be clocks at all. In 'Circe', a cuckoo clock sounds "Cuckoo. Cuckoo. Cuckoo." (*U*: 15.1133-1135) This particular timepiece has lost all connection to not only nature but to time in general, instead taunting Bloom for his position as a cuckold. Of course, we can reasonably assume the clock *does* tell the time, but from Bloom's perspective, this meaning is lost; his semblance of time is almost entirely eroded by this stage of the novel, leaving him to experience it as an embodiment of his consciousness rather than an objective phenomenon. Bloom's individual response to the clock strips time of its objective qualities, returning it to a matter of his personal experience.

Even notwithstanding questions of consciousness, the flaws of mechanical timepieces are shown in *Ulysses*. In 'Lestrygonians', Bloom tries to check the time on a clock located on the roof of a bank, but his view is obstructed (*U*: 8.560-564). Instead, "The tip of his little finger blotted out the sun's disk," (*U*: 8.566) allowing him to use the position of the sun. Barrows claims "The bank's timepiece, signifying and regulating commerce and trade, is invisible to Bloom. He has no visual access to it and has to place his faith in its existence." (Barrows 116) The idea of the clock's existence (or at the very least accuracy) being

predicated on faith recalls the idea of money's value as something dependent on belief in its power; the fact that the clock in question is located on the roof of a bank is significant in leading us to this conclusion, drawing a comparison between time and money. Although there is a clear scientific basis for modern timekeeping methods, the possibility of error or failure is great enough that it is still merely a potentially inaccurate representation of astronomical time. In the absence of this representation, Bloom is forced to return to its source in nature.

A contrast to mechanical time is found in the "God's time" (*U*: 15.2191) of 'Circe'. The phrase finds a parallel in political debates surrounding the standardisation of time. During a debate on the Time (Ireland) Bill (subsequently Act) in the British parliament in 1916, the Irish Parliamentary Party MP Tim Healy claimed "It is called 'English' time, but it is no more English time than any other time. It is God's time." (HC Deb 17 August 1916 vol 85 cc2222-36) This claim for the universality of time was made in support of the bill, which proposed the abolition of Dunsink time and the assimilation of Ireland into Great Britain's time zone. There is a distinction between the two uses of the term 'God's time' here; while Healy uses it to advance a definition of time as politically neutral, it stands for a religious purpose above the idea of an objectified or mechanised time in 'Circe'. Despite this sense of a spiritual time that transcends human attempts to control time, it is given a reference on the clock – "12.25" (*U*: 15.2191). Even God is forced to operate by the rules of the clock, placing religion within the framework of rationalised time.

As the date of the Act suggests, the Easter[15] Rising was a substantial concern behind the change in time zone. The difficulty in organising British forces during the Rising demonstrated the difficulty in effective telegraph communication between Dublin and London, a difficulty which was partially attributed to the discrepancy in time zone. Aside from this practical concern, there is also a suggestion of punishment in the timing of the change, symbolically stripping

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[15] The calculation of Easter is the centre of an enduring chronometric debate, one which was of particular significance to the intellectual landscape of Ireland in the Middle Ages. This is alluded to in the "two easter island" (*FW*: 188.10-11) of *Finnegans Wake*.

Ireland of its own time. Despite this, as Healy's contribution suggests, Irish responses to the change were by no means politically homogenous. There were also more important considerations; the Dublin Reconstruction (Emergency Provisions) Bill was also proceeding through the House of Commons at the time and, as the *Freeman's Journal* reported, Edward Carson threatened to obstruct this significant piece of legislation unless Irish nationalist members dropped their opposition to the time zone change ('The Time Bill' 7). Although Carson denied this (HC Deb 17 August 1916 vol 85 cc2222-36), this intervention may have ensured passage of the bill, effectively restoring the party lines that had broken down over the issue.

Although the political resonance of "God's time" is clear, the significance of "12.25" is less so. The Time (Ireland) Act meant Ireland changed its clocks to 2.25 am on October 1st 1916; the "12" could simply be an error. Alternatively, it may indicate the time at which the action of 'Circe' takes place. In an article on Joyce's "time mind" in *Ulysses*, Harriet Blodgett argues that along with other temporal references in the chapter, this emphasises "the brevity of activities in this episode that is long in pages, but short in duration." (Blodgett 28) This places this cryptic example within the context of Joyce's play with time. There is, however, a complicating factor in this reading. Drafts indicate that "God's time" was originally "6.30." (Joyce, II.i.4 MS 36,639/5/B) This time is resistant to a political reading, and cannot possibly indicate the setting of 'Circe'. It would appear to be an almost entirely arbitrary reference, superseded by Joyce as his temporal imagination developed.

The Parallax of 'Wandering Rocks'

Simultaneity is literally impossible in the physical confines of a book, leaving its treatment in literature dependent on ideas of representation and approximation. In the case of *Ulysses*, the heavily controlled timeframe of 'Wandering Rocks' allows Joyce to extensively explore simultaneity. Within that chapter, parallax is used to create a sense of events occurring simultaneously rather than sequentially. This is often achieved through repetition, particularly

between the various interpolations which comprise the chapter. In the first section, "On Newcomen bridge the very reverent John Conmee S.J. of saint Francis Xavier's church, upper Gardiner street, stepped on to an outward bound tram." (*U*: 10.110-12) This image is duplicated in the subsequent section: "Father John Conmee stepped into the Dollymount tram on Newcomen bridge." (*U*: 10.213-14) The effects of parallax are abundantly clear in this example. While the same event is seen, the perspectival modulation between these two glimpses is apparent. While the first instance is more detailed in its depiction of Conmee, the second, pared-down example still adds a hitherto unmentioned fact: the destination of the tram. It is only by triangulating viewpoints that a fuller picture may be established[16]. This technique – which Luke Gibbons terms "narrative ellipsis" (Gibbons 170) – requires the use of the full spatiotemporal scope of the chapter to make events clear.

This subjective element is crucial to understanding Joyce's aesthetic of simultaneity: that the same events may be seen from multiple perspectives, appearing different from each of them. This creates a spatial relationship which inherently complicates the temporal dynamics at play. In 'Wandering Rocks', this is epitomised by the final interpolation, which stitches together images from all of the preceding sections to reconstruct the complete viceregal procession. This literary crescendo is largely composed of repeated images, ideas and characters, creating something out of what Gilles Deleuze terms the "synthesis of time" of repetition (Deleuze 70). Deleuze's views on time and repetition are consonant with the chapter's structure:

> Time is subjective, but in relation to the subjectivity of a passive subject. Passive synthesis or contraction is essentially asymmetrical: it goes from the past to the future in the present, thus from the particular to the general, thereby imparting direction to the arrow of time (Ibid. 71).

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[16] Clive Hart's work is of particular importance in characterising 'Wandering Rocks' in spatiotemporal terms. His ground-breaking reading of the chapter in *James Joyce's Ulysses: Critical Essays* has been the foundation of much critical thinking on 'Wandering Rocks' for over forty years.

This movement from the particular to the general is effected throughout 'Wandering Rocks', particularly in the incorporation of smaller units within the grand sweep of its final section.

Although the panoramic scope of this final interpolation severely reduces the glimpses of interiority that have defined the preceding sections, its ironic thrust nevertheless allows many voices to be heard through the clamour of the cavalcade. Simon Dedalus is seen covering his open fly after a trip to the greenhouse (*U*: 10.1200), while John Howard Parnell remains oblivious to the procession, engrossed in his chess game (U: 10.1226). After the viceroy is "smiled upon" (*U*: 10.1195) by the windows of the Patriotic Insurance Company, "From its sluice in Wood quay wall under Tom Devan's office Poddle river hung out in fealty a tongue of liquid sewage." (*U*: 10.1196-97) This gesture provides both an unsanitary riposte to unionist sycophancy and a counter-narrative to the grander (if equally fetid) Liffey. The viceroy remains oblivious to the true feelings of observers, leaving his perspective severely limited by comparison to the omniscient narrator of this section. Although the perspective occasionally switches to that of an observer (we briefly see the procession through the eyes of Dilly Dedalus, for example), the viceroy is denied the interiority offered to many Dubliners throughout the course of 'Wandering Rocks'. In this wide scheme of parallax, he is only ever the object, never the subject. While pauses in the narration allow us to see many figures in greater detail, the resumption of linearity in this final section denies the viceroy the perspective provided by the previous gestures towards simultaneity.

Through its densely multiperspectival framework, 'Wandering Rocks' forms a literary analogue to the panorama genre. Cleo Hanaway-Oakley explains that "Panoramas attempted to create visual versions of real cities or landscapes by providing all the different perspectives afforded by traversing the real space." (Hanaway-Oakley 97) Hanaway-Oakley notes the disorientating effect of panoramas on proprioception (Ibid. 98-99), an effect which also finds its analogue in 'Wandering Rocks'. The nonlinearity of the interpolations necessitates rereading to develop its sense of simultaneity, producing a similarly disorientating effect in readers. The necessity of reading non-

sequentially in order to make sense of this nonlinear narrative produces a sense of vertigo, "which parallels the vertigo experienced by panorama film-viewers." (Ibid. 102) The temporal object of the chapter extends the haptic confusion of panoramas to the scope of time, blurring the lines between events past, present and future across the interlocking interpolations of 'Wandering Rocks'.

One of the most effective (and disorientating) techniques used by Joyce to depict the simultaneous view of 'Wandering Rocks' is repetition. As has already been established, it is only at the chapter's conclusion that a full picture of its events can be reconstructed, and even then, this picture is ironically framed by the limited subjectivity of the viceroy. Within the chapter, repetition derails the sense of a linear sequence of events, but this is also achieved across the novel as a whole. 'Wandering Rocks' is by no means an isolated section of *Ulysses*, offering multiple connections within its interpolations, but also repeatedly referring to past events in the novel, and also gesturing towards the events of subsequent chapters. Recurring motifs like Stephen's "Agenbite of inwit" (*U*: 10.879) are strong currents in the chapter, but the subsequent chapter 'Sirens' is also presaged, with the "*basso profondo*" of Ben Dollard (*U*: 10.918) and the information that Blazes Boylan will be "in the Ormond at four." (*U*: 10.395) The final interpellation even provides a direct segue into 'Sirens', with the passage of "gold by bronze" (*U*: 10.1198) outside the Ormond Hotel; this image is glimpsed anew with the "Bronze by gold" hoofirons that open the next chapter (*U*: 11.1). Temporal parallax applies not only within the chapter, but more broadly to the chapter's position within the novel.

The idea of repetition representing simultaneity is imbued within the structure of *Ulysses*. The return to an earlier moment in the day at the beginning of 'Calypso' allows Bloom's timeframe to play out in parallel to Stephen's. Bloom's introduction begins the parallactic movements of the two characters which form the structural basis of most of the novel, until they converge into a united path towards its culmination. The final image of the viceregal cavalcade in 'Wandering Rocks' achieves a similar effect, albeit with its concluding unity concealing the political disunity of Dublin's residents. Even when used ironically, simultaneity is a force for unity; Henri Bergson defines it as "the

intersection of time and space." (Bergson, *Time and Free Will* 121) Within 'Wandering Rocks', the use of simultaneity allows a panoramic view across a variety of geographical and social spaces, a view which is permitted by this spatiotemporal intersection.

Like simultaneity, parallax is dependent on the relationship between time and space. Although typically considered a spatial phenomenon, Joyce's application of parallax to temporality challenges this idea, moving it closer to simultaneity as posited by Bergson. To consider Joyce's use of parallax, it is helpful to return to his sources for the idea. In Robert Stawell Ball's astronomical text *Story of the Heavens*, the observed parallax of a celestial object is used to calculate its distance (Ball 181-182). A similar definition is reached by Dionysius Lardner in *Handbook of Astronomy*, identified as a book on Bloom's shelf in 'Ithaca' by Hanaway-Oakley (Hanaway-Oakley 95). Lardner emphasises the importance of the position of the observer: "When a multitude of stationary objects are viewed at a distance, their relative position will depend on the position of the observer; and if the station of the observer be changed, a change in the relative position of the objects must be expected." (Lardner 119) The importance of the observer's position in parallax is mirrored by the subjective time explored in *Ulysses*.

The relationship developed between scientific and literary endeavour, and empirical and subjective observation, places the view of time produced by *Ulysses* in a complex position, itself the product of a parallax between the arts and the sciences. If we follow Ball's definition of parallax as a means of calculating astronomic distance relative to the observer, a similar process of calculation is afoot in terms of the distance between subjectivity and objectivity in *Ulysses*. This distance is continually recalibrated in the shifting style of narration that occurs throughout the novel, arguably measurable by shifting views of parallax.

Inchoate Memory: Ghosts and Trauma

In *Ulysses*, the presence and absence of memory allows a variety of alternative presents and futures to be imagined, both in personal and political terms. This is particularly potent when memories of the dead – especially Rudy Bloom, May Dedalus and Paddy Dignam – are invoked. These moments where memory is most profoundly foregrounded often include a collapse of temporality to briefly align the past and present. This effect is most prominently used in 'Circe', the novel's longest chapter in pages and lines used, and a chaotic space in which spatiotemporal rules are frequently broken. The increasing collapse of time in the chapter allows the ghostly figures of Stephen's mother and Bloom's son to briefly appear. Although formatted in the manner of a play script, 'Circe' could not be comfortably performed or read in real-time; at best, the hallucinatory conclusion of the chapter could be considered a simultaneous outpouring of chaos, which would produce considerable issues with an attempted staging. The Linati schema affords it the usual hour given to most episodes of *Ulysses*, yet its great length suggests a far longer expanse of time. For example, an RTÉ radio production of the entire novel timed to commemorate Joyce's centenary in 1982 took three hours and sixteen minutes to complete its rendition of the chapter. In its extreme length, 'Circe' conveys the interminable slowing of time precipitated by the fatigue and intoxication felt by its characters. Although this sense of fatigue is intensified by the tortuous prose of 'Eumaeus', it permits a form of temporal transgression here, by slowing the 'hour' of the chapter to fit the tired rhythms of Stephen and Bloom, while also affording time to lead the reader on digressions and fantasies.

Even within the spectral realm opened in 'Circe', temporal boundaries continue to erode. Stuck in the timelessness of death, Stephen's mother's concept of time continues to decay. She says to Stephen "Years and years I loved you, O, my son, my firstborn, when you lay in my womb." (*U*: 15.4203-4) No longer able to access the temporal markers available to the living, Mrs Dedalus recalls her first pregnancy as an indeterminate, lengthy period, clearly of great significance but with no reference to temporal specifics. Pregnancy maintains its own biological timeframe, which is no longer applicable to the ghostly form of

Stephen's mother as she appears in this posthumous guise. While this particular biological rhythm is absent, another one – death – is doomed to recur in this vision. Stephen hears his mother "*in the agony of her deathrattle*" (*U*: 15.4238) once again, her life after life becoming a death after death.

The uncomfortable presence of May Dedalus brings her son to the brink of emotional destruction, but it also poses an intellectual problem. Her reappearance replays a sequence of events from Stephen's gestation and birth to his mother's death, producing something akin to the eternal recurrence of the same explored by Friedrich Nietzsche. In *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, the eponymous protagonist encounters a group of animals, which tells him "Everything goes, everything comes back; the wheel of being rolls eternally. Everything dies, everything blossoms again, the year of being runs eternally." (Nietzsche 175) While Zarathustra experiences this sense of recurrence as a condemnation, this inverts Nietzsche's own treatment of the theme as a means of exploring the ethics of one's own life; as Sam Slote puts it, "If Nietzsche is the teacher of the eternal recurrence, then the character Zarathustra is a failed teacher of the same." (Slote, *Joyce's Nietzschean Ethics* 113) Stephen appears aligned to Zarathustra's perspective here; rather than taking the opportunity to reconsider his own ethical position, he is beset by terror. While he may be forgiven for showing fear at such a terrifying vision, Stephen's horror also indicates his discomfort with the course of his life thus far. When he attempts to beat the vision away by smashing a chandelier with his ashplant he only creates another ethical quandary, leaving Bloom to cover for him while he makes his escape from the brothel. Despite positing an aesthetic contingent on matricide, Stephen is unable to cope with his own feelings around his mother's death.

The looping, nonlinear time of eternal recurrence is intended as a thought experiment rather than a serious theory of temporality, but nevertheless, it poses issues for any theory of time or memory. For Stephen, it even asks questions of ontology, removing his presence from the present and reducing him to a sense of being that is chiefly constructed through prior experiences, particularly as the day grows long and his aesthetic sensibilities are dulled by

alcohol and fatigue. When the aesthetic apprehension that forms Stephen's primary connection to his surroundings wanes, he retreats into a world of memory. In this state, Stephen even takes on the past lives of others, restating Haines's previous comments in an argument with Private Carr: "History to blame. Fabled by mothers of memory." (*U*: 15.4371-72) Personal and national nightmares of history are reprised in this instant, in which both Stephen and Ireland are marooned in memory.

These seeds are sown in 'Telemachus', with the establishment of May Dedalus's death in the conversation between Stephen and Buck Mulligan. This scene sets numerous recurring themes into motion, including the Yeats poem 'Who Goes with Fergus' (*U*: 1.239-41) that is reprised at the culmination of 'Circe', and the motif of the "agenbite of inwit" (*U*: 1.481). Although these motifs are intrinsically tied to the traumatic memory of his mother's death, Stephen's attention is also drawn to the traumas of Irish history. A third significant motif, the "cracked lookingglass of a servant" (*U*: 1.146) that symbolises Irish art, begins to establish Stephen's relationship to this broader tradition of memory, trauma and history. The traumas discussed in 'Telemachus' ripple across the rest of the novel.

The traumatic memories which engulf Stephen are played out on a broader level in the historical frame of *Ulysses*. As I will discuss in relation to DeLillo's late work, the traumas of events filter into a reconfiguration of temporality for those who are living with the consequences of history. While the September 11th attacks constitute most of DeLillo's historical basis for this exploration, Joyce's desire to explore the Irish psyche forces him to incorporate the afterlives of numerous traumas, and even the traumatic rubric of colonialism, within his work. In an early confrontation with Deasy, Stephen defines history as "a nightmare from which I am trying to awake." (*U*: 2.377) This history is identified by Stephen as an intrinsic part of his identity; as he thinks in 'Proteus', "Famine, plague and slaughters. Their blood is in me, their lusts my waves." (*U*: 3.306-7) The inescapability of history is represented on a personal level by the agenbite of inwit which forms a continual backdrop for Stephen's thoughts, but on a national level, the ghosts of history manifest themselves at every turn. This

is as true for Bloom as it is for Stephen; it is notable that Stephen's famous proclamation on history emerges as Deasy descends into an antisemitic tirade. While Deasy's belief is that "All human history moves towards one great goal, the manifestation of God," (*U*: 2.381) for Stephen, history moves beyond the religious plane, instead producing a relentless scheme of inhumanity.

While the idea of universal history is explored more extensively in the Vichian cycle of *Finnegans Wake*, *Ulysses* begins to theorise history in a multifaceted way which merges the personal and political. One crucial means of exploring this is the use of characters who bear an often difficult relationship to history. Haines and Deasy provide two early examples of this, each displaying a colonial tendency that demonstrates the extent of Stephen's nightmare. Although ostensibly amenable to Irish culture, Haines quickly unravels as an English bigot[17]. Something of an intruder in the Martello Tower, he attempts to speak Irish to the Anglophone milkwoman, claims "history is to blame" (*U*: 1.649) for England's historical mistreatment of Ireland, and concludes by explaining England's national problem: "I don't want to see my country fall into the hands of German jews either." (*U*: 1.666-67) Haines's antisemitism links him not only to Deasy but also to the later figure of The Citizen, constructing a racism without borders that demonstrates the scope of the challenge for those wishing to escape or overhaul historical narratives. In *Ulysses*, perhaps the one thing which can unite English and Irish nationalists is a shared antisemitism.

While the scope of the history of antisemitism crosses paths with *Ulysses* at many points, the most concerted view of this history is provided by the appearance of The Citizen in 'Cyclops'. The chapter's nameless narrator creates a fluid historical space in which a variety of timelines and cultures are meshed together, often with anachronistic effects. This parallel "Eblana" (*U*: 12.83) is ripe for nationalist mythmaking, often incorporating parodies of the lengthy lists of Irish epics such as the Táin Bó Cúailnge. These lists typically falter, incorporating disparate, inaccurate influences; for example a list of Irish heroes

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[17] Despite Haines's position as a patronising but prejudiced English scholar, he actually forms an analogue for Dermot Chevenix Trench, an Anglo-Irishman and Gaelic League supporter (Trench 39).

includes "Benjamin Franklin," (*U*: 12.187) "Muhammad," (*U*: 12.189) and "Brian Confucius" (*U*: 12.191) alongside more plausible entries. These humorous games immediately draw attention to the hyperbolic claims of inheritance made by nationalists like The Citizen and, by extension, to the more nuanced position of Bloom, whose opinions on the subject are more rooted in reality, despite sometimes offering their own inaccuracies. The jarring combination of mythological and historical figures in the list offers its own traumatic resonances. "Theobald Wolfe Tone" (*U*: 12.184) died in captivity after leading the 1798 Rebellion, while "Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa" (*U*: 12.199) was exiled in the United States as of 1904, only to return for his internment at Glasnevin Cemetery. The condition of exile and the endurance of trauma are significant factors in becoming an Irish hero.

Although there is clearly scope for cross-cultural discussion of the shared histories of trauma of the Irish and Jewish people[18], this is not present in 'Cyclops'. This lack of communication is particularly curious, considering the strong contemporary political parallels drawn between Irish and Jewish causes. Despite this, there is also a depressing sense that The Citizen's views exist within the mainstream of Irish politics; it is significant that 1904 saw a pogrom against Jewish residents in Limerick. Indeed, Kevin Haddick Flynn claims Michael Davitt and John Redmond were "the only two people of national standing to speak out in condemnation" (Haddick Flynn 31) against the pogrom. Haddick Flynn even lists Arthur Griffith as a supporter of the boycott of Jewish businesses (Ibid. 32), despite an antisemitic conspiracy theory which claimed he had Jewish backers (voiced in *Ulysses* by John Wyse's claim that "it was Bloom gave the ideas for Sinn Fein to Griffith" in order to carry out numerous corrupt misdeeds (*U*: 12.1574). The public confusion around Griffith's position demonstrates the degree of hearsay and gossip used to substantiate racist claims.

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[18] For many Irish nationalists, this went as far as identifying direct points of comparison. As Andrew Gibson notes, "throughout the nineteenth century, there had nonetheless been an honourable tradition of Catholic and Protestant nationalist identification of the Irish with the Jewish people. It ran from Tone to Parnell through O'Connell." (Gibson 49)

The position of Griffith is vital in understanding the relationship between nationalism and antisemitism in *Ulysses*. Marilyn Reizbaum suggests it may be

> from Griffith that Joyce first heard the peculiar split in sentiment toward the Jew. Griffith believed (at least initially) that the Zionist Jew was to be applauded, for Zionism was equated with nationalism […] on the other hand, the Jew-*ish* imagined in Ireland […] was that of the parasitic outsider, who exploited in order to survive (Reizbaum 39).

This reconciliation of antisemitic views with sympathy for the Zionist cause defines the position of the Jewish people in the novel: as outsiders who often endure racist abuse, but also as a model for the creation of an independent Irish nation. The hypocritical consolidation of these two views gives Joyce scope to criticise Griffith and his allies. As Reizbaum notes,

> Griffith is employed in *Ulysses* essentially as a symbol of one branch of Irish nationalism. But Joyce's notions about the movement and the man are clearly less than supportive. He saw the movement as exclusive; as supporting measures and methods that made it potentially no less destructive than British imperialism, and no more acceptable than the Parliamentarians, who saw separation from England as undesirable; and as inherently contradictory in its aims (Ibid. 40-41).

It is with this in mind that Joyce inserts the antisemitic canard that Griffith had mysterious Jewish backers; this embarrassing suggestion exposes Griffith's antisemitism, while also hinting at his support of a dual monarchy based on the system used in Austria-Hungary, an idiosyncratic idea that ultimately gained little traction.

In the broader historical currents of the chapter, 'Cyclops' also attempts to create a condensed history, a project which is necessarily flawed within such a miniature format. Just as the narrator – and The Citizen – make grandiose claims to support dubious arguments, Bloom's frustration pushes him to follow suit. He claims "Mendelssohn was a jew and Karl Marx and Mercadante and Spinoza. And the Saviour was a jew and his father was a jew. Your God." (*U*:

12.1804-5) Bloom lists figures who were unambiguously not Jewish, or had complex relationships with Judaism. Significantly, his reference to "Your God" disavows the Christian upbringing he received, aligning Bloom with his father's Judaism instead. In the face of such immediate threats, Bloom is forced to take sides, in this case distancing himself from the bigots in Barney Kiernan's pub in order to emphasise his Jewish heritage and cosmopolitan ideals. This contributes to the chaos of a chapter which collapses the boundaries between numerous historical and fictional narratives, eventually yielding to a singularity of past and present.

The transgressive style of 'Cyclops' bears a significant relationship to colonialism, superficially subverting but ultimately supporting its narratives. As Christine van Boheemen-Saaf states,

> Joyce's aim is not only to frustrate a conventional mode of reading [...] His criticism also bears on the illusion of self-identity of the Irish, maintained by the heady alliance of narrativized romanticism, aestheticized history, and Celticist nationalism. Part of the tragedy of a colonial heritage is that one's self-identity is unconsciously predicated upon the model and example of the oppressor. (van Boheemen-Saaf 88)

The location of an Irish identity within the domain of ancient texts like the *Táin* undercuts the narrative of a modern independence movement, instead yearning for a precolonial past. In this model, the present – and future – of Ireland still belong to its British colonisers, and it is only able to maintain an ever-weakening grasp on its history. Even when there are consonances between past and future, they are seldom positive ones; for example, the *Táin*'s depictions of a civil war and a separate Ulster provide worrying premonitions of the Irish Civil War and partition. When the coloniser's model is more directly paralleled, the problems are even greater. The antisemitism displayed in 'Cyclops' is perhaps the clearest example of this, ironically duplicating the views already expressed by Haines and Deasy and therefore, placing Irish nationalism under the umbrella of a wider British racism.

Despite its position as a particularly ancient racism, antisemitism nevertheless became an increasingly dangerous idea in a rapidly modernising Europe. It is now all but impossible to separate early twentieth century racism from its culmination in the Holocaust, providing textual echoes of future ghosts. Although Ireland's neutrality and small Jewish population left it somewhat insulated from the effects of the Holocaust, *Ulysses*'s remarkable textual afterlife and Joyce's pan-European sensibilities necessarily place it within the same context. Theodor Adorno's remarks on the impossibility of poetry after Auschwitz may be applied here to consider the difficulty of reading *Ulysses* after Auschwitz; although Joyce managed to avoid the grossly offensive sensibilities of peers like Pound and Wyndham Lewis, the scale of the novel can seem at odds with the weight of subsequent events. Nevertheless, *Ulysses* provides an important lesson in engaging with historical and personal traumas in a way which can help to shed light on the horrors of the twentieth-century.

A means of exploring these horrors within the frame of *Ulysses* is through its own references to violent racism, especially the Kishinev[19] Pogrom of 1903, an event of such brutality that until the Holocaust, it was a byword for trauma for many Jewish people (D'Arcy). Anne Marie D'Arcy has explored the resonance of the Kishinev Massacre in *Ulysses*; she notes that:

> the notoriously anti-Semitic Citizen and his cenacle, gathered in the snug of Barney Kiernan's pub in Little Britain Street, insist on defining Bloom's Jewishness in religious terms. This deliberate shift in perspective is not only informed by Joyce's extensive knowledge of patristic and medieval anti-Judaic polemic, but also situates this knowledge in the aftermath of the most notorious pogrom during the dawning era of mass communication. (Ibid.)

The historical tradition of antisemitism exposed in 'Cyclops' gives the episode a degree of historical specificity, opening up recent traumatic wounds (such as the horrific events in Kishinev), but also establishing a peculiarly Irish framework to this bigotry. D'Arcy identifies a consonance between the words

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[19] Now Chișinău, the capital of Moldova.

of the Citizen and "Father John Creagh's second anti-Semitic sermon to the Mens' Confraternity in Mount St Alphonsus, Limerick, on the evening of 18 January 1904." (Ibid.) Creagh's actions led to a mass boycott of Jewish businesses in Limerick City, bringing the vicious racism of continental Europe dangerously close to home for Irish Jews. Although tensions in Limerick were defused by the summer of 1904, the traumatic effects of Kishinev for many Jewish people were brought into sharp focus in Ireland.

In *Ulysses*, traumatic memory is a phenomenon which distorts ideas of temporality, often appearing involuntarily. Gibbons compares these incidents to cinematic flashbacks, noting "what we find in Joyce is unannounced flashbacks, or rather 'flash-cuts,' in which the pressure of the past forces its way into the present" (Gibbons 186), hauntings without consent. We have already explored the horrifying vision of Stephen's mother in 'Circe', but Bloom's increasingly unstable sense of time and memory at this stage of the novel also produces a notion of temporal and historical disruption. After cycling through a variety of guises in the fantasies conjured in 'Circe', Bloom has a fleeting vision of his late son Rudy. This moving scene creates a brief sense of resolution not only to Bloom's personal tragedy, but also to the political traumas he has suffered, envisioning Rudy as a Jewish heir:

> Silent, thoughtful, alert, he stands on guard, his fingers at his lips in the attitude of the secret master. Against the dark wall a figure appears slowly, a fairy boy of eleven, a changeling, kidnapped, dressed in an Eton suit with glass shoes and a little bronze helmet, holding a book in his hand. He reads from right to left inaudibly, smiling, kissing the page. (U: 15.4955-60)

Reading in Hebrew, this vision of Rudy presents an unambiguously Jewish persona that has not been available to Bloom. As Don Gifford and Robert J. Seidman note, Rudy's helmet (combined with the presence of a "white lambkin" (*U*: 15.4967) condenses the figures of Hermes and the sacrificial lamb of the Old Testament in his appearance (Gifford and Seidman 529), marrying the novel's broader Homeric resonances to a Jewish sensibility that crystallises

and perhaps even resolves some of the questions around Bloom's identity. This "changeling" transcends temporal and cultural boundaries to assist Bloom in the present, completing the lengthy conjuring trick of the chapter. Although only a fleeting glimpse, the vision of Rudy brings Bloom a degree of comfort and stability that has hitherto been lacking, concluding the phantasmagorical world of 'Circe' and returning the novel to the overdetermined realism of 'Eumaeus'.

This response to trauma leads Bloom to an alternate temporality, in which Rudy appears not in the guise of the infant who lived, but as an older figure who embodies Bloom's values. Referring to the work of Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok, Gibbons notes that this parallel world demonstrates "an acute failure to mourn: the memory of the lost loved one is not as they were when they died, but how they would be in the present had they continued to live." (Gibbons 160) With this in mind,

> It is not, therefore, that the vision of Rudy represents a projection on Bloom's part of an internal loss onto an external medium: rather, the memory was never fully introjected in the first place, in keeping with a disjunctive Irish culture in which waking rituals, communal memory, and haunting were at most incorporated' rather than internalized within modernity. (Ibid. 161)

Bloom's thoughts of this alternative timeframe – exactly paralleling real time – demonstrate the magnitude of his trauma by imposing its existence on the scale of his own life. However, this is not the only magnitude of trauma shown in *Ulysses*. The presence of broader historical traumas – particularly the Great Famine – brings Joyce to explore a greater temporal and traumatic order. Despite the Famine's historical distance (concluding over fifty years before the events of *Ulysses*), it looms large in the imagination of 1904 Dublin, a pervasive pre-modern residue that keeps Ireland moored in its past. Although Dublin's position as the urban epicentre of the country is significantly influenced by the effects of the Famine – particularly migration from the more heavily affected rural west to the east of the island – it is by no means treated as a beneficial

event in the city's history, but rather, as an extraordinary trauma which has affected generations who did not directly experience it. Kevin Whelan sees the Famine's legacy as vital to the attitudes of future generations:

> The period from the 1880s, when the post-Famine generation took over, witnessed the creation of an Irish radical memory that sought to escape the baneful binary of modernisation and tradition—the Hegelian view that all that is lost to history is well lost, the Scottish Enlightenment paradigm in which what is sacrificed to progress is retrieved imaginatively as nostalgia. This attitude generated a wistful, rearmirror view of history where the past stayed firmly in the past, drained of politics and available merely as sentiment. Modernity's nostalgia for its past became a political placebo, sweetening the bitter pill of history and establishing the comfort of distance between past and present. By contrast, radical memory deployed the past to challenge the present, to restore into possibility historical moments that had been blocked or unfulfilled earlier. (Whelan 60)

Ulysses explores both of these tendencies but ultimately strives to enact the latter, radically reducing the sense of historical distance to explore the presence of the Famine in a much changed Ireland.

The political legacy of the Famine was double-edged, inasmuch as it was a catalyst for change, but also a force for paralysis. The destruction of a rural, Irish-speaking nation and birth of an urbanised, English-speaking one was significant in establishing the dichotomy between nationalisms that were predicated on reverence for the past and the desire to modernise. This debate is vividly and aggressively dramatized in *Ulysses* by the conflict between Bloom and The Citizen. As we have already seen, the racism embodied in this episode has a significant bearing on Bloom's own history and forms an event in a deeply traumatic historical lineage in its own right. However, the presence of Irish history – particularly the Famine – in 'Cyclops' opens up another dimension of trauma, and another relationship to the past. Although The Citizen places the Famine in a long series of other historical events (stretching back to the "broken

treatystone" (*U*: 12.1381) of 1691), "the black '47" (*U*: 12.1365-66) maintains a spectral presence above all other events of Irish history. This reference to the Famine is enough to send the narrative on an almost apocalyptic course, a variety of symbols of Ireland and its art presented by "each of the four evangelists […] to each of the four masters" (*U*: 12.1443-44) in the manner of the Book of Revelation. The historical trajectory set in motion by the Famine is one which leads to ruin. The presence of the four evangelists in this scene turns from an image of apocalypse to the history of Irish art, reflecting one of the most famous pages of the *Book of Kells*. Even Ireland's past artistic riches are tainted by the events of the Famine.

The sense of destruction wrought by the Famine extends far beyond its direct time period in both directions, damaging the perception of the distant past while maintaining a destructive influence over the future. The Famine's legacy permanently changed Ireland's demographics, significantly reducing the population through death and emigration, shifting the centre of population from rural to urban areas, and destroying Irish-speaking communities to such grave degrees that English quickly became the dominant language of most of the country. These effects continue to be felt in the present day and with survivors of the Famine still alive in 1904, they maintain a strong pull on events in *Ulysses*. In 'Cyclops', even staunch nationalists struggle to find their words in Irish, a language traumatised into submission. The Citizen and the narrator occasionally interject in Irish in a manner which betrays little active use of the language as anything other than a foil to Hiberno-English or, in The Citizen's case, as a blunt political instrument. This grim state of affairs clearly has the Famine as a catalyst; by 1870, only a two-hundredth of the Irish population were Irish monoglots (Bartlett 310). Although rooted in the spirit of the Revival, the use of Irish in *Ulysses* becomes another fragment of the broken looking-glass, a reflection of trauma.

A further use of the language in 'Cyclops' demonstrates its increasingly fraught position. Barney Kiernan's pub in Little Britain Street becomes "the ancient hall of Brian O'Ciarnain's in Sraid na Bretaine Bheag" (*U*: 12.897-98). While clearly parodying the language commitments of nationalists, this line also hints at what

is lost in the translation of place names. Although Little Britain Street is a literal translation, it carries another shade of meaning in the alternative translation Wales Street. The translation of this name is not merely a change in political inflection, but a transformation in meaning. With use of the language in a seemingly terminal decline, leaving meaning either uncertain, or contingent on an increasingly moribund body of knowledge. The fact that the street name in question bears colonial overtones ironically undercuts the intended nationalism of the translation, again imposing a traumatic resonance upon language.

The specific resonances of this allusion to Wales are noteworthy in a chapter with a distinctly Cambrian inflection, albeit one which uses Welsh sources to complicate its focus on Irish nationalism. In a highly dubious list of Irish heroes, one entry is listed as "the first Prince of Wales." (U: 12.192) Aside from the obvious confusion regarding the Irishness of this figure, it is unclear whether this is a reference to Edward II of England, appointed to the role after the conquest of Wales by his father, or an earlier Welsh figure who held a parallel title with a similar name[20]. This unresolvable ambiguity harnesses the complexities of Welsh history to raise a wider issue with the blurred lines of myth and history. Within a later section of 'Cyclops' that parodies pan-Celticism, the rabid dog Garryowen is cast as a poet; although his poem is translated into English, the narrator claims "The metrical system of the canine original, which recalls the intricate alliterative and isosyllabic rules of the Welsh englyn, is infinitely more complicated but we believe our readers will agree that the spirit has been well caught." (*U*: 12.733-36) The subsequent translation in no way resembles the strict monorhyme (Cuddon 261) of englyn form, leading to a rupture in translation that emphasises the breakdown of communication that occurs in translation between language (and in this bizarre case, between species). This particular translation is especially problematic, refracted through

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[20] The political complexities of medieval Wales make it difficult to definitively state when the title began to be used, not least as several candidates did not rule the entirety of the country; early adopters of the term 'princeps' over 'rex' include Owain Gwynedd, Llywelyn ap Iorwerth, Dafydd ap Llywelyn and Llywelyn ap Gruffudd, all of whom were rulers of Gwynedd in north-western Wales in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (Pryce and Insley 74).

several broken lenses: first moved into an Irish context, then forced into a defective English translation.

The process of translation can reopen traumatic wounds. Even when discussing the raft of name changes which took place as Ireland set on its path to independence, Joyce allows the weight of colonial violence to be seen. In *Finnegans Wake*, a "sackvulle of swart" (Sackville Street, now O'Connell Street) is juxtaposed with the "Hurdlesford" (*FW*: 14.5) that roughly translates Dublin's Irish name (Baile Átha Cliath) into English. Significantly, this translation is deeply evocative of place names in England, either implying the transposition of Dublin to English soil or underlining the conditions of its colonisation. The presence of this bastardised name is especially jarring when it is followed by a chronicle's description of "Bloody wars in Ballyaughcleeagh-bally," (*FW*: 514.9-10). In English, Irish or something in between, there is no escaping the bloody wars of the past.

Memory Incarnate: Commemoration

The issue of commemoration provides an adjunct to these problems of history. In *Ulysses*, commemoration is a means of bringing the past into the present space of the city but despite the sense of a safe historical distance which may be conferred by the presence of a monument to previous events, the complexities of commemoration in an Ireland which is yet to achieve its independence make this a fraught issue in *Ulysses*. Just as the name of O'Connell/Sackville Street brings the tensions within Ireland to light[21], the presence of a statue of Daniel O'Connell in pre-independence Ireland is equally significant. The "hugecloaked Liberator's form" (*U*: 6.249) located on the same street as Nelson's Pillar reveals the presence of a shadow nation, its monuments based on rebels like O'Connell rather than the imperial heroes of British conquests. Although the O'Connell statue demonstrates the fact that a

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[21] Joyce uses the unofficial 'O'Connell Street' throughout his oeuvre, in keeping with the desires of the Dublin Corporation to change the name in the 1880s; it was officially changed in 1924.

desire to construct a pantheon of Irish monuments considerably predated independence, this desire was not always realised. In 'Wandering Rocks', the Hely's sandwichmen pass "the slab where Wolfe Tone's statue was not," (*U*: 10.378) the foundation for a monument that was originally laid in 1898 (*Thom's 1904* 2105) but never completed. Anne Fogarty claims:

> To some degree, the imaginary statue and the utopian promise of self-governance and political liberty that it betokened were of greater moment in this period of political change than the actual material sculpture. The flux of a memorial that had yet to be actualized is preferred by the late-nineteenth-century Irish cultural imaginary than its anticlimactic, mundane embodiment in metal or stone. Joyce, however, picks up on the palpable absurdity of a community with a predilection for sculptural figments and political phantoms. (Fogarty 73)

The incompleteness of the Wolfe Tone statue[22] (and, as of 1904, the Parnell Monument, not completed until 1911 (Ibid.) reflects the incompleteness of the Irish nationalist project. As Gibbons asserts, "Monuments were indeed more effective by their absence during the rise of Irish nationalism, ordinary streets and places themselves furnishing sites of memory of the dead." (Gibbons 58) To give a concrete form to a movement that is still in progress would consign it to the past, preserving its inchoate form as though it has failed; instead, the entire landscape became a palimpsest for remembrance.

When monuments were completed, they stood in stark contrast to the brash jingoism of British imperialist effigies. Fogarty discusses the new artistic idiom created by Irish nationalist monuments, which is designed to connect more closely to the spectator. "The nationalist hero is still aggrandized, but he is also made seem a part of the human domain and not of a remote superhuman pantheon." (Fogarty 74) Although it is placed on a high pedestal, the O'Connell Monument contains figures which depict "the many sections of the Irish population (amongst them the poet, peasant, priest, and politician) who

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[22] Roy Foster attributes this failure to the embarrassingly small sum of money raised to fund the statue (Foster 82).

supported O'Connell. The public hero hence is conceived of *vis-à-vis* the general populace to which he belongs." (Ibid.) This conceives of the monument as a democratic alternative to the pompous authoritarianism of Nelson's Pillar. The Parnell Monument makes this democratic impulse even more apparent; as Fogarty notes, it places Parnell's figure "almost at ground level." (Ibid.) His figure is dwarfed by a tall obelisk, which challenges the height of Nelson, contrasting to the position of O'Connell and placing Parnell himself at the bottom of a greater structure. This reflects the fortunes of Parnell in the popular imagination, whose ideas were largely replaced by the ideology of Sinn Féin after 1905 (Bartlett 353).

The political symbolism of Dublin's statues remained a contentious issue throughout the early twentieth-century. Aside from the obvious conflicts between imperial and nationalist forces, the decisions to commemorate certain Irish political figures generated much opprobrium within nationalist ranks. Sean Rothery quotes The Irish Times as claiming there were "scenes" at the ceremony that accompanied the laying of the foundation stone for the Parnell Monument. These "scenes" were caused by protestors who felt a memorial to Wolfe Tone should be prioritised over one to Parnell (Rothery 55). This view is not shared by the Parnellite Bloom, who, on seeing the foundation stone for the incomplete monument, thinks "Breakdown. Heart," (*U*: 6.320) repeating Dignam's cause of death as stated by Martin Cunningham (*U*: 6.305). In the midst of 'Hades', a chapter centred on death, Parnell is defined by the tragedy of his fall from grace, and subsequent death. Parnell's position as a figure of moral contention is an apt parallel here; Bloom has just caused offence by claiming the best death is sudden, "A moment and all is over. Like dying in sleep." (*U*: 6.314) Such a death does not give time for the last rites to be administered, and Bloom's opinion is as offensive to Catholic decency as Parnell's affair.

The fraught relationship between Parnell and the Catholic establishment is matched by the position of Wolfe Tone, whose revolutionary ideas hinted at an anti-clericalism that was repudiated by many of his republican descendants. The changing fortunes of Wolfe Tone by the turn of the twentieth-century may

well account for the vacant slab at the spot designed to honour him; his secular principles were deeply unfashionable among republicans, possibly after the failure of the cross-community Young Ireland movement and downfall of the Protestant Parnell. Like the copy of *The Woman in White* that Miss Dunne hides in her drawer (*U*: 10.368), Wolfe Tone's legacy is hidden away, deemed too salacious and sensational for public display. Both the absent Wolfe Tone statue and the hidden book hint at the shadow world that lurks behind the façade of self-censorship. This sense of concealment places radical elements of Irish history within the same marginal space as Nighttown, hidden from the gaze of the general public.

The censorship implicit in this control of urban space can be attributed to the "largely imaginary, prelapsarian Irish idyll defined by rurality and premodern social harmony" (Lanigan 72) that was promoted by the Irish revival. Although the revival was largely a Protestant movement, its scepticism of urban life was shared by the Catholic Church, which feared urbanisation would "foster secularism and socialism." (Ibid.) It is the combination of these two forces that encourages the erasure of figures such as Wolfe Tone, whose views were often close to proto-socialism. More generally, urban modernity produces stark challenges to both the prelapsarian ideals of the revival and the moral fibre of Catholicism. The vastness of the metropolis brings its population together in physical terms, particularly in densely populated slums, while simultaneously balkanising its population on economic, social, religious and ethnic lines. This produces a diverse but chaotic environment in which traditional notions of community are challenged, and the holism of identity is refuted. The evident divisions in Edwardian Dublin – down to the disputes over its street names – are a demonstration of the political implications of urbanisation. This question of modernity underpins virtually all of the disputes about commemorations and monuments in the period.

The death of Paddy Dignam allows the immediate aftermath of trauma to be explored in *Ulysses*. Dignam's death demonstrates the privileging of bereavement in Joyce's aesthetic; while Dignam's funeral sets many of the novel's events in motion, he is also mourned by Bloom and, in one scene, his

son Patsy. Patsy Dignam is one of only four characters given an extended interior monologue, in his case in one of the vignettes of 'Wandering Rocks'. Through Patsy, the inchoate grief of a child is visible, and may be compared to the much-ruminated traumas of Bloom and Stephen's guilt-ridden agony. The physical realities of death are present in Patsy's thoughts, as he recalls the sight of his father's body. "His face got all grey instead of being red like it was and there was a fly walking over it up to his eye. The scrunch that was when they were screwing the screws into the coffin: and the bumps when they were bringing it downstairs." (*U*: 10.1161-64) This image has all of the immediacy (but little of the horror) of Stephen's hallucination; still processing events, Patsy is able to recall such a traumatic sight with relative clarity.

Despite the poignancy of the scene, Patsy's measured appearance does not acquire the transcendental quality conferred by grief in other parts of the novel. Rather than attaining any hallucinatory properties, Patsy's presence is noted for displaying the pathos of the quotidian, his thoughts on attending a boxing match interrupted by the sight of his reflection in funeral clothes: "That's me in mourning." (*U*: 10.1138) While Patsy maintains a foothold in ordinary life as his grief begins to intercede, it is actually Alf Bergan who – preposterously – 'sees' Paddy Dignam alive "in Capel Street." (*U*: 12.314) In his drunken state, Alf's vision gives way to a parody of a theosophist séance (*U*: 12.338-73) and, eventually, a rather tasteless discussion of the phenomenon of posthumous erections, (*U*: 12.457) a theme which takes the notion of life after death an absurdly literal degree, meshing the ludicrous quasi-séance of the preceding pages with Bloom's appeal that the phenomenon can be "explained by science." (*U*: 12.464) Despite his greater proximity to Paddy Dignam, Patsy does not display this chaotic response. Through Patsy, we are given the novel's clearest account of Paddy's death. This sorry story – Dignam drunkenly falling down the stairs – is undercut by what Pericles Lewis calls "the [larger] manufacture of public myth that has transformed the drunken and improvident father into 'one of the best,' in the words of Mr McCoy." (Lewis 188) Although the circumstances around Dignam's death are frequently rendered absurd, either by heroic elevation or the distorted slapstick of the details, all of the

myths which surround the death contain a grain of truth. Even the séance in 'Cyclops' reflects one of the details alluded to by Patsy; Paddy Dignam's last moments are spent "bawling out for his boots to go out to Tunney's" (*U*: 10.1168), but in 'Cyclops,' it is noted that "Before departing he requested that it should be told to his dear son Patsy that the other boot which he had been looking for was at present under the commode." (*U*: 12.366-68) Even in the midst of ribald humour, this ridiculous version of a séance retains an improbable sense of truth.

Without the distance of time, Dignam's death occupies an interstitial position between immediate experience and memory. His death is not only a significant event in its own right, but also a force for bringing past memories into present consciousness, especially for Bloom. While riding in the funeral cortège en route to Glasnevin Cemetery, Bloom recounts his father's suicide for the first time in the novel:

> That afternoon of the inquest. The redlabelled bottle on the table. The room in the hotel with hunting pictures. Stuffy it was. Sunlight through the slats of the Venetian blind. The coroner's sunlit ears, big and hairy. Boots giving evidence. Thought he was asleep first. Then saw like yellow streaks on his face. Had slipped down to the foot of the bed. Verdict: overdose. Death by misadventure. The letter. For my son Leopold (*U*: 6.359-64).

As in Patsy's interior monologue, the pathos of the scene is largely derived from its attention to detail, the smallest fragments of memory that Bloom has retained of his trauma. While Patsy's (far more recent) recollections are relatively prosaic, Bloom's memories are rendered in clipped, staccato sentences, detached images of his father's death scene and the subsequent coroner's hearing.

The death of Rudolph Bloom forms a persistent motif, the details of which are teased out through repeated reimaginings. The clearest image is produced in 'Ithaca,' where the minutiae of Bloom's recollections are synthesised with something resembling a coroner's report, in which the narrator states that

Bloom Senior "died on the evening of the 27 June 1886, at some hour unstated, in consequence of an overdose of monkshood (aconite) selfadministered in the form of a neuralgic liniment composed of 2 parts of aconite liniment to 1 of chloroform liniment." (*U*: 17.623-26) Despite taking the dry tone of the chapter, the details of this passage go some way to explaining Bloom's emotional state, as well as the broader significance of the date. The date of June 16th attains a new significance in the knowledge that Bloom is approaching the anniversary of his father's death; the arbitrariness of dates only applies if they are not welded to a broader significance. In this case, the novel's events are tainted not only by the various memories that appear, but also by the imminent commemoration of his father's death.

Joyce's interest in dates forms a point of comparison here. His birthday was of particular personal significance; Ellmann describes how Joyce contrived "with great difficulty, to see the first copies of both *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* on that white day," (Ellmann 23) shaping the publication of two significant works. Joyce's superstitious beliefs around his birthday were such that pressure was applied to ensure publications could be made on that exact date, leading to "a frenzy of proofreading" (Ibid. 714) in the latter stages of work on *Finnegans Wake* as February 2nd approached. Similar efforts had been made to ensure *Ulysses* was published on Joyce's fortieth birthday (Ibid. 523), adding a degree of time pressure to the publication process which may well have contributed to the mass of textual errors that has posed challenges for scholars for decades. Although the novel was originally intended to be published in late 1921, when it became apparent that this was impossible, Joyce sought to add his birthday as a secondary deadline. Despite the arbitrary nature of February 2nd, in Joyce's personal superstitions, its significance was such that the desire to publish on the date has had a material impact on the substance of Joyce's work, particularly in the case of *Ulysses*, a novel whose publication history has been shaped by the experience of zeitnot.

A further significance is added by the recent birthday of Milly Bloom. Although this fact is established as early as 'Calypso,' Bloom's memories of Milly's birth are gradually developed over the course of the novel. The scene is first recalled

immediately after Bloom reads his daughter's letter: "Remember the summer morning she was born, running to knock up Mrs Thornton in Denzille street." (*U*: 4.416-17) By 'Ithaca,' a more fully-fleshed picture has been developed, with the picture of a newborn Milly emerging through the ether of memory: "15 June 1889. A querulous newborn female infant crying to cause and lessen congestion." (*U*: 17.865-66) The details of memory unravel across the course of the novel, yet it is often only in the obsessively factual domain of 'Ithaca' that the base underlying dates and times of events are clear. Two different timescales are played out: the amorphous, mutable nature of memory on one hand, and the order conferred by dates, times, facts and specifics on the other.

While the dates revealed by 'Ithaca' add a significance and even a poignance to Bloom's thoughts, they achieve a similar effect with Stephen, whose mother is revealed to have been buried on "26 June 1903," (*U*: 17.952) the anniversary of Rudolph Bloom's death. The nature of Stephen's grief is remarkably strong considering almost a year has elapsed since his bereavement, but the impending anniversary also leads his mind to consider his mother. The date also provides a union between Bloom and Stephen, the coincidental timing aligning their thoughts to matters of life and death, producing a kinship in the present moment.

Mourning becomes an increasingly important concept through the course of *Ulysses*, ultimately acting as the driving force which pushes Stephen and Bloom into a shared position. The central position afforded to mourning is close to Shoshana Felman's description of the work of Walter Benjamin as a continual dialogue with death and the deceased:

> an implicit figure of prosopopeia structures [...] his entire work: the underlying, understated evocation of the dead is present and can be deciphered everywhere. Benjamin's whole writing could be read as work of mourning, structured by a mute address to the dead face and the lost voice of the young friend who took his own life in a desperate protest in the first days of the First World War. (Felman, *The Juridicial Unconscious* 38)

A similar notion of prosopopeia is present in *Ulysses*. An early suggestion of this is made by the personification of the sea as 'Proteus' in the eponymous chapter; prosopopeia proper then appears in 'Aeolus,' with the noise of the printing press considered "Almost human the way it sllt to call attention. Doing its level best to speak." (*U*: 7.175-76) Prosopopeic themes reach a peak in 'Circe,' in which the lines between living and inanimate things, and even life and death, are frequently blurred. The appearances of Rudy Bloom and May Dedalus make a structural link between mourning and prosopopeia, underlining the suggestions made by Felman in relation to Benjamin.

With prosopopeia, there is an implicit translation of absence into presence; Felman goes on to call for the role of the witness to be considered that of a translator of "an original historical event that has remained completely untranslatable." (Felman, *The Juridicial Unconscious* 40) The chaos brought by the presence of absent figures in *Ulysses* brings the issue of untranslatability to the fore; it is through the inability of Stephen and Bloom to truly comprehend the scale of their own mourning, and the possibility of an end to time through death, that 'Circe' takes the novel on such a leftward turn into hallucination. In the vision of Rudy, this produces an image which transcends historical context, the child's "Eton suit" worn alongside a "little bronze helmet" (*U*: 15.4958) that is suggestive of Bronze Age Ancient Greece, possibly of Hermes. The figure of Rudy is defined by his shapeshifting qualities, evading any temporal capture and inhabiting a separate space to the surrounding narrative. The overdetermined vision of Rudy exceeds any coherent historical positioning for his clothing or appearance. Catherine Flynn sees a transformative potential in the changeling Rudy: "Rudy is a new machine for thinking, specifically by both being unintelligible and in offering several meanings […] As a collection of old and compromised materials, Rudy is the embodiment of a new kind of text." (Flynn 200) The inaccessible temporality beyond the realm of mourning produces a world of possibility in which many material and immaterial forces can coexist, and the dead can live; for a brief moment at the end of 'Circe,' Bloom enters this world.

The forces unleashed by this inaccessible but not unimaginable temporal plane resonate on a personal, but also a political, level in *Ulysses*. One figure who is frequently mourned is Charles Stewart Parnell, whose death comes to symbolise a crisis in the possibility of Irish self-governance. Nevertheless, this possibility is by no means absent in the 1904 of *Ulysses*. The masthead image of the *Freeman's Journal* appears to Bloom as he surveys the old Irish Houses of Parliament: "Homerule sun rising up in the northwest." (*U*: 8.473-74) Although the image provides a degree of solace, it is nevertheless unattainable, appearing as an astronomical impossibility. As the issues around commemoration demonstrate, Parnell's legacy is fiercely contested. By 1904, his posthumous reputation had already mutated into such different forms that the peculiarly Parnellite vision of home rule held by Bloom – and Joyce – had already become as impossible as the sun rising in the north west. This mangled celestial vision reflects a warping of history present throughout Joyce's work; Chrissie Van Mierlo discerns the same device in the final chapter of *Finnegans Wake*: "At the dawn of the new day, the chapter looks as far backwards as it does forwards as seen in the account of the backwards-barrelling Shaun-Kevin that we are now treated to." (Van Mierlo, *James Joyce and Catholicism* 132) While the extension of this device in *Finnegans Wake* can be located within that work's treatment of history as cyclical, the similar metaphor used in *Ulysses* is arguably less kind to home rule, not even allowing the opportunity to recur, but instead locating it beyond a world that is physically possible.

Although Bloom attributes the quote on home rule to Arthur Griffith (*U*: 8.462), the rising sun is figured as a widely-used symbol of the home rule movement. The symbol was even invoked in relation to the debate on Ireland's time zone by the *Ulster Herald*, which discussed the debate in critical terms:

> In the pictorial representations of the Irish Parliament, which the *Freeman's Journal* appears to have patented, that journal represents the sun as rising to the North of Dublin, but this is a small matter

compared with the exertions of the Irish Parliamentary Party to have English time extended to Ireland ('Ireland's English Time' 2).

The relationship between time, space and nationalism extends from the legislative level to the celestial plane, repositioning phenomena like sunrises according to political rather than astronomical coordinates. In the period of temporal standardisation, this constitutes an ironic riposte to the manipulation of time by political forces, allowing contradictory political movements to extend beyond temporality to include the basest natural phenomena within their domain.

Embryological Time: 'Oxen of the Sun'

'Oxen of the Sun' provides a vision of linguistic and literary development through a temporal lens, in which the narrative events of the chapter are dilated by the parallel presence of a stylistic palate that spans over a millennium. The chapter's narrative meanders through thirty-two drastic changes in style, spanning a chronological history of prose that moves from a chant recalling the deas-iul tradition of Scottish Gaelic culture[23] to an imagining of the English language of the future, described by Joyce as "a frightful jumble of Pidgin English, nigger English, Cockney, Irish, Bowery slang and broken doggerel" (*L I*: 140). The mimesis of language used to depict a birth within the chapter is used to birth its own bastard language at its conclusion, turning the English language into a quasi-technological organ that can bring its own temporal dimension into being. The power of language is emphasised by its ability to shape historical and temporal markers on its own terms here.

Despite the efforts made by Joyce to represent linguistic change, 'Oxen' is anachronistic on a number of levels. First and foremost is the fact that it inherently produces an unfaithful representation, predicated as it is on the use

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[23] The eighteenth-century Celticist John Smith describes this as an extant tradition, designed to ensure a safe and comfortable birth: "The ceremony of deas'iul [sic] is still used on many occasions in the Highlands of Scotland. Women with child go thrice, in this direction [i.e. clockwise], round some chapels to procure an easy delivery." (Smith 38)

of archaic terminology and obscure references that would not be readily used by its characters. In turn, these characters are forced to adopt each of the linguistic sets offered by Joyce, limiting their range of expression and experience to the restrictions imposed by the author. On another level, the language of the chapter is itself frequently anachronistic, often imposing the *sense* of the English language of a particular period as opposed to presenting a faithful replication of its language; the opening lines of the chapter demonstrate this prioritisation of playfulness over fidelity, mixing Irish, English and Latin in the chant "Deshil Holles Eamus" (*U*: 14.1). Instead of attempting to faithfully represent Latin through direct use of the language, the opening sections of 'Oxen' adopt a syntactic structure that resembles a literal translation of Latin into English, peppered with Latinate lexis such as "lutulent" (*U*: 14.19) and "inverecund" (*U*: 14.25). Despite its intention of evoking the development of written Latin – and then Anglo-Saxon – the melding of English and Latin in these sections brings Joyce's style remarkably close to the deliberately hybridised English, sometimes incorporating Latin verbiage, that concludes the chapter. Temporally, the past and future of language conjoin in the ouroboric structure of 'Oxen'.

The reliance on a representational rather than direct use of historical language is emphasised by Joyce's sources for the chapter, which were largely second-hand. Michael Gooch identifies the particular significance of George Saintsbury's *A History of English Prose Rhythm* as the basis for Joyce's understanding of Anglo-Saxon. Gooch notes the flaws in Saintsbury's 'translations', which

> are hardly translated at all and are filled with archaic and antiquated phrases in order to emphasize their alterity. More important, in order to preserve the prose rhythm, Saintsbury retains the original order of the words rather than reorganize them into the familiar subject-object-verb format (Gooch 401-402).

This unorthodox approach to translation is dependent on Saintsbury's belief that Anglo-Saxon remains largely intelligible to the average reader of Modern

English, and it is through the ironic gap between Anglo-Saxon and Modern English that Joyce produces much of the humour present in these passages. This ironic humour is dependent on the inappropriate and sometimes unintelligible intersection between two drastically different periods of linguistic and literary history, particularly the flawed idea that meanings and concepts can readily cross such enormous temporal boundaries without becoming lost in translation. In 'Oxen', language is a vector for temporality, delineating various ages of history and, ultimately, allowing their various traits to merge, creating a bastardised future.

The orthographic qualities of 'Oxen' undermine the chapter's commitment to representing historical forms in modern English, containing none of the additional characters or diacritics that would be expected in archaic writing. Although there are technical printing limitations at play, there are other instances in which Joyce ensured orthographic fidelity was maintained; for example, in 'Cyclops', the pseudo-Czech name "Goosepond Přhklštř Kratchinabritchisitch" (*U*: 12.565-66) uses authentic carons, despite its clear fictitiousness. Likewise, the Rosenbach edition of 'Scylla and Charybdis' incorporates the use of Gaelic type; this was not continued in later incarnations of the chapter, but nevertheless indicates Joyce's great attention to detail in matters of orthography and typography. As with the merging of languages in 'Oxen', the presence of Gaelic script in 'Scylla and Charybdis' creates a sense of hybridity, combining the Shakespearian theme of the chapter with its subtle but persistent references to the Irish language[24] such as the presence of the lexicographer Patrick S. Dinneen[25] in the National Library (*U*: 9.967-68). With this in mind, the decision to represent Anglo-Saxon and Middle English in the modern Latin alphabet appears to be more of an editorial or authorial decision than a practical one, allowing the temporal modulations of the chapter to be understood in terms of vocabulary and syntax, but not orthography. By

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[24] These allusions are chronicled by Philip L. Marcus in his article 'Notes on Irish Elements in 'Scylla and Charybdis'.
[25] Dinneen's *Foclóir Gaedhilge Agus Béarla* remains in print as an uncommonly detailed dictionary, which contains a wealth of obscure and obsolete verbiage.

synthesising elements of archaic and modern English, Joyce treats language as a technological organ to facilitate temporal distortion.

As in 'Scylla', in 'Oxen', the written word is the ultimate means of temporalising language, and this techno-temporal impulse in turn drives the narrative into its own temporal domain. The chapter uses an extreme form of temporal dilation which only yields to external time pressure when the "Closingtime" of 11pm is reached at its conclusion (*U*: 14.1534). Prior to this point, around ten minutes worth of narration takes several pages to conclude, after we are informed that the time is "Ten to." (*U*: 14.1471) The issue of temporal dilation is heightened by the parallel temporal compression which occurs on a macroscopic level in the linguistic history that is chronicled across the course of the chapter, allowing the events of the chapter to seemingly expand across a timespan of over a millennium. For Cheryl Temple Herr, 'Oxen' is the point at which Joyce's temporal framework begins to disintegrate: "The reader begins to see [...] the rigorously controlled clock-time of Bloomsday breaking apart and overlapping so that competing nighttime chronologies seemingly distort the go-ahead daytime narrative" (Temple Herr 158) Although 'Oxen' maintains a frame of reference to clock-time, this is only a tertiary indicator of temporality in a chapter which deals with biological, experiential and historical timeframes that are not readily subordinated to the clock.

The natal theme of 'Oxen' introduces the temporal dimension of gestation into the mix. While Mina Purefoy's pregnancy and the birth of her child gestures towards a time frame of roughly nine months, her painfully protracted birth complicates this timespan. However, the birth, which is already well in progress at the start of the chapter, is itself condensed within the narrative, and the moment of birth itself is related laconically by the straightforward announcement "that an heir [had] been born." (*U*: 14.945) This distorted temporal presentation is underlined by the discussion of 'unnatural' births in the section that is based on the style of Edward Gibbon, referencing "the prenatal repugnance of uterine brothers, the Caesarian section, posthumity with respect to the father and, that rarer form, with respect to the mother," (*U*: 14.956-58) among many other examples. While these examples are largely of a

legal, social or biological nature, there are also temporal aberrations, such as "that distressing manner of delivery called by the Brandenburghers *Sturzgeburt*[26]." (*U*: 14.973) Despite the great duration and difficulty of the birth, it is by no means the focal point of the chapter, acting more as a cipher for broader notions of maternity and progeny than as a central theme in its own right.

The timeline of progeny is underlined by James Atherton's reading of the chapter, which largely concentrates on the parallels between the stylistic and structural elements of 'Oxen' and the notion of embryonic development as Joyce understood it. Atherton explains this as an example of "imitative form" (Atherton 313), a mimetic sensibility which develops Litz's notion of expressive form: "Joyce's experiment in presenting verbal equivalents for reality by means of the well-known attempt to parallel the growth of a child in the womb using passages illustrating the development of English prose from Anglo-Saxon to modern times." (Ibid. 314) This temporalised mimesis uses parallel but asynchronous timeframes to shape the distorted temporal plane of the chapter, allowing several different senses of literal and figurative gestation to emerge through its narrative course. The embryological dimension of the chapter – largely borrowed from Giulio Valenti's *Lezioni Elementari di Embriologia applicate alle Scienze Mediche* (Benzenhöfer 608) – allows historical forms of English to emerge as equally inchoate. Even within such an elaborate structure, the parallels are by no means absolute; as Atherton reminds us, even after the birth is complete, "on the literal level birth has taken place, while on the literary level we are in the seventh month when birth is possible." (Atherton 328) The emergence of something resembling modern English prose is premature, not least at the birth is described with all of the flaws of Gibbon's prose. It is only with the blossoming of a style suggestive of John Ruskin – and the creation of a parallel between Stephen and Rudy – that the embryo of the chapter (suggested by Atherton as Stephen) reaches birth by emerging into the street and leading his friends into a nearby pub (Ibid. 333).

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[26] Literally 'fall birth', a method of delivery which presents significant risk of injury to the newborn.

Although the actual birth has already taken place, this later section allows two parallel births to occur.

Despite the imperfect relationships between the various temporal spheres of 'Oxen', the chapter is one of a handful of episodes which makes explicit reference to the date of *Ulysses*, providing a rare anchor in clock time. "So Thursday sixteenth June Patk. Dignam laid in clay of an apoplexy" (*U*: 14.474) opens a section which derives its style from Samuel Pepys and other seventeenth-century diarists. This is only the second instance in which the date is given, in the case incorporated as a necessary means of replicating diaristic style. Direct signifiers of the date and time are treated as practical considerations rather than necessarily narrative ones; while there is clearly an aesthetic judgement at play in parodying the style of a diary, the need to do so with a degree of fidelity necessitates the inclusion of the date. Nevertheless, the desire to stick rigidly to a diary format is curious given Joyce's otherwise inauthentic style at this point; Atherton notes that "there is no sign of Evelyn and the Pepys imitation is barely recognizable," as it is excessively dependent on Peacock's reproduction of Pepys's writing (Atherton 324). As with the Anglo-Saxon style filtered through the later work of Saintsbury, the refraction of Joyce's writing through Peacock's damages the sense of authenticity here. Given the exaggerations inherent to a second-hand parody of this nature, the inclusion of the date is a necessary concession to the superficial features of the diary form.

The embryological dimension of the chapter is complicated by its opening invocation; this allusion to the deas-iul ceremony moves to the parallel linguistic sphere of the Celtic languages, simultaneously invoking folkloric themes that further underline the pressures on history and time here. Although the deas-iul is associated with Scotland, the word 'deiseal' is used in Irish to mean a clockwise direction, or something heading in the direction of the sun. In Irish folklore, similar rites are found around birth and pregnancy. Luke Gibbons notes the presence of these themes in the figure of Rudy as a changeling in 'Circe', which forms "an allusion to the 'kidnapping' of Bridget Cleary by the little people and her replacement by a 'changeling,' and several

related cases of fairy abduction in nineteenth-century Ireland" (Gibbons 161). For Gibbons, the case of Bridget Cleary, a woman who was murdered by her husband, father and other men as an alleged fairy-changeling in 1896 is a haunting reminder of asymmetrical development, taking place "in the shadow of modernity" (Ibid. 153). This idea, however, is tempered by the presence of colonial prejudices around spiritual practices that do not conform to the behavioural modernity associated with organised religion: "The assumption that savagery is enmeshed with superstition, and that both are residues of a distant past, or alien practices in distant lands, is a legacy bequeathed by Victorian Social Darwinism to evolutionary anthropology." (Ibid.) In the binary system of religion versus superstition, superstition is dismissed as a relic of distant times and cultures.

The appearance of Rudy as a changeling – in a curiously atemporal guise, with a confused array of garments from a number of historical periods – is a reminder of these traditions, as well as a fragment of beliefs which have been cast out of modernity by its colonial guardians. Deas-iul plays a similar role, awkwardly intersecting with the largely scientific discourse that marks the embryological discussions in 'Oxen'. Given its position opening the chapter, this ritual is required to ensure the safe birth that takes place subsequently; rather than merely acting as a substrate to be built on and surpassed, this apparent historical residue is an active and immanent presence, working alongside medicine, much as archaic forms of English appear in tandem with modern language here. The coexistence, even interdependency, of deas-iul and embryology demonstrates a non-linear vision of progress, in which developments occur in parallel; the language of 'Oxen' forcefully adapts this point to a view of linguistic and literary change. The temporal arrow that pushes modernity forward does not entirely sweep away earlier forms, but finds a means of incorporating them within the broader framework of modernity. It is within the gaps and asymmetries of this process that Joyce often operates, demonstrating Gibbons's suggestion that "What has to be learned under modernity is the painful lesson of disenchanting the environment, reducing it to its mere physical and abstract properties, often at odds with the lived texture

of everyday life." (Ibid. 212) The speed at which this process of disenchantment takes place ensures many people, ideas and things are left behind, leaving paralysis in its wake. In 'Oxen', the asymmetrical development of embryos (Janusko 40) suggested by uneven linguistic development advances this idea.

The embryological parallel itself is discussed fully by Robert Janusko, who significantly develops arguments originally made by Frank Budgen and Stuart Gilbert to explore the notes on gestation made by Joyce and their resonances in the chapter (Ibid. 39). Structurally, Jaunsko divides the chapter into nine sections, each relating to a month of gestation, with a 'headpiece' and 'tailpiece' at either end; the relationship to gestation is integral to the entire structure, despite the apparent asymmetry of references to embryology. Janusko notes that "the months are not all the same length", emphasising "Joyce's organic, rather than mechanical, use of his framework." (Ibid. 44) This uneven portrait of development leads to a somewhat lopsided structure, prioritising the first trimester; "[References] to the fourth month are sparse in the notes and the gestation chart has no entries for this period. There are, in fact, more references in the notes for the first three months than for all the rest combined." (Ibid. 49) This parallels the similarly unbalanced view of linguistic and literary development depicted in the chapter, again gesturing towards notions of uneven development.

However, despite the absence of notes, correspondences to the fourth month are still identifiable in the text. Janusko suggests that the "black crack" (*U*: 14.408) of thunder that ends the third month reverberates throughout the fourth, but also that the "voice of the god that was in a very grievous rage that he would presently lift his arm up and spill their souls for their abuses" (*U*: 14.471-472) refers to the development of the forearm in this period (Janusko 50). Within this tightly woven schema, the headpiece and tailpiece of the chapter present problems. Janusko explains the opening section as an approximation of the moment of conception; he associates Anglo-Saxon language with masculinity and Latinate language with femininity, fertilising the 'ovum' of the chapter's English (Ibid. 45), an explanation which does not account for the Goidelic inflection of the introductory passages of the chapter.

In the male-female binary established, it is virtually impossible to assign such a gender to 'Deshil' without significantly altering the nature of this binary; as such, the linguistic intricacies of the chapter begin to unravel its own embryology. The tailpiece is equally difficult to situate; although critics such as Hugh Kenner have suggested it embodies the baby (Kenner 109-110), Janusko's reading suggests this futuristic patois constitutes a placental form, "the ephemeral mass of tissues which vitalizes and nourishes both the growing fetus and the language of his father" (Janusko 53). This allows for a more nuanced reading of the language of 'Oxen', emphasising the correspondences to the past even within its final, future-oriented pages, ultimately expressing the negotiation between past and future that takes place in birth, but also in the development of language and literature.

Even within this established framework, several temporal markers appear to place the chapter before the act of conception. The section resembling Laurence Sterne's writing includes a number of references to contraceptives, such as a "coquette cap" (*U*: 14.758) (also a hat purchased by Bloom for Milly), the "*marchand de capotes*, Monsieur Poyntz[27]" (*U*: 14.776) and an "umbrella" (*U*: 14.785) [diaphragm]. These double entendres establish a picture of synthetic contraception, disrupting the embryological structure of the chapter by placing a series of barriers within it. These contraceptive technologies can alter the temporal structure associated with gestation by inhibiting it altogether, paralleling the timeline of embryological development by producing a space in which it does not even occur. These allusions divert the path of the chapter, complicating its structure beyond the model of gestation. Chrissie Van Mierlo has identified a series of Italian notes on contraceptives in Notesheet 17; however, these are not present in the chapter itself (Van Mierlo, 'Oxen of the Sun Notesheet 17' 4). Nevertheless, these notes indicate that Joyce's thinking incorporated ideas which complicated the overarching structure of the chapter, ultimately undermining linearity.

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[27] Listed by *Thom's 1904* as "waterproofers and hosiers", based on Clare Street (*Thom's 1904* 1455).

More recent criticism on 'Oxen' has helped to conceptualise the complexity of the chapter beyond the twin movements of linguistic and foetal development. Noting the critical emphasis imposed on Joyce's letter to Budgen, Sarah Davison demonstrates that "the quotations in parenthesis in the letter to Budgen only partially correspond to the text of *Ulysses*" (Davison, 'Literary Sources' 3). Despite the critical weight attached to the letter,

> it should be noted that the letter showcases nothing later than seventeenth-century prose, and that the material quoted to Budgen is embryonic. It is therefore dangerous to view Joyce's letter to Budgen – and the outline articulated therein – as anything other than a promotional statement of a work in progress (Ibid. 4).

This is borne out by Davison's genetic exploration of the chapter, which demonstrates the multiple influences lurking within single paragraphs, denying the chapter the discreet order of temporal subdivision suggested by Joyce. Although stylistic boundaries are readily discernible, a variety of strands and motifs transcend them; as Davison puts it, "each paragraph of 'Oxen' echoes many authors, very often spanning different periods in English literary history" (Ibid. 14). For example, the section most closely resembling the writing of Daniel Defoe is also demonstrated to contain borrowings from Jonathan Swift, Henry Wotton and Philip Sidney (Ibid. 15), not only tempering Defoe's influence, but also initiating a temporal collapse, in which several centuries of English prose are consolidated into a single paragraph. As the presence of contraception contradicts the linear notion of embryological development imposed on the chapter, these diversions demolish the notion of linear literary and linguistic progress.

In microcosmic form, 'Oxen' demonstrates the temporal complexities that surround the position of modernity in *Ulysses*. Although the chapter sets out to chronicle the development of English-language literature, the persistent use of anachronisms ensures that this sense of progress is continually questioned, and that the persistence of older forms is evident. This reflects the position of Edwardian Dublin, caught in an asymmetrical model of development that both

emphasised and undermined its claims to modernity. It is in the gaps between modernity and its antecedents that Joyce frequently operates, exploiting these lacunae for ironic effect and sometimes, as in 'Oxen', even to undermine his own structures. Far from displaying the uniform application of standardised time at the dawn of the twentieth-century, *Ulysses* demonstrates the unevenness of the temporal field at the apex point of modernity.

The temporal distortions of 'Oxen' – and *Ulysses* as a whole – prefigure the increasing abstraction of time that defines temporality in later modernities. DeLillo's late writing frequently tethers temporality to technological development, moving away from the experientially-motivated model used by Joyce and many other canonical modernists to reflect the temporal acceleration of twenty first-century cybercapitalism. Nevertheless, the riposte to temporal standardisation provided by the extreme temporal modulations of *Ulysses* remains a strong current in the work of DeLillo, a writer who shares Joyce's interest in representing the residual forms that slip through the cracks of modernity.

"This is the time and this is the record of the time": Late DeLillian Temporality

"There are events that fix themselves in memory because even as they are happening, the person living through them knows she has been rocked by a moment that later will be called 'history'." Siri Hustvedt, '9/11 and the American Psyche'.

"If Newton really thought that time was a river like the Thames, then where is its source and into what sea does it finally flow? Every river, as we know, must have banks on both sides, so where […] are the banks of time?" W.G. Sebald, *Austerlitz* (Sebald 142).

Temporality is a distorted presence in DeLillo's late novels, often consolidating past, present and future in a single textual instant. While I have already discussed similar ideas in relation to *Ulysses*, there are nevertheless significant differences between the temporal modulations of Joyce's writing and those invoked by DeLillo. In DeLillo's writing, history itself becomes a substantially altered concept, moulded by the pressures of technological and financial development. Although these pressures are also evident in *Ulysses*, Joyce primarily subordinates them to experiential factors when considering time; by contrast, in DeLillo's work, technology and money *are* time, placing experience and perception in an entirely different context. Despite this sense of totality, DeLillo shares Joyce's use of irony to expose the gaps between the apparent malleability of time and enduringly immutable forces.

Falling Man uses the frame of the September 11th attacks to explore the return of history, demonstrating that reports of its death had been greatly exaggerated. Coming in the context of such a frightening event, this return is a traumatic one, precipitating its own distorted timeframe that is marked by repetition and nonlinearity. Two external factors produce their own distortions: the recorded images of the attacks, present in the form of a VHS player in the novel, and also the counterpoint of a group of dementia

patients, whose own disconnected memories provide a broken lens through which DeLillo refracts the attacks and their aftermath.

Meanwhile, *The Body Artist* conveys its own sense of trauma through time, this time exploring bereavement within its short scope. Written in the seemingly posthistorical moment before the September 11th attacks, it nevertheless asks similar questions to *Falling Man*, distorting time according to the rhythms of trauma and technology, with its protagonist anchoring herself in the aftermath of her husband's death by obsessively watching livestreamed footage of a bland location. Her own sense of time passing is eventually incorporated into an extraordinary performance work, *Body Time*, which constitutes one of DeLillo's earliest explorations of time passing as mediated by art. This allows us to examine the importance of duration in the visual arts as well as recent literature.

Beyond artistic bounds, *Zero K*, uses science to distort time with the development of a cryogenic freezing programme that is intended to conquer temporality altogether. Despite this, DeLillo uses the gap between the project's revolutionary ambitions and technical limitations to force it to return to a recognisable temporal frame, namely hoping for the future to provide the requisite technological developments. Although the ideas raised in the novel inevitably gesture towards posthumanism, there is also a sceptical undercurrent which makes their proximity to older Judeo-Christian notions of eternity apparent. When the technological frames of *Zero K* are stripped bare, the novel returns to a more experiential space that recalls the modernism of Virginia Woolf more than the future possibilities of posthumanity.

Point Omega provides another glimpse of duration in art through the presence of Douglas Gordon's *24 Hour Psycho*, an installation which manipulates the temporal possibilities of cinema. This is paralleled by the apparent timelessness of the novel's desert landscape, but also by the ideas of the Jesuit philosopher Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, who discussed the relationship between time and space in a framework that also considered the ultimate deferral of human extinction. The work of de Chardin appears as a

counterpoint to the technological manipulation of *Zero K*, providing a theological notion of eternity.

The economic elements of temporality are made abundant in *Cosmopolis*, which gestures towards an Omega point of its own, albeit one which is predicated on Thanatos, specifically through the ultimate fate of its protagonist. The technological and financial acceleration which drives twenty-first century modernity is the cornerstone of time as depicted in this novel, yet this is repeatedly undermined by DeLillo, who inserts numerous counter-discursive temporalities within the novel, producing anachronism and stasis when perpetual motion is needed to support the financial systems it depicts. Proust is invoked by DeLillo as the ultimate counterpoint to this, producing a temporal frame which is almost entirely predicated on subjectivity and experience. This allows DeLillo to contrast the state of his world with an earlier form of modernity, exploring precisely what has changed in the perception of time.

End of Endings: *Falling Man*

Despite the 'end of history' infamously posited by Francis Fukuyama at the death of Eastern European communism, DeLillo demonstrates that history very much maintains the power to resurrect itself, often in shocking ways. The break caused by the September 11th attacks is extremely important in this regard; whether the attacks are considered a 'revenge' of history or an example of how events have become unrepresentable is debatable, and DeLillo's work does little to resolve this debate, but what is clear is the enormous significance of September 11th in understanding the relationship of history and time to the contemporary world.

As I have previously discussed, DeLillo's first post-September 11th novel, *Cosmopolis*, disappointed many critics by not dealing with the attacks and their aftermath. Its setting in April 2000 explicitly denies it the possibility of doing so, other than briefly featuring the World Trade Centre towers as a

ghostly figurehead of a world about to disappear. This spectral presence uses a key DeLillo tactic – hindsight – to broaden the novel's theme of financial crisis into a general crisis of western civilisation. A paratextual resonance to the novel has been added by the 2008 financial crisis, greatly improving the retrospective critical assessment of *Cosmopolis* by allowing it to be considered a prescient foretelling of the global economic crisis.

DeLillo's two direct approaches to the attacks, the essay 'In the Ruins of the Future' and *Falling Man*, are more concerned with the effects of the attacks than the historical moment of September 11th 2001. Indeed, the title *Falling Man* is a reference to one of the most haunting – and enduring – cultural artefacts of the attacks, an extraordinary photograph of a person hurtling down from the upper floors of one of the World Trade Centre towers. The novel's conclusion presents a disembodied vision of the same image as the photograph: "Then he saw a shirt come down out of the sky. He walked and saw it fall, arms waving like nothing in his life." (*FM*: 246) The otherworldly, dehumanised vision seen in 'real time' is a stark contrast to the clearly, horrifically, human figure visible in the photograph. The first-hand glimpse of this remarkable image is somehow less 'real' than its photographic representation. This derealised, almost oneiric depiction of that moment suggests the challenge to the real presented by the attacks. As DeLillo put it, "It was bright and totalising and some of us said it was unreal. When we say a thing is unreal, we mean it is too real, a phenomenon so unaccountable and yet so bound to the power of objective fact that we can't tilt it to the slant of our perceptions." ('ITROTF')

Play with duration is a common theme in works dealing with the attacks and their aftermath. To give two examples from music, William Basinski's *The Disintegration Loops* maintains a sprawling series of repetitive loops, expanding tiny snatches of music to take up vast expanses of time[28]; meanwhile, Steve Reich's *WTC 9/11* uses repetition as well as spoken samples

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[28] Solely comprised of samples of music taken from decaying magnetic tapes, *The Disintegration Loops* forms a musical analogy to the decayed images of memory; the slow mutation of its pieces over their long durations allows this process to be made audible.

of air traffic controllers and interviews with survivors to deal with the traumatic aftermath of the attacks[29]. In *Falling Man*, the post-September 11th period is interspersed with flashes of the attacks themselves, combining a long, meditative expanse of time with the flashes of immediacy induced by post-traumatic memory. This is less an end of history than an end of a *linear* view of history. Even those who were only indirectly affected by the attacks are demonstrated by DeLillo to have experienced this temporal dislocation. Lianne, the estranged partner of Keith, a survivor of the attacks, struggles to reconcile the sight of the man with the events he endured.

> There was Keith in the doorway. Always that, had to be that, the desperate sight of him, alive, her husband. She tried to follow the sequence of events, seeing him as she spoke, a figure floating in reflected light, Keith in pieces, in small strokes (*FM*: 126).

It is as though Keith's visibility to others has been altered by his experience, his mere presence enough to produce fragmented views of the attacks. The collective traumatic memory clearly extends far beyond those who were physically present at the World Trade Centre.

Time in *Falling Man* also has the power of recovery. Having suffered a wrist injury in the attacks, Keith's subsequent course of exercises is "restorative"; more significant than the physical effect is the soothing quality of the repetitive movements he performs, "the counting of seconds, the counting of repetitions, the times of day he reserved for the exercises, the ice he applied following each set of exercises." (*FM*: 40) As in musical responses to the attacks, repetition aids the healing process, both physically and mentally. The repetition induced by physiotherapy even allows Keith a form of communion with those who were more severely affected by the attacks. "There were the dead and maimed. His injury was slight but it wasn't the torn cartilage that was the subject of this effort. It was the chaos, the levitation of ceilings and floors, the voices choking in smoke." (Ibid.) Repetition is a mnemonic device,

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[29] Reich's earlier piece *Different Trains* uses a similar form to explore the legacy of the Holocaust, contrasting the experience of travel on American railways to the trains used to move Holocaust victims to death camps.

albeit one which allows a clearer recollection of the instant of the attacks than trauma would normally permit.

The theme of repetition persists in responses to the attacks. At the conclusion of Moshfegh's *My Year of Rest and Relaxation*, the protagonist repeatedly watches a VHS recording of the news coverage of the attacks as a means of soothing herself. The image of a falling woman – who may be her troubled and estranged friend – is largely the object of this obsession "not because she looks like Reva and I think it's her, almost exactly her, and not because Reva and I had been friends, or because I'll never see her again, but because she is beautiful." (Moshfegh 289) Through repetition, this disturbing image mutates into something hauntingly beautiful. The physical process of rewinding and replaying the video footage of the attacks artificially accelerates the time spent emotionally processing the aftermath, just as Keith's hand exercises gradually allow a clarity of memory to return from his post-traumatic fog.

Equally, reflections on the attacks can force trauma to recur. A recurring strand of *Falling Man* sees a performance artist appear at various locations in Manhattan, contorting his body in the manner of the falling man in the photograph of the same name. For many bystanders, this is an unwelcome and upsetting sight, often provoking anger or fear:

> [He] brought it back, of course, those stark moments in the burning towers when people fell or were forced to jump. He'd been seen dangling from a balcony in a hotel atrium and police had escorted him out of a concert hall and two or three apartment buildings with terraces or accessible rooftops (*FM*: 33).

While the predictability of repetition allows the comfort of knowing what is to follow, the seemingly random appearances of the falling man reproduce the raw shock of the event itself. Repetition produces a sense of continuity, an understanding that there is an intrinsic connection between past, present and future. This sense was obliterated by the attacks, instead leaving a temporal singularity in which "Nothing is next. There is no next. This was next." (*FM*: 10) While simple repetitive acts of physiotherapy or media-driven reflection allow

a semblance of continuity to return, the actions of the falling man return all those in his presence to the seemingly inescapable moment of the attacks, destroying the sense of a future.

The collapse of time precipitated by the falling man's performances reflects DeLillo's position in the temporal debates around postmodernism and postmodernity. Boxall describes DeLillo's late work as arriving at "the condition of a total obsolescence," which marks "the consummation of DeLillo's narrative of technological development." (Boxall, *Don DeLillo* 223) The implications of this for technology will be addressed in a subsequent chapter; this notion of a condition of obsolescence can, however, also be applied to time itself. Boxall identifies "reverse déjà vu" as a key feature of DeLillian temporality (Ibid. 224), creating "a perpetual sense of déjà vu, déjà vu both as the experience of an unrecoverable but nevertheless recovered past, and as the premonitory encounter with an as yet unlived future." (Ibid.) This 'reverse déjà vu' manifests itself in several ways in relation to the attacks. In *Cosmopolis*, the World Trade Centre maintains a proto-spectral presence; the collapse of seemingly invincible economic forces in the novel constitutes a September 11th *avant la lettre*. *Falling Man* addresses the other side of this temporal coin, repeatedly confronting survivors and witnesses of the attacks with the moment of trauma. The blurring of memory and performance produced by the presence of the falling man induces a return to the time and place of the attacks, disrupting the boundary between past and present, and art and history.

Boundaries are equally disrupted by the nested structure of the novel; although it begins and ends with a depiction of the collapse of the North Tower, events are otherwise related at a distance. Keith's experiences are retold to Lianne, and these retellings are in turn related by DeLillo's narrator. The switch between immediacy and memory produces a dialectic of presence and absence, perhaps even allowing the towers of the World Trade Centre to momentarily reappear. Despite the sparseness of DeLillo's prose, some of the imagery used around the idea of presence and absence is revealing. Giorgio Morandi's still lifes are repeatedly referenced, sometimes even merging with

the real world. "The two dark objects, the white bottle, the huddled boxes. Lianne turned away from the painting and saw the room itself as a still life, briefly. Then the human figures appear." (*FM*: 111) The frozen world depicted by still lifes provides a means of stopping time; Lianne's perception of her surroundings as a still life demonstrates the stasis of the post-attack period, and her ability to comprehend the future in the light of such events. For a moment at least, the relentless march of time is paused.

Time and memory are distorted in one of the novel's main subplots, a writing group for patients in the early stages of dementia organised by Lianne. As the Alzheimer's disease specialist Harold Apter states to Lianne, "From this point on, you understand, it's all about loss." (*FM*: 60) The decay of memory seen in the members of the writing group is slowly indicated by changes in the style and content of their writing, leading to "diminishing returns" (Ibid.) which eventually wither away to nothing. Although clearly a counterpoint to Keith's journey of memory, the trajectory of the members of the writing group sharply contrasts with the sense of clarity he edges towards. Through repetition, the ravages of time allow him to reclaim a clearer vision of the attacks and his place in them, while for the writing group, time is a force which pushes them closer to obliteration.

While both of these examples demonstrate the fallibility of memory, even the ability to reflect through media retains a potential for error. Like Moshfegh's protagonist, Florence, a survivor of the attacks, repeatedly watches footage of them. She compares her own memory to the images on the screen:

> The skies she retained in memory were dramas of cloud and sea
> storm, or the electric sheen before summer thunder in the city, always
> belonging to the energies of sheer weather, of what was out there, air
> masses, water vapour, westerlies. This was different, a clear sky that
> carries human terror in those streaking aircraft, first one, then the
> other, the force of men's intent (*FM*: 134).

Although the recording allows Florence to correct her own false memories, even this is manipulated by the knowledge of what is to come, the sense of

intent and menace from the danger lurking in the clear sky. When watching footage of the attacks with Keith, both survivors attempt to see it anew, but find this impossible; Keith claims "It still looks like an accident, the first one," which Florence attributes to "The way the camera sort of shows surprise." Keith replies that "by the time the second plane appears […] we're all a little older and wiser." (*FM*: 135) While the video footage allows the memory of the moment to be resurrected, this is still inherently modulated by subsequent events; the loss of innocence suggested by the appearance of the second plane is a terminal one which cannot be reversed by rewatching the attacks.

The back-and-forth narrative of *Falling Man* allows similar tricks of memory to take place. As Joseph M. Conte states:

> Just as he employed a recursive timeline from 1951 to the post-Cold-War present in *Underworld*, DeLillo structures *Falling Man* as a retrograde loop, beginning with the pinwheel of disintegration as the ash and girders and office paper and human forms fall in pieces over lower Manhattan on that September morning in 2001 (Conte 567-68).

In *Falling Man*, the attacks constitute a ground zero of time at which a new timeline begins. Life is divided into the pre-September 11th and post-September 11th periods, with only the timeframe of the attacks themselves straddling this barrier. The novel's structure, oscillating between both side of this divide, allows visions of parallel worlds, demonstrating the permanent changes forced by the attacks.

Falling Man extends across the two years that follow the attacks, incorporating protests against the Iraq War and the death of David Janiak, the falling man performance artist. Janiak's death – surprisingly "of natural causes" (*FM*: 220) – has a dual effect. While the natural death of a man who engaged in such a risky pursuit (incurring the sometimes violent ire of others in the process) marks a return to 'normal' biological processes, it also returns the loop of memory to the immediate aftermath of the attacks. Reading Janiak's obituary leads Lianne to contemplate her father's suicide, a pre-emptive strike against his encroaching dementia (*FM*: 218); she is then

transported to the image of the falling man posing outside a schoolyard in the days following the attacks (*FM*: 224). By contrasting Janiak's death with the attacks and the suicide of Lianne's father, DeLillo allows us to question the role of human control in events. While Janiak's art played on a conscious response to a pre-meditated suicide attack, his death appears to have evaded his control. This bluntly ironic moment in the novel questions whether, in contradiction to many beliefs, there is somehow an amount of dignity in having control over one's death.

An even more uncomfortable question can be inferred from the novel's approach to death, and especially from Janiak's work: can any aesthetic qualities be observed in disasters such as acts of terrorism? The responses to Richard Drew's real-life 'Falling Man' photograph constitute a debate on this matter; it was widely used in print media on September 12th 2001 but after allegations of poor taste, it was subsequently removed from many publications (Conte 575). The furore around Janiak's performances parallels the debate about Drew's photograph, in which the raw emotions of New Yorkers collided with cold aesthetics.

In his provocative collection *The Spirit of Terrorism*, Baudrillard examines the attacks on the level of the image. He claims "[the] impact of the images, and their fascination, are necessarily what we retain, since images are, whether we like it or not, our primal scene. […] [they] can also be said to have radicalized the relation of the image to reality." (Baudrillard, *The Spirit of Terrorism* 26-27) Rather like Janiak's work, Baudrillard's writing on the attacks caused outrage in the United States; a review in the *New York Times* caustically referred to his "cerebral cold-bloodedness," claiming "It takes a rare, demonic genius to brush off the slaughter of thousands on the grounds that they were suffering from severe ennui brought about by boring modern architecture." (Kirn) The collision of emotion and cogitation produces such a corrosive conflict, yet this awkward conjunction is not entirely distant from aesthetic apprehension itself. Despite Baudrillard's acknowledgement that the attacks were "immoral," (Baudrillard, *The Spirit of Terrorism* 12) his framing of the debate within his views on globalisation denies his reading of events the

opportunity to attain a sense of intrinsic morality. While this is primarily political, it is also leads Baudrillard to contemplate the September 11th attacks as an aesthetic phenomenon.

Like Janiak, the attackers used subterfuge in order to make their point: "[using] the banality of American everyday life as cover and camouflage. Sleeping in their suburbs, reading and studying with their families, before activating themselves suddenly like time bombs." (Ibid. 19-20) The vision of Janiak appearing on a school fence is so disturbing to Lianne precisely because it emerges in such a superficially benign location. Hammad, a hijacker glimpsed briefly at the end of the each section of the novel, forms an imperfect analogue to Janiak – and Baudrillard. While he is "invisible" (*FM*: 171) to the denizens of Middle America who surround him during his pilot training, his camouflage is limited. Nevertheless, he uses his relative cover to contemplate the ease with which he can conduct a carjacking (*FM*: 172), or pass through airport security prior to participating in the planned suicide attack (*FM*: 173). Significantly, he is aware that his camouflage may be easily penetrated by the security services, with their "watch lists and undercover agents." (Ibid.) The time pressure added by the threat of surveillance becomes a driving force for Hammad and his fellow hijackers, who suspect they may never get to carry out their planned atrocity.

The preparations for the attacks – frantic and pressurised – are far from fertile territory for aesthetic appreciation. It is in the moment of aesthetic apprehension, the "intense instant of imagination" (*U*: 9.381) as Stephen puts it in *Ulysses* that these factors truly come into view. The horrific instant of the attacks, an image seared onto the minds of thousands of observers and billions who subsequently saw the images on television, constitutes a forced engagement with aesthetics. The almost unreal images reflected the thoughts and goals of the attackers with a nightmarish intensity. It is perhaps only through the multiperspectival view afforded by DeLillo – a triangulated perspective which shows the moment of the first plane crashing into the tower through the eyes of Hammad (a hijacker), Keith (a survivor) and Lianne

(an observer) – that some form of clarity can be attained. Even the studied coldness of Baudrillard's response betrays a political rage which defies sense.

Janiak's response, carefully considered yet deeply insensitive, is interesting from a temporal perspective. While Janiak's performances have some temporal distance, they begin in the days following the events; the distance of time in question is clearly insufficient to allow the attacks to be viewed as anything other than a recent trauma. More saliently, Janiak's still figure allows him to replicate the sense of time standing still that may be felt by observers to such a shocking event. As Hamilton Carroll claims:

> Seemingly existing only in the cycles of repetition that characterize both trauma and the media coverage of the event, September 11 stands outside of narrative time. The event is all but lost, trapped between the cacophonous media cycle in which footage of the falling towers was replayed over and over and the counter imperative for a truer, fuller representational account of those events (Carroll 109).

In this cyclical model of time after the attacks, a question is raised about Janiak's actions: do his attempts to recreate a single moment produce allow that moment to be transcended in time, or do they merely fall back into stasis?

In the narrative of *Falling Man* at least, Janiak's actions allow a return to the moment that begins and ends the novel, smoothing its extremely complex timeframe into one sprawling instant. Carroll notes the ekphrastic qualities of elements of the novel (Carroll 116), and this dimension finds an analogue in Janiak's performances; DeLillo's descriptions of Morandi's paintings slow the narrative, providing pause for thought and reflection. The temporal effects of DeLillo's ekphrasis[30] are enhanced by the subject matter of the paintings, all of which are still lifes. While Janiak's movements are not themselves ekphrastic, they share several qualities with this element of DeLillo's writing.

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[30] The definition of ekphrasis is a source of some debate; while describing DeLillo's writing on Morandi as ekphrastic is uncontroversial, the use of the term in relation to digital media is not widely accepted. Cecilia Lindhé argues for an expansion of the term in the article '"A Visual Sense is Born in the Fingertips": Towards a Digital Ekphrasis'.

They relate to the attacks themselves but also to a specific image of September 11th – Drew's 'Falling Man' photograph. Just as the photograph freezes time, so do Janiak's performances; this plays on the entwinement of distance and immediacy allowed by the modulation of time in DeLillo's novel. Crucially, neither Drew nor Janiak allows their version of the falling man to reach the ground. While Drew's figure is frozen in one instant, Janiak uses a harness to break his fall (*FM*: 220). In these parallel worlds of representation, disaster is averted.

Although there appears to be a contradiction between the speed of digital media and the slowness of ekphrasis, DeLillo manages to combine the two in the image of an ekphrastic medium. The reduplication implied in television news images allows the march of time to slow to the pace of reflection; Carroll notes that "DeLillo's descriptions of what Lianne sees, of the televisual images themselves, are quickly transformed into a meditation on the act of watching in relation to questions of memory and experience." (Carroll 118) From the incessantly repeated footage of the attacks, DeLillo develops an ekphrastic sensibility akin to his descriptions of Morandi's paintings. Carroll suggests that the role of television footage is pivotal to understanding the novel's treatment of time and memory:

> Lianne's viewing of the footage replicates the seemingly endless repetition that characterized the media coverage in the early days after the attacks. The cycle of repetition DeLillo describes evokes not only the event, but also addresses the problems of memory and witnessing that dominate the descriptions of Keith's firsthand memories at other points in the novel (Ibid.).

Perhaps even more significant than the television itself is the role of the VCR, the technology which permits this play of memory to take place. The act of rewinding and pausing the video tape produces a physical relationship to the images on the screen. As Florence and Keith repeatedly watch video footage of the attacks, Florence momentarily moves her finger to the "power button on the remote," but decides to keep watching. Left watching in unease, her

body slows to "a deep pause." (*FM*: 134) The repetitive images of the VHS allow this meditative, almost hypnotic state to be reached, a condition of pure memory.

Despite the endless repetition of the images of the attacks, commentators have suggested these images have limits. Slavoj Žižek claims "it is surprising how little of the actual carnage we see", comparing western coverage of the attacks to reporting on atrocities in developing countries (Žižek 13). On similar lines, Anne Longmuir notes the fine line between ideas of 'good taste' and "the ideological implications of [this] censorship." (Longmuir 50) The form of memory prompted by media retellings of the attacks is one imbued with a particular ideological weight. It is against this backdrop that Janiak's performances of memory exist. Despite the clear importance of ekphrasis to understanding the role of memory in *Falling Man*, it is through the troubling performances of Janiak that this can truly be interrogated. Longmuir claims:

> In place of Morandi's apparently ahistorical art, DeLillo offers Janiak's performance art as a locus of genuine political opposition, not least because it deals directly and explicitly with 'history,' but because it depicts an aspect of 9/11 that was, by and large, not allowed to appear in the public sphere in the United States: the photographs and footage of the people who fell, or jumped, from the Twin Towers (Ibid. 44).

The conditions of memory that Janiak engages with are damaged, erased or censored. Against the pressure of self-censorship, political concerns and simple sensitivity, Janiak's art reproduces painful and disturbing memories, bringing them into the present moment of a scarred city.

Janiak's performances are analogous to the real-life performance art of Kerry Skarbakka, whose photographic collection *The Struggle to Right Oneself* features images of the artist falling in a variety of settings (Ibid. 51). The release date of the collection (2002) poses similar temporal questions to Janiak's work, in addressing recent events; indeed, New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg condemned Skarbakka's work (Ibid.), which is parodied in *Falling Man*'s "MAYOR SAYS FALL MAN MORONIC" (*FM*: 222) headline. Longmuir

cites Skarbakka, but also the artists Eric Fischl and Sharon Paz, as examples of artists whose work caused public offence in the aftermath of the attacks (Longmuir 51). Aside from the difficult – perhaps even offensive – subject matter at hand, the passage of time is a significant factor in the angry responses elicited by these artists, and especially Janiak. Through the recursive timeline of *Falling Man*, the difficulty of establishing temporal boundaries to art is explored. Arguably, DeLillo's decision to publish the novel in 2007, after several years of work, is itself a comment on the difficulty of marking the limits of an 'acceptable' timeframe for depictions of real-life tragedies.

Within *Falling Man*, the exact boundaries of the novel's timeline are only thinly outlined. It takes places over at least three years; the third section of the novel opens with a protest which appears to be the demonstration against the Republican Party Convention in August 2004[31] (*FM*: 181). It is difficult to establish Janiak's position in this temporal structure, but he appears to value the immediacy of his response to the attacks as a significant feature of his artistic career; "Early in 2003 he began to reduce the number of performances and tended to appear only in remote parts of the city." (*FM*: 223) A back injury stops the performances around this time, but their diminishing nature suggests they would have presumably tapered to a halt regardless. Although his performances invoke a temporal modality that relies on stasis, recurrence and déjà vu, Janiak's career is nevertheless dependent on more conventional time factors, namely the increasing distance between his performances and the attacks, and the physical wear and tear that is concomitant with his years of performance. Over time, the bounds of acceptability are stretched, and the sense of transgression necessary for the art of Janiak becomes increasingly limited.

Conventional wisdom suggests the distance of time presents opportunities for resolution; the ability to construct a narrative from traumatic events forms an

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[31] Although the date is established as August 29th 2004 (marked in the text as the jazz musician Charlie Parker's birthday) (*FM*: 182), there is also a clear evocation of the widespread protests against the Iraq War that took place worldwide in February 2003.

important marker in this. Longmuir notes that "unlike traumatized memory, 'normal' memory takes the form of stories or narratives." (Longmuir 54) As she suggests, the only characters in *Falling Man* who truly attempt to develop a narrative understanding of the attacks are the members of Lianne's dementia group, for whom the act of literary expression becomes a means of attempting to reconcile their failing memory to the unspeakable trauma that has been visited upon their city. For Longmuir, this even forms "an ironic comment on the American media and government's response" (Ibid.) to the attacks; while this critical response itself is dependent on the short-term political implications of the attacks (and their more enduring effects), a broader reading suggests any attempt to narrativise trauma is doomed to failure. The loose structure of *Falling Man* – a series of barely-connected vignettes, sprawling over an almost undefined period of several years – is a reflection of this difficulty, and a sign of DeLillo's refusal to engage in narrative techniques that do not afford the full trauma of the attacks to be considered. The unrepresentability of the attacks, and their long-ranging consequences, is somehow represented by DeLillo in the amorphousness of *Falling Man*.

The relationship between dementia and trauma that is established by the role of the writing group is heightened by Lianne's personal background: her father's suicide. This layering of traumatic memory assists the temporal ebb and flow of the narrative, enmeshing cataclysmic events with dementia in such a manner that dementia almost becomes a *recovery* of memory, a means of allowing traumas to be processed without censorship of thought or emotion. The decisive actions of Lianne's father in the face of catastrophe form a curious parallel to two sides of the attacks: the suicide attackers themselves, but also those who jumped from the towers. All of these people somehow embody the ultimate control over time: the ability to terminate one's own life and permanently change the lives of others in the process.

"A house of dust on open ground": Performed Time in *The Body Artist*

The Body Artist opens with a series of meditations on time, interspersed with a quotidian breakfast scene. While far removed from the epochal events of the September 11th attacks, DeLillo plays with time in a similar manner to *Falling Man*, pausing altogether at certain moments. In the novel, "Time seems to pass," (*TBA*: 3) clearly a different state of affairs to time actually passing. While there is superficially little to separate this from the subjective time posited as a key facet of modernism, DeLillo's time is peculiar to the conditions of the turn of the twenty-first century. As Boxall states, late DeLillian temporality "suggest[s] a new technological-economic complex that produces a different kind of time, a thin, simultaneous time in which it is hard to gain a narrative purchase." (Boxall, 'Late' 690) The enmeshing of highly abstract temporal reflections and images of daily life in the opening pages of *The Body Artist* epitomises the elusive quality of time in DeLillo's hands.

The temporalisation of art is so vital to understanding Janiak's performances in *Falling Man* forms an offshoot of *The Body Artist*, in which Lauren (the eponymous body artist) becomes increasingly unmoored from time. DeLillo's first novel published after the dawn of the new millennium leads to a temporal plateau, in which time is a spent force while still somehow advancing forward. The crucial points of the novel are temporal lacunae, in which the sense of motion stops and a point of stasis is reached. While the September 11th attacks reasserted the importance of historical experience and led to a widespread reconsideration of temporal and historical factors in western culture, *The Body Artist* marks the millennial period in which there is little sense of temporal identity. The 'thinness' of time alluded to by Boxall is made possible by a world in which the historical ballast of the twentieth-century is released, only to find itself weighed down by new ideological and historical narratives. While the brief interstice between the millennium and the attack on the United States has emerged as a distinctive historical and cultural period – epitomised in literature by Moshfegh's aforementioned novel as well as works by writers like Tom McCarthy – it nevertheless appears

here as a negative temporal space, one in which time passes blankly while giving the illusion of stasis.

This sense of a pause is strongly suggested by the analogy of the VCR in *Falling Man*, but in *The Body Artist*, it appears as the result of more esoteric factors, most significantly the effects of Rey's death on his wife Lauren. Finding herself detached from time, Lauren engages in regimented activities such as catching a timetabled ferry in order to "organize time until she could live again." (*TBA*: 36) As in *Falling Man*, grief and trauma drastically reorganise the temporal experience for those who have endured tragic events and are struggling to resume their lives in the aftermath. The small scale of *The Body Artist* allows Lauren's grief to be seen in close focus, rehearsing the drama of September 11th on a smaller scale.

Like *Falling Man*, the passage of time is mediated by technology. While the repeated media images of the attacks enact a form of recurrence and arguably accelerate the recovery process for survivors like Keith and Florence, *The Body Artist* uses technology to produce a different temporal effect. Lauren spends "hours at the computer screen looking at a live-streaming video feed from the edge of a two-lane road in a city in Finland." (*TBA*: 37) Despite her desire to use repetitive activities to resume a semblance of normal life, Lauren's viewing of the webcam feed allows her to access its "dead time" (Ibid.). This alternate temporal dimension is an eternal present, live but faceless and almost unchangingly repetitive. The instantaneous access to the feed allows a technological means of representing an eternal present, the world without end of the twenty-first century.

While technology facilitates a means of reliving (and relieving) trauma in *Falling Man*, the webcam feed does not provide a similar function; in *The Body Artist*, that role is fulfilled by the presence of an infantile homeless man who invades Lauren's rented house. He occupies a savant-like position, talking on a level that requires "many levels of perception" (*TBA*: 51) to comprehend. Laura Di Prete sees the presence of the man as constituting a form of replacement of Rey "as it mimics a dead man's words, renews and

compulsively repeats in Lauren's psyche the trauma of an intolerable loss" (Di Prete 488). This function mirrors the video recordings of the September 11th attacks, ventriloquising the otherwise unspeakable voice of trauma through mediation. While neither form of ventriloquism allows a loss to be recovered, both allow the barrier between the remembered past and barren future to be breached.

The novel's sense of time is eroded by the man's strange presence. Lauren's suggestion that he may live "in a kind of time that [had] no narrative quality" (*TBA*: 68) is as much a self-reflexive statement on DeLillo's behalf as it is a portal into Lauren's thoughts; riding on the coattails of the historically expansive *Underworld*, *The Body Artist* is a conspicuously compact work. Boxall notes the inversion which took place in DeLillo's work after *Underworld*, leading to "an explosion" of the historical and temporal organising principles that structured his pre-millennium opus (Boxall, *Don DeLillo* 215). Exemplified by *The Body Artist*, DeLillo's post-millennial work is focused on the temporal contradiction "that [this] evacuation of the moment, this entry into the suspended non-time of posthistorical mourning, is also a delivery into the very fibrous material of the moment itself. […] Here, a deficit of time is indistinguishable from a surplus." (Ibid. 217) While this marks a departure from a historical trajectory, it also expresses the specific qualities of time at the dawn of the twenty-first century; Boxall compares *The Body Artist* and *Cosmopolis* as novels which "take their temporal co-ordinates from the evolution of technologies which are transforming the social production of space and time in the twenty-first century." (Ibid. 221)

Virtually all of DeLillo's twenty-first century novels use corporeal themes to remodel time. The repetitive exercises of Keith in *Falling Man*, the prototypical quantified self of Packer in *Cosmopolis*, and the knife-edge of bodily decay and immortality of *Zero K* all develop this idea. *The Body Artist*, however, forms DeLillo's most sustained engagement with the intersection of temporality and the body. As in *Falling Man*, repetitive motions allow the sense of time passing to return; "After the first days back [following Rey's death] she began to do her breathing exercises." (*TBA*: 36) The focus on

Lauren's body persists throughout the novel, often marking time. Even acts of exfoliation reveal a hidden temporal content, the resulting dead skin emerging "as the cell death of something inside her." (*TBA*: 89) The bodily processes that Lauren unconceals demonstrate the inner workings of a biological clock; through her painstaking attention to physical detail, Lauren accesses this temporal dimension within her own body.

As in *Falling Man*, ekphrasis forms a crucial means of exploring this bodily time. The penultimate chapter of *The Body Artist* concludes with a brief newspaper article, written by Lauren's friend Mariella Chapman, which records the work of performance art produced by Lauren after the events of the preceding chapter and features a brief interview. The work (*Body Time*) incorporates most of the repetitive events that have occurred between Lauren and the intruder, a corporeal replaying of memory and the past. While Lauren is keen to emphasise that the piece is not a direct consequence of "what happened to Rey," (*TBA*: 115) his death is clearly the catalyst for the emotional and habitual changes which enabled Lauren to pursue such extreme ends. While the death is not itself featured in the memory reel of the piece, Lauren's bodily presence – consciously withering away to almost nothing – reflects a trajectory towards death. At its conclusion, she inhabits a figure uncannily similar to that of the tramp who emerged in her home, "a naked man, emaciated and aphasic, trying desperately to tell us something." (*TBA*: 111)

The paralinguistic space occupied by Lauren at the conclusion of the piece allows her to access memories and experiences that cannot be comprehended in the instant of apprehension, somehow vocalising them through an extraordinary "monologue without a context," in which "Verbs and pronouns scatter in the air." (*TBA*: 114) The monologue, recalling Lucky's speech in *Waiting for Godot* but even further removed from semantic content, so much that it cannot be represented in writing, ventriloquises memory itself. While it would be crass to claim Lauren is somehow 'possessed' by Rey at this stage, it is clear that her own asceticism allows her trajectory to align itself with his path, turning away from the march of time altogether. Paradoxically, her

efforts – particularly the physical process of semi-starvation that is implied – require the passage of time to bear fruit. The narrator emphasises that "You are made out of time […] Time is the only narrative that matters. It stretches events and makes it possible for us to suffer and come out of it and see death happen and come out of it. But not for him." (*TBA* 98-99) Presumably referring to the intruder in Lauren's house, this passage goes some way towards a suggestion of the intersection between her grief and fascination with this stranger.

Although *Body Time* only lasts seventy-five minutes, the porous boundary between the performance and Lauren's life affords it a far greater duration. Her stated desire is to "Stop time, or stretch it out, or open it up. Make a still life that's living not painted." (*TBA*: 113) Despite the use of temporal constraints not adopted by Lauren, the idea of durational performance – often associated with the Fluxus artists working from the 1960s onwards – has a similar effect on time. Natasha Lushetich notes the implications for the "continuous mutual configuration between form and emptiness, between the already existing and the not-yet-existing […] deployed on two different but mutually configuring time scales - that of lived and phenomenal time" in durational performances (Lushetich 85). Lauren's performance collapses the boundary between the experiential time of her life and the distorted time imposed by the performance. Her desire to make it "sparer, even slower than it is" (*TBA*: 112-13) firmly suggests the ability of the artist to control the perception of time through their work. Time in this context is a purely experiential domain, defined by phenomenological rather than physical factors.

Lushetich examines one particular work – Alison Knowles's *Identical Lunch* – to develop this point. Knowles's performance entailed eating the same lunch "for a period of over a year, at exactly the same place, the Riss Restaurant in New York, and approximately the same time of day." (Lushetich 85) While certain aleatoric factors (seasonal differences, minor changes in food preparation, variations in staff or customers at the restaurant) affect the

ability of Knowles to faithfully reproduce the same performance, the sense of continuity is striking.

> Here, the phenomenal continuity of the noonday lunch situation, part of the performer's own continuity and thus history as well as narrative identity, is determined always anew in the discontinuity of 'disparate moments' of which the performer's lived time consists (Lushetich 85-86).

This places the performance itself within the broader frame of the artist's life, creating an eternal present in which they are always performing, and yet not performing. Although Lauren's interviewer categorises her performances as "acting," (*TBA*: 111) the distorted line between her art and life suggests otherwise. Through its repetitive reflections of her life, Lauren's work produces what Lushetich terms "pure duration, a qualitative, multisensorially texturized, musicalized immersion in the thickness of existence." (Lushetich 86) This palpability of time manifests itself in the audience and their reactions; as Lauren's interviewer and reviewer claims, "[she] wanted her audience to feel time go by, viscerally, even painfully. This is what happened, causing walkouts among the less committed." (*TBA*: 110) The endurance of the artist is less significant than that of the audience, all of whom are challenged to enter the temporal frame of grief inhabited by Lauren. Art is a manipulator of time to the observer, reflecting but also distorting temporal phenomena.

Great Release: Posthumous Time in *Zero K*

While questions of art are rarely far from DeLillo's writing, science and technology are also highly significant in understanding late DeLillian time. The closest DeLillo's work has come to an overt engagement with science-fiction, *Zero K* explicitly addresses temporal concerns in relation to runaway technological development. In the near-future of *Zero K*, technology begins to control time not just in the sense of perception, but with a tangible physical effect. The development of a cryogenic freezing programme in an area named

the Convergence allows bodies to be preserved until future developments permit their reanimation. While this theme is familiar, both from science-fiction and from the ambitions of real-world fringe movements[32], the programme depicted in *Zero K* differs, in that the living volunteer is to be 'killed' and preserved with the hope of being resurrected later. Human agency prevails in this cycle of life and death, hoping to conquer time.

In its cycles of life, death and potential resurrection, *Zero K* establishes two separate trajectories, bifurcated in the motivations behind them. The novel's treatment of cryogenics is introduced with the case of Artis, the narrator's stepmother who suffers from a degenerative illness which will eventually kill her; it is presumed that, should the technology to resurrect Artis be subsequently designed, it would also be possible to cure her illness, affording her a healthy life that is hitherto impossible. Her state is already liminal, straddling the boundary between life and death, a condition of metempsychosis (*ZK*: 48). Her position in contrasted with that of her husband, Ross, who wishes to die with her, believing "One dies, the other has to die." (*ZK*: 112) An extra layer of artificiality is introduced into Ross's timeline by the fact that he assumes control not only of his possible resurrection, but also his death itself, something which is managed by the Zero K unit, a strange, quasi-religious organisation which deals with the death and preservation of its clients.

An oppressive undercurrent in the novel continually emphasises the fact that the process of preservation and reanimation is dependent on hope, a hope which is profoundly uncertain. In her last moments, Artis wonders "But am I who I was," eventually fading to the state of "[a] woman's body in a pod." (*ZK*: 162) The cynical framing of the drive to immortality is suggested in the novel's title; although it is a reference to a temperature of zero kelvins, the lowest temperature theoretically attainable, a guide informs Jeffrey that "the temperature employed in cryostorage does not actually approach zero K." (*ZK*: 143) Such a temperature is barely physically possible, and a state of

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[32] A noteworthy account of transhumanism which is consonant with *Zero K* in many ways is Mark O'Connell's *To Be a Machine*.

absolute zero would exceed the parameters of classical physics altogether (Kosloff, Geva and Gordon 8093). In the context of the Convergence, it represents the hope for future scientific discoveries rather than a current physical reality. For the technical aspects of *Zero K* to become reality, the passage of time must be conquered in both scientific and religious terms, allowing new, currently unimaginable technologies to attain the quasi-religious aims of Ross, Artis and their peers.

Although DeLillo steadfastly denies the seductiveness of immortality, his presentation of such a concept is nevertheless a significant deviation in his late style. Boxall has identified DeLillo's post-millennial work to engage with the "sense of an ending" shared by a diverse range of theorists "Theodor Adorno to Gilles Deleuze, from Francis Fukuyama to Fredric Jameson," (Boxall, 'Late' 681) yet *Zero K* presents a form of resistance against this idea. Even in the maelstrom of environmental and political disarray, and in a physical space that is repeatedly compared to a hospice, the Convergence provides the semblance of an escape from endings, a glimmer of hope of new possibilities, albeit with the sense that these possibilities are unrealisable. The publication date of *Zero K* – 2016 – offers a tantalising if coincidental parallel between its "end of endings" and the sense of a significant break in the global order. Political events in the United Kingdom and United States that year opened up a new timeframe of entropy, drawing a line under the heat death of western liberal democracy that was implied by so many theorists of lateness. So many of the possibilities presented by *Zero K* are derived from abused or fictional science (even the notion of storing bodies at zero kelvins is exposed as a sham within the novel). This bastardised sense of immortality stems less from scientific developments than the imagination itself; it is hard not to draw parallels between the pseudo-scientific cult leaders of DeLillo's novel and the liars, charlatans and fantasists of contemporary political discourse. Like *Cosmopolis*, the temporal space of *Zero K* stretches far beyond its publication, attaining an afterlife that is extended by its intersection with real-world events.

The idea of thinking beyond endings is curiously anathematic to the attitude so often prefigured by DeLillo's later work. Boxall identifies tautology as a key trait of DeLillo's late style, claiming "The slightness of DeLillo's late works follows from this tautologous logic. He produces a style that is so transparent, that has become so nearly itself, that it carries a death within it." (Boxall, 'A Leap Out of Our Biology' 532) While this minimalist prose is maintained in *Zero K*, it is not so closely paralleled in its events. The Thanatos that defines characters in *The Body Artist*, *Cosmopolis* and *Point Omega* is modulated by the desire for immortality that pervades *Zero K*, producing a death drive which is itself subordinated to a desire for life. Through its weaving of human and posthuman, *Zero K* achieves

> a distinct, late stylistic means of picturing a humanity that has reached a late historical tipping point, a humanity whose most intimate self-congress is being shaped by an encounter with a leap beyond its own determining conditions, a leap out of its own biology (Ibid. 546).

These dialectics of mortality and immortality, scarcity and abundance, time and timelessness, present the current state of humanity, probing and potentially transcending its own limits, while at the same time staring its own obliteration in the face.

Despite the future-oriented nature of *Zero K*, this is nevertheless a future dependent on the termination of the present. Despite the promise of rebirth, infertility looms large; the Convergence is located in a Central Asian desert, an area prone to extremes of heat and cold. Synthetic greenery adorns the facility, acting more as a mirage than an oasis, merely deceiving the viewer into the illusion of an English country garden, eerily "unruffled by the breeze" (*ZK*: 122). The entire project of the Convergence is a riposte to nature; as one of its monk-like dwellers puts it, "Nature wants to kill us off in order to return to its untouched and uncorrupted form." (*ZK*: 70) To achieve this ultimate corruption of the natural order, natural time must be somehow bypassed. While the isolation of the Convergence produces a timeless space in relation

to clock time, the ability to free oneself from natural cycles remains a distant fantasy.

As with the moment of the September 11th attacks seen in *Falling Man*, the activities at the Convergence produce a breakdown of the temporal order, through actions which deliberately mangle the workings of nature. Increasingly, the activities at the Convergence take on the dimension of a peculiar philosophical experiment, an exploration of the outer limits of the human condition. Its remote location, constructed in a hostile climate, is itself an expression of this condition; one of the mysterious inhabitants who treats the convergence as a postmodern monastery claims "We have remade this wasteland, this secluded desert shithole, in order to separate ourselves from reasonableness, from this burden of what is called responsible thinking." (*ZK*: 71) Despite the heavy scientific engagement necessary to produce such an ambitious project, the basis for the activities at the Convergence stems from the breakdown of scientific thought and reason itself that defines the chaos of the present era. The bastardised theories of the novel are corrupted amalgams of science and religion, evading the grasp of existing bodies of thought to create something akin to a scientific religion, or a religious science.

The ultimate goal is not just to bring the dead back to life, but to effect a manifest change in the human condition by achieving this. The conquest of time implicit in the process of freezing and reanimating human bodies is enough to radically alter the human condition: "Those who eventually emerge from the capsules will be ahistorical humans. They will be free of the flatlines of the past, the attenuated minute and hour." (*ZK*: 129-30) For a writer whose entire career has formed an engagement with historical processes and the shifting nature of the contemporary world, it is shocking to hear a DeLillo character voice such an appeal to transcending the historical specificity of humanity. Boxall rightly situates DeLillo's late work within a context of "uncertainty about the nature of cause and effect in contemporary political culture," (Boxall, *Don DeLillo* 230) yet *Zero K* marks the point at which this model of complexity is itself exceeded. With the apparent abolition of historical processes postulated by the theorists of the posthuman in *Zero K*,

even uncertainties around historical cause and effect becomes obsolete. This temporal paradigm is far removed from the end of history and its violent return.

With the scientific conquest of time, almost everything can be reduced to the level of problems and solutions. History and language form unnecessary barriers that can be overcome by "the logic and beauty of pure mathematics." (*ZK*: 130) As Mark O'Connell frames the argument, "Solve the brain. Solve death. Solve being alive." (O'Connell 180) The contours of the human condition as it is presently understood would clearly be drastically altered by 'solutions' to all of these issues; the very concept of perceiving life, death, though, history and language as problems to be overcome rather than inherently human traits is itself a challenging, perhaps unhelpful, outlook. What is highly significant to *Zero K* is the implication that, should the project succeed, those who are successfully reanimated will be different humans in a different age; perhaps the only way to ensure the endurance of humanity is to give rise to a posthuman epoch.

For Paul Virilio, this imagining of a cybernetic posthumanity is not a new phenomenon but, rather, the manifestation of longstanding religious impulses within a scientific context. He relates ideas of extended or infinite life to Lucifer's promise "thou shalt not die," returning the technological faith of such pledges to their origin in a Judeo-Christian context (Virilio, *Ground Zero* 16-17). This religious structure is clearly present in *Zero K*, with so much of the novel's programme dependent on blind faith. By directly considering the Judeo-Christian resonance of these ideas of longevity and immortality, the time of *Zero K* is taken out of joint; a futuristic work transpires to be grounded in ancient ideas, revealing its promises of a radical new future to be entirely bankrupt. In the Convergence, religion masquerades as science and the past poses as the future. These promises of a posthuman future are at best illusory, perhaps even fraudulent.

The second half of *Zero K* returns Jeffrey to the more familiar territory of New York, allowing a more conventional sense of time to resume. Jeffrey identifies this change almost immediately:

> When we returned from the Convergence I announced to Ross that we were back in history now. Days have names and numbers, a discernible sequence, and there is an aggregate of past events, both immediate and long gone, that we can attempt to understand (*ZK*: 167).

Although conceived by Jeffrey as a return to history, this is more of a return to intelligibility, to a temporal context which can be arranged in some order. While the uncertainties of the Convergence produce a temporal dislocation that evades all semblance of sequencing, the mere fact of living in New York is inherently imbued with the rhythms of time.

A curious parallel can be drawn to modernist uses of time, particularly in the work of Virginia Woolf. Critics such as Boxall have identified a similarity between the "stilling of the temporal current" (Boxall, 'A Leap Out of Our Biology' 540) of DeLillo's late work and Woolf's treatment of time, particularly in the extraordinary 'Time Passes' section of *To the Lighthouse*. Like DeLillo, Woolf's treatment of time is largely dependent on its setting; while clock time and subjective time merge and conflict in the London of *Mrs Dalloway*, the remote setting of *To the Lighthouse* produces a meditative temporal sphere, which is severely contracted at times but also greatly expanded into moments of almost impressionistic stasis. While this comparison is productive, the differences between these two approaches must also be taken into consideration. Fundamentally, while Woolf's main means of approaching temporality is through an experiential lens, DeLillo's late treatment of time is primarily mediated through art and technology. Even when exploring the relationship between time and trauma, as in *Falling* Man and *The Body Artist*, this relationship is arbitrated by technological and artistic factors. For DeLillo, it is less the direct experience of time than its representation that is significant.

In *Zero K*, the ultimate arbiter of time is technology. Although the technologies to produce its attempted conquest of death are not presently available, the pseudo-religious system at the heart of the novel treats the telos of technological development and its own drive to immortality as one and the same. While theorists of technology like Heidegger have conceived of humanity as experiencing alienation from itself as a result of technological manifestations, the theories that drive *Zero K* see technology as realising humanity's goals, aligning its own temporal arrow with that of the human race. These two conflicting interpretations reach a point of contact in the thoughts of Nadya Hrabel, who claims the Convergence as a safe zone in which technology can be harnessed;

> Technology has become a force of nature. We can't control it. It comes blowing over the planet and there's nowhere for us to hide. Except right here, of course, in this dynamic enclave, where we breathe safe air and live outside the range of the combative instincts, the blood desperation so recently detailed for us, on so many levels (*ZK*: 245).

Nadya's peroration constitutes one of the strangest and most perceptive pieces of self-criticism from an adherent to the ideas of *Zero K*, explaining the dual forces of control and concession that permit it to exist. In her model, technology is a rogue offshoot of humanity which can only run further and further from the image of humanity with time, unless it is somehow contained within a safe environment. It would appear this is best achieved by the control of time, something made possible in the Convergence by its heavily controlled environment and cryogenic freezing programme, both of which aim to offset the ravages of time.

Nadya's thoughts on history are equally illuminating. As she addresses Ross Lockhart and several other candidates for cryogenic preservation, she states that "Sometimes history is single lives in momentary touch […] [You] are about to become, each of you, a single life in touch only with yourself." (*ZK*: 237) This attempt to overcome the certainties of time is also a means of changing course, moving away from time altogether: "You are completely

outside the narrative of what we refer to as history. There are no horizons here. We are pledged to an inwardness, a deep probing focus on who and where we are." (Ibid.) This introspection is made possible by the loss of any contextual anchor in the timeless realm proposed by the adherents of *Zero K*. Without any historical or temporal tether, human identity folds inwards. The 'voyage' expected by those who wish to be preserved is less a journey through time than a journey into oneself, one which is less an obliteration of horizons as promised by Nadya than a shrinking of them. This extension of life is still a kind of death.

As in many DeLillo novels, art figures as a prosthesis for life and death in *Zero K*. However, there is a substantial change here, as DeLillo's ekphrastic impulse finds itself curtailed by the boundaries of language. While *Falling Man* and *The Body Artist* both present performance pieces which play on ideas of dynamism, stasis and time, art in *Zero K* is inchoate, a provisional force of possibility not unlike the temporary state of the bodies stored in the Convergence. Ross Lockhart's last words to his son, "*Gesso on linen*," (*ZK*: 251) make a parallel between the process of corporeal preservation and the process of painting. Just as the application of gesso primes the canvas (or other material) for painting to begin in earnest, the ritualistic preparations undertaken at the Convergence prepare the body for its transition into a state of potential. These preparations do take something of an aesthetic sensibility, shaving the body from head to toe "with traditional razor and foam." (*ZK*: 233) Practical reasons for doing so are not explicitly stated, and Jeffrey considers his father's bare body as a spectacle, reduced to its "elemental force [...] stripped of everything that might mark it as an individual life." (*ZK*: 251) With his sense of self shaved away, Ross is transformed into a vessel of pure possibility, a tabula rasa for the future to modify as it sees fit.

Point Omega's Temporal Ekphrasis

The relationship between ekphrasis and time in DeLillo's later work is most fully developed in *Point Omega*, which uses Douglas Gordon's art installation

24 Hour Psycho as a backdrop for much of its narrative. Gordon's installation stretches the running time of Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho* to a full twenty-four hours, becoming what DeLillo calls "pure film, pure time" (*PO*: 7). The narrative structure of Hitchcock's film is obliterated by the slowed pace of the installation, which leads many to quickly leave as it moves "too slowly to accommodate their vocabulary of film." (*PO*: 13) Rather than producing a new cinematic vocabulary, the installation reduces the pre-existing film to its components, turning its infamous 'shower scene' into a heap of "curtain rings and eyelets." (Ibid.) This almost incoherent manipulation of the film becomes an artefact of pure duration, making time spent viewing it a communion with time itself. For the unnamed character featured in the opening and closing sections of the novel, it renders time into a somatic force: "The fatigue he felt was in his legs, hours and days of standing, the weight of the body standing. Twenty-four hours." (*PO*: 15) Although few art galleries are able to facilitate the twenty-four hour opening required to allow the work to be viewed in its entirety, the mere existence of the piece is enough to suggest a feat of endurance not dissimilar to that depicted in *The Body Artist*.

Point Omega is doubly entangled with Hitchcock's film: David Cowart identifies a parallel between the novel and *Psycho*, noting that Jessie Elster "disappears into a desert landscape like the one in the enormous photograph that hangs over the desk of Marion Crane, the disaffected — and doomed — office worker in *Psycho*." (Cowart, 'The Lady Vanishes' 34) The tonal and structural similarities between the novel and Hitchcock's work raise questions of artistic inheritance that are complicated by the presence of Douglas's installation. At each remove, the crucial factor in manipulating Hitchcock's original work is altering its relationship with time. As Cowart states:

> At century's end, [Douglas] radically reimagines and reconceptualizes this classic, simply by slowing it down. In an exemplary postmodern exercise, the original artifact is appropriated, repurposed, and recycled as, among other things, a millennial musing on time itself. A decade into the twenty-first century, DeLillo discerns in these texts an evolving grammar of dread. Invoking both prior *Psycho* diegeses, he at once

orients the story told by Hitchcock to a new era and deepens the

mystery foregrounded in the Gordon installation (Ibid. 36).

The manifestations of historical and temporal factors give a new hue to the

original film in each iteration. For DeLillo, Hitchcock and Douglas alike, the key

factor is duration; while Hitchcock's voyeuristic camera lingers too long on

singular images and Douglas's slowed version crystallises the tiniest details,

DeLillo's short novel accelerates the action of *Psycho* by speeding through its

analogous plot (and Douglas's installation) in terse prose.

The temporal properties of cinema are paramount in its relationship to *Point

Omega*. Jim Finley recounts how, as a young man, he "used to sit through the

credits, all of them, when [he] went to the movies," in a "spectacle of excess

nearly equal to the movie itself." (*PO*: 80) The darkened room of the cinema

provides a space in which the temporal mode of art is permitted to supersede

clock time and even natural time. Endurance-testing artists are drawn to

cinema for this reason: *24 Hour Psycho* is an example of the temporal

disruption that can be precipitated by cinema. The sense of cinema as a

separate dimension is inverted by Christian Marclay's *The Clock*, a

painstakingly edited work compiling twenty-four hours of cinematic footage

to play out in a real time. Crucially, every single shot in the film displays the

time, which is always corresponded to local time at showings (Levinson 89).

This turns the work of art into a locus of pure time, in which the primary

objective is to make the *sense* of time passing a physical reality with a real-

time visual representation on the screen.

The presence of *24 Hour Psycho* within the novel allows it to occupy a specific

(perhaps contradictory) time; it is "a videowork produced in 1993, viewed in

2006, reperforming a film from the 1960s, and co-opting some of the ideas

developed by the avant-gardes in the 1920s and 1930s." (Gourley 92-93) This

cinematic time, imbued with cultural resonances of the past and yet remote

from the present moment, runs a timeline that is contrary to the pressures of

the urban environment not dissimilar to the setting of *Ulysses*, which

condenses a single day in 1904 into a frame that incorporates innumerable

historical references and later developments. Although the novel's *24 Hour Psycho* sections are set in New York's Museum of Modern Art, their open, almost oneiric time has more in common with the experience of time in the Southwestern desert of the central sections of *Point Omega* than the accelerated time of New York. This cinematic time is paradoxically the consequence of modern art and technology, while allowing an escape from the time pressure of modernity.

Although the physical domain of cinema provides the space for time to be manipulated, *Point Omega* utilises a different landscape to allow DeLillo's temporal manipulations and meditations. The blank expanses of the American Southwest remove many of the natural cues of time changing; as Elster says to Finley, "time is blind here." (*PO*: 81) This is specifically attributed to the meteorological stability of a place in which "heat was weather and weather was heat." (Ibid.) Despite its reputation for a bland climate, the Southwestern United States is a common setting across popular culture, particularly in cinema and television, allowing its open desert spaces to become exposed. Although DeLillo uses the desert as a location of mystery and anxiety, its apparently unchanging nature sets it against the encroaching threat of anthropogenic climate change. Claire Colebrook has explored the cultural effects of climate change, comparing it to the cultural and philosophical breaks precipitated by Darwinism as "similarly catastrophic for the human imaginary." (Colebrook, *Death of the Posthuman* 10) The alienating effects of this are disturbing:

> there is something essentially self-destructive about the human theoretical eye: our very openness to the world — the very relation that is our life — is precisely what seduces us into forgetting that before there is an eye that acts as a camera or window there must have been something like an orientation or distance, a relation without relation (Ibid. 13-14).

Unable to attain this distance through the inescapable immediacy of anthropogenic climate change, DeLillo's characters are forced to develop a

sense of perspective through geographical distance. In *Point Omega*, place is a vector for time; it is only through the pure duration provided by Douglas's *24 Hour Psycho* that a concrete temporal identity can be attached to the events of the novel.

The convergence of space and time within the desert setting of *Point Omega* returns the novel to the source of its title: the point Omega theorised by the Jesuit philosopher Pierre Teilhard de Chardin as the universal centre (de Chardin 115). De Chardin's strangely future-oriented philosophy gestures towards the singularity of space and time; he claims "To accept that Space-Time is convergent in its nature is equally to admit that Thought on earth has not achieved the ultimate point of its evolution." (Ibid. 81) While this idea is inherently predicated on the idea of perpetual progress, de Chardin's attempt to think beyond the future limits of this progress is striking. Although this chiefly advances de Chardin's theological ambitions (namely the suggestion of a union between God and the Universe), the idea of a singularity of space and time is equally significant for matters temporal and spiritual. Through his (sometimes questionable) engagement with physics, de Chardin begins to contemplate the future in a serious manner.

Despite his alignment of spatial and temporal axes, de Chardin emphasises the physical effects of time. He imagines a future of scarcity, in which "by prolonging its existence on a scale of planetary longevity, the human species will eventually find itself with a chemically exhausted Earth beneath its feet," with only the possibility of interplanetary travel to release itself from its prison (Ibid. 302). Even ideas of infinity reach hard, physical limits. As has already been demonstrated, these limits are probed by DeLillo in *Zero K*, but they are also tested in *Point Omega*. The barren backdrop of much of the novel resembles the depleted Earth described by de Chardin, providing a space for similar temporal questions to be raised. De Chardin's idea that "the end of Mankind may be deferred *sine die*" (Ibid.) resounds throughout DeLillo's later novels. Its most obvious offshoot is the deferred deaths of *Zero K*, but Jessie's unresolved disappearance in *Point Omega* produces a similar effect, in which a resolution is endlessly deferred, and her father leaves

without knowing her whereabouts. For both de Chardin and DeLillo, the main prospect of the future is an uncertain infinity, a paradoxical position of potential and stasis not dissimilar to the static state of absolute zero.

The temporal collapse suggested by de Chardin is a persistent theme in DeLillo's late novels, which incorporate both parachronistic and prochronistic elements to complicate their intense immediacy. The future-oriented bent of these novels is especially significant, demonstrating DeLillo's view that "the future impinging on the present is actually occurring right now." (Gourley 39) The porosity of the border between present and future renders the present eternal (Ibid.), collapsing any sense of a meaningful chronological order into a singularity of the moment. This singularity resembles the Omega point postulated by de Chardin, becoming the *Point Omega* of DeLillo's title.

Beyond Experience? The Financial Time of *Cosmopolis*

Time in *Cosmopolis* is distinct from its treatment in other late DeLillo novels, as it is difficult to separate it from the financial core of the novel. Nevertheless, DeLillo's view of the connection between time and finance capitalism far surpasses the old maxim "time is money," moving beyond models of production and labour time to explore the forces of acceleration unleashed by cyber-capital. Although an economic prism is the obvious way to read *Cosmopolis*, its temporal manifestations extend far beyond the world of finance. As Gourley notes, the novel forms a kind of temporal parallax, "with both the past and the future impinging on the present." (Ibid.) This extends beyond finance and into the domain of history, suggesting the historical – and temporal – break caused by the September 11th attacks. This is underlined by the novel's setting before the attacks, imbuing "a pre-September 11 novel with post-September 11 concepts." (Ibid. 38) In DeLillo's depiction of New York in 2000, to look forward is also to look back.

While *Falling Man*'s hindsight operates literally, exploring the September 11th attacks and their aftermath, *Cosmopolis* uses its setting before the attacks to

establish an almost spectral prescience. Although DeLillo had completed the bulk of the novel prior to the attacks (Ibid. 37), his decision not to make alterations in the light of the attacks imbues the novel with an antediluvian quality that is arguably anachronistic. As Ronan McKinney notes, "Such is his association in public consciousness with themes of terror and spectacle that it seemed DeLillo had to respond to 9/11 in some fashion." (McKinney 327) The fact that this did not directly occur in *Cosmopolis* enhances the sense of anachronism produced by the novel, not least as its suggestions of violence are of an altogether pre-September 11th form, in the respective assassinations of IMF Director Arthur Rapp and Eric Packer. While captured on camera, both acts are avowedly analogue, a stark contrast from the extreme use of speed and modern technology in the events of September 11th. Although the novel constitutes DeLillo's most sustained engagement with the accelerating forces of cyber-capital, its moments of violence are curiously out of step with its rapid temporal arrow.

Despite its own anachronistic qualities, a crucial theme in *Cosmopolis* is the increasing obsolescence of modernity, which appears on technological but also historical lines, as the rapid advance of time leaves the present moment appearing already a thing of the past. Packer leaves a note on his digital organiser musing about "the anachronistic quality of the word skyscraper," soon realising "The hand device itself was an object whose original culture had just about disappeared." (*C*: 9) The novel's curious entanglement of digital, analogue and post-digital cultures lends it a confused temporal position, in which a variety of time frames uneasily coexist. Gourley notes that despite this sense of anachronism, the presence of multiple temporalities within one day reflects the desire of the September 11th attackers to return to a mythical past[33]; "This temporal change manifests itself in a deinterlacing of the present from the future." (Gourley 40) The narrative trajectory of *Cosmopolis* – hurtling towards the future but eventually diverting to merge

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[33] DeLillo's suggestion is that the attackers wished "to bring back the past." ('ITROTF')

into the primitive past of Benno Levin – allows this deinterlacing to take place within the novel itself.

The cultural and historical contexts of *Cosmopolis* imbue this deinterlacing with a significant sense of irony. DeLillo's decision not to significantly revise the novel in the light of the attacks gives it a peculiarly organic relationship to history, in which prescience and anachronism are both present, but his subsequent writings are also important in understanding the wider position of *Cosmopolis*. As has already been suggested, *Point Omega* and *Zero K* both explore the idea of a singularity, a position of entropy but also one of enervation. As Catherine Gander states, "there is a certain sense that the trajectory of DeLillo's work has for decades been toward a formal omega point, a convergence of general relativity and quantum theories." (Gander 388) The position of *Cosmopolis* complicates this idea, allowing a reversal of the temporal arrow to occur despite its strong sense of acceleration. Although an early glimpse of Packer sees him reading Einstein (*C*: 6), this is more as an attempted cure for insomnia than a serious suggestion of the consonance between Packer's financial time and Einstein's theories. While this comparison can be readily made, it is not necessarily obvious to Packer.

While the aforementioned skyscrapers are already considered obsolete by Packer, they also epitomise the ending of a particular timeframe of modernity.

> They were made to be the last tall things, made empty, designed to hasten the future. They were the end of the outside world. They weren't here, exactly. They were in the future, a time beyond geography and touchable money and the people who stack and count it (*C*: 36).

This leaves skyscrapers in a curious position, acting as the material symbols of immateriality, an archaic rendering of a future that has already been surpassed. This positioning of skyscrapers as existing on the boundary between past and future is enhanced by the aftermath of the September 11th attacks, which not only led to skyscrapers re-entering the public

consciousness in a significant way, but also preceded the significant construction of skyscrapers in Lower Manhattan as part of reconstruction efforts. One World Trade Centre, the effective replacement for the towers destroyed in the attacks, now carries the symbolism of the past as much as the future, simultaneously acting as the tallest building in New York City and an enormous memorial to the attacks. The tower's architecture is a specific reaction to the attacks; writing in the *New York Times*, Nicolai Ouroussoff considers its fortified base a "grotesque attempt to disguise its underlying paranoia. And the brooding, obelisk-like form above is more of an expression of American hubris than of freedom[34]." (Ouroussoff WK14) This medieval-like fortification reconfigures the position of skyscrapers, using the innovations of many centuries past to defend the idea of a future[35]. This places the concept of the building within the same regressive ideological space as that of the terrorists who destroyed its predecessors.

This vying between past and future finds a pre-September 11th resonance in *Cosmopolis*, in which the technological mediation of the present often leaves it on a temporal knife-edge. Packer's spycam, a device which records most of the events of the novel and acts as a significant portal for Packer, operates on a slight delay, affecting his perception of time. He views the camera's live images during sexual intercourse, knowing "the spycam operated in real time, or was supposed to. How could he see himself if his eyes were closed? There wasn't time to analyse. He felt his body catching up to the independent image." (*C*: 52) Although the camera experiences a fractional latency, Packer experiences this latency as a phenomenon of his body, rather than the technology. The camera footage condenses past, present and future, literally depicting an extremely recent past, figuratively showing the present moment, while giving the illusion of a window on the future. For Packer, the delay produces something akin to an out of body experience, in which his

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[34] Freedom Tower was an early nickname given to the project.
[35] The conjunction of medieval defensive architecture and modern materials was pioneered by brutalist architects working in Great Britain in the 1970s. Buildings such as Stuart Brown's North Wales Police Headquarters (demolished in 2021) and Basil Spence's 50 Queen Anne's Gate (built for the Home Office, the British interior ministry) overtly incorporated castle-like motifs such as "narrow slit windows […] as if those windows were actually designed for archers to shoot through" (Clement 73).

movements can be 'seen' before they register in his consciousness. Even the name of the spycam, recalling comic book advertisements rather than serious innovation, is suggestive of anachronism.

Despite the runaway speed of technology and capitalism in *Cosmopolis*, the novel's own timeline is often a decelerated one. For much of its duration, Packer's limousine is stranded in gridlocked Manhattan traffic, moving "at an inchworm creep." (*C*: 64) Frequently, art is the force that emerges in these slowed moments of the novel, whether in the Erik Satie pieces played at a quarter-speed in one of Packer's private elevator (*C*: 29), or his perusal of poetry chapbooks as the traffic stops moving altogether (*C*: 66). While ekphrasis is less prominent in *Cosmopolis* than other late DeLillo works, the position of art is still a privileged one here; however, it is less that the specific properties of artworks modulate time, than time must be reconsidered in order to provide a space for art. It is only in these moments of deceleration that art can be separated from capital. Packer's engagement with poetry – usually selected on the basis of brevity – is markedly different to his economic desires for art, such as his desire to purchase the Rothko Chapel. As with poetry, his choice of music is selected for its brevity; as Gourley notes, the manipulation of Satie's music in the lift constitutes "a futile attempt to return the possibility of duration to the work of art." (Gourley 51) Although Satie's own work frequently played with temporality, particularly his lengthy *Vexations*, the viability of such experiments is significantly modulated by the techno-capitalist time of the early twenty-first century.

With the possibility of art substantially altered by temporal change, the need to escape to a parallel timeframe becomes imperative for art to function. Packer's hermetically-sealed limousine goes some way to explaining the conditions required for this different level of perception to prevail. Although it is repeatedly figured as the ultimate emblem of finance capitalism, the vehicle's isolation also permits it to act as a space beyond the perimeters of finance. In explaining his modification of the vehicle, Packer claims "I had the car prousted." (*C*: 70) A highly ironic allusion to Marcel Proust continues; Packer explains that while the vehicle's chassis was lengthened, he "sent word

that they had to proust it, cork-line it against street noise." (Ibid.) Proust's notoriously isolated later life is an absurd point of comparison for Packer, but its significance as a gesture is a driving force behind his decision to have this modification made. This nod to literary modernism – specifically to a writer not known for the brevity Packer typically values – suggests the possibility of art, and the conditions which permit it to exist in a seemingly hostile world. A soundproofed seal provides respite from the noise and speed of the city outside, allowing the existence of a contemplative space in which art may be considered on its own terms.

The difficulty of considering art within time is underlined by DeLillo's emphasis on the colonisation of time by finance capitalism. Packer's 'theory chief' Vija Kinski identifies a reversal: "Money makes time. It used to be the other way around. Clock time accelerated the rise of capitalism. People stopped thinking about eternity. They began to concentrate on hours, measurable hours, man-hours, using labor more efficiently." (*C*: 79) This quantification of time has reached absurd ends, utilising ever smaller units of measurement such as "Yoctoseconds. One septillionth of a second." (Ibid.) As Kinski states, this has happened "[Because] time is a corporate asset now. It belongs to the free market system. The present is harder to find." (Ibid.) With an end to any meaningful understanding of the present, the nature of duration becomes difficult to ascertain. Although Kinski's thoughts are limited to the implications for finance, the effects on art are significant. As the performances of *The Body Artist* and *Falling Man* suggest, duration and the present moment are two significant factors in creating meaningful artistic experiences. With the evacuation of the present, this becomes difficult or impossible. It is only when events such as the September 11th attacks create extraordinary circumstances that some sense of duration can be reclaimed, reopening a temporal and historical paradigm that is otherwise dormant.

The possibility of a return to duration is addressed ambiguously at the close of the novel, with Packer's assassination at the hands of Benno Levin, an ascetic figure who inverts his life into an atavistic spiral, rejecting all the trappings of modernity. Levin (whose real name is Richard Sheets) is a former employee,

who has abandoned Packer's pursuit of transcendence, reversing his drive to infinity into his own Thanatic impulses. In a peculiar premonition of *Zero K*, *Cosmopolis* concludes with Packer lying "dead inside the crystal of his watch[36] but still alive in original space, waiting for the shot to sound." (*C*: 209) Even in this terminal moment, there is a sense of possibility. Packer's apparent precognition of the gunshot leaves him frozen in anticipation, on some quantum level left to indefinitely wait for his death to be completed. Whether this paused moment allows a semblance of duration to return or obliterates the notion of temporal progression altogether is unclear.

Packer's deferred death also opens a question of history. Although the financialised world depicted by DeLillo resonates with the end of history hypothesised by Fukuyama, culminating in an event which cannot be absorbed by the market suggests the possibility of a re-entry into a historical frame. While previous events in the novel (such as the assassination of Arthur Rapp) are treated as economic rather than historical events, Packer's murder leaves him beyond the financial world altogether, bereft of "the predatory impulse" (Ibid.) that drives his business instincts. Despite the apparent ahistoricism present in the world without end of finance capitalism, Alison Shonkwiler is keen to demonstrate that DeLillo's depiction of this is itself historical. She claims:

> The thinness of the novel's history and the abstractions of its narrative form reflect precisely this new condition: the sublime imagination of capital does not reach into the thickness of historical material relations. As wealth comes and goes in the blink of a cursor, DeLillo suggests, our representational techniques may be limited to historicizing the forms of alienation that are produced by such contemporary cultural fantasies of global technocapitalism (Shonkwiler, 'Don DeLillo's Financial Sublime' 254-255).

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[36] The crystal in question is a screen, which constitutes an early form of wearable technology (*C*: 123).

This evacuation of apparent historical content is precisely a historical marker itself, a means of displaying the specific historical conditions of cyber-capital. While DeLillo's response to this is more ambivalent that Shonkwiler's, it can only be understood on a scale grander than that of *Cosmopolis* alone. The subsequent events of *Falling Man* demonstrate the return of a materiality that is perhaps precipitated by the inchoate gunshot of the last page of *Cosmopolis*.

Given the largely ahistorical nature of *Cosmopolis*, it is ironic that the novel itself has been deeply shaped by historical events. Its reception has been strongly influenced by both the September 11th attacks and the 2008 financial crisis, events which exceed its temporal frame but nevertheless appear to seamlessly follow the events invented by DeLillo. The Thanatos imbued in the novel's trajectory towards crisis and death is shared by both events; the sheer materiality of these events, however, distinguishes them from the thrust of DeLillo's novel. The September 11th attacks turned the physical infrastructure of American capitalism against itself, while the later financial crisis gave a materiality to financial events through effects such as the epidemic of foreclosures and repossessions that hit the United States. The timelessness and immateriality that define finance in *Cosmopolis* have subsequently been transformed into more concrete forms.

While art gives voice to some of these concerns in other late DeLillo novels, the relative lack of ekphrasis in *Cosmopolis* yields to different forces. The return of physical sensation in the novel is brought about by the 'attack' of "André Petrescu, the pastry assassin" (*C*: 142). Petrescu's notoriety rests on his habit of assaulting public figures with pastry, a bloodless assault designed "To sabotage power and wealth." (Ibid.) Somewhere between artist, terrorist and comedian, Petrescu is a self-described "action painter of crème pies" (*C*: 143). Although an analogy can be drawn to the performance artists depicted in *The Body Artist* and *Falling Man*, the physical impact of Petrescu's actions on his targets removes this from the domain of memory; this is the intrusion of the material, the resumption of events and temporality in the timeless world of finance. Despite this ambition (and the decidedly low-tech means of

realising it), Petrescu's actions are imbued in the relationship between time and space defined by Virilio as one of negation; "at present, gaining Time is exclusively a matter of vectors. Territory has lost its significance in favor of the projectile" (Virilio, *Speed and Politics* 149). This dromological theory is inverted by Petrescu, whose absurd actions gain neither time nor space, instead forcing Packer to return to a physical domain.

This physical realm is given an artistic touchstone in the shape of a film shoot, which Packer attends towards the novel's culmination. The scene incorporates "three hundred naked people sprawled in the street," (*C*: 172) facilitating Packer's return to the corporeal. However, the film itself is subject to the forces of time and money. An extra in the scene has heard "the financing has collapsed. Happened in seconds apparently. Money all gone." (*C*: 175) The financial backing for the film – presumably provided by Packer himself – facilitates its entire existence. The dependence of film on money is only heightened by the different timeframes seen here; while filmmaking is a lengthy process, the financial death drive of Packer can lead to almost immediate destruction. The gulf between artistic time and financial time can only be bridged in the absence of the latter, allowing for the totalising experience of this film shoot to exist independently of any practical, material considerations. For Packer, who finds the experience "so total and open he [can] barely think outside it," (*C*: 174) the futility of filming a scene for a film that will never be produced provides a transcendence of the financial temporality that has consumed his life up to this point.

At this stage in the novel, a semblance of history is permitted to resume. Packer's fascination with his driver's disfigured eye leads him to contemplate the physical scars of historical events.

> He was thinking of the bodyguard with the scarred face and air of close combat and the hard squat Slavic name, Danko, who'd fought in wars of ancestral blood. He was thinking of the Sikh with the missing finger, the driver he'd glimpsed when he shared a taxi with Elise, briefly, much earlier in the day, in the life, in a time beyond memory nearly.

> He was thinking of Ibrahim Hamadou, his own driver, tortured for politics or religion or clan hatreds, a victim of rooted violence driven by the spirits of his enemies' forebears. He was even thinking of André Petrescu, the pastry assassin, all those pies in the face and the blows he took in return (*C*: 194-95).

Packer's insertion of himself within this sequence indicates his readmission to a historical timeframe, albeit one which is almost "beyond memory". While the somatic memory indicated by scars and deformities produces a physical referent for memory, Packer's virtual life does not bear such features, allowing his immense financial losses of the day to exist detached from memory and history. This is ironic, considering the context of the novel, set immediately after the dot-com crash, and incorporating what Andrew Strombeck terms "a rising shift in capitalist practices, which might be described as the consequences of the wide adoption of Internet technology, such as accelerated risk and 24/7 operations." (Strombeck 148) With the reaction to the dot-com crash in mind, the physical and virtual infrastructure which dominates Packer's life is itself symptomatic of historical processes, yet it is only with the corporeal turn of the latter stages of the novel that this is met with any self-awareness on Packer's part.

This self-awareness leads Packer to revisit his own past, in the form of a barber shop once frequented by his late father, concluding the quest that has framed the whole novel. The barber shop allows Packer to return to his origins, facilitating the broader project of return that marks Packer's ultimate trajectory. This apparent attempt to escape the ennui of finance returns Packer to a sense of history, adding a postscript to Fukuyama's musing in 'The End of History' that "Perhaps this very prospect of centuries of boredom at the end of history will serve to get history started once again." (Fukuyama 18) While the idea of the return of history is contingent on history ending in the first place, a thought that is not uncontroversial, the idea of a renewed temporal dynamic emerging in the early years of the twenty-first century is perhaps easier to comprehend. However, while Packer's ennui can be located in the financial terrain surrounding the dot-com boom and bust of the turn of

the century, the most obvious events to demarcate a new epoch are the September 11th attacks.

In DeLillo's late novels, a temporal shift is palpable. Although this shift can be traced back to the shrinking world of 2000's *The Body Artist*, it is nevertheless significant that a break is most strongly felt in the historicised space of *Falling Man*. While it is an overstatement to exclusively map this temporal break onto the moment of the September 11th attacks, the intense trauma and sense of return provoked by the attacks substantially altered the sense of time in a world where the temporal order appeared to be collapsing into a singularity. While other periods have seen ruptures in the temporal fabric, they have never been so readily traced to a single event; the ripples of the attacks resonate throughout DeLillo's subsequent novels. Despite the epoch-defining attacks, the economic forces which drove temporal condensation into the turn of the millennium persisted, and have continued to accelerate apace, albeit with different energies and motivations. This includes the coupling of an accelerated, 24/7 economy with technological surveillance. In *24/7*, Jonathan Crary explores the technological and economic knot that allows this to occur, eating into human sleep. Crary notes that "24/7 markets are a global infrastructure for continual work and consumption have been in place for some time, but now a human subject is in the making to coincide with these more intensively." (Crary 3-4) This is the culmination of a project that is seen in its infancy through the eyes of Eric Packer, possibly the earliest depiction of the quantified self in literature.

The specifics of Packer's technologies will be addressed in a subsequent chapter, but it is revealing that *Cosmopolis* depicts innovations such as an early smartwatch. These are less evidence of DeLillo's oracular power than of the latent surveillance potential in technologies of capitalism, a potential which is most readily realised when used in relation to time. The manifestation of the watch – literally a time-telling device – as a tool of connectivity, surveillance and constant vigilance suggests the degree to which time has been colonised by the forces of finance capitalism. In the post-September 11th world, these forces are imbued with a new paranoia, a

paranoia which has only intensified in the decade since the financial crisis of the late 2000s. This sense of capture, that time is no longer "Like holding water in your hand," (*U*: 8.610-11) but is subject to control, is perhaps improbable in a world where the virtual has increasingly intersected with the physical world, yet temporal control is often key to understanding these virtual worlds. The ultimate sense of control and potential provided by the immortality project at the heart of *Zero K* allows a view of the present state of humanity, left with a crumbling sense of concrete time while pursuing virtual solutions to material problems. This late novel puts DeLillo in contact with science-fiction and fringe sciences, allowing his vision to extend beyond the present moment and imagine a strange future.

The Great Artifice: Technology in *Ulysses*

"Machines. Smash a man to atoms if they got him caught. Rule the world today." (*U*: 7.80-81).

"The monotonous hum of the dynamos has succeeded" Weston St. John Joyce, *The Neighbourhood of Dublin* (W.S. Joyce 12).

Positioned at the apex of technological change, *Ulysses* weaves a dense web of technological development. This is reflected in its depictions of numerous technologies, from the telegram and telephone to electrified trams. On a more fundamental level, *Ulysses* also allows us to explore the sense of mastery that drives technological development. At its core is the relationship between the human imagination and the built environment, suggesting the moment of recognition of potential at which the process of technology is set in motion. The future-oriented nature of much of the novel allows us to explore the seeds of ideas which then lead to developments. This is particularly clear in Bloom's meditations in 'Ithaca' but, more obliquely, we can see a similar spirit of recognition in Stephen's thoughts of creative possibilities and, finally, in Molly's thoughts on her own future. This allows us to consider technology from several perspectives: in terms of specific examples, but also as a broader concept, in which technology is a mode of exploitation.

Bloom's thoughts on technology reflect the duality of a means of benefitting humanity that is also a force for alienation. With the different inflections imposed on technology in 'Aeolus' and 'Ithaca', we can take a multifaceted approach, using the work of Marx and Heidegger to explore the potential ontological implications of technological development, particularly when forces of nature are harnessed. These ideas are also explored in relation to Stephen's more sceptical perspective, allowing a dialogue between his views on technology and those of Bloom. This is epitomised by the relationship the two men have to water, specifically in the contrast between the

"hydrophobe" (*U*: 17.237) Stephen and "Bloom, waterlover" (*U*: 17.183). The notion of aquacity as a mistrusted force by Stephen allows further interrogation of these ideas, as well as a broader discussion of the world-shaping abilities of technology. Stephen's scepticism is also rooted in his own situation, with his possessions and even his life taking on a telos in the context of his family's increasingly dire financial situation.

These discussions frame more specific appearances of various technologies in *Ulysses*, beginning with beekeeping, a particular form of utilising nature which poses some of the ethical questions that preoccupy Bloom, also forming a part of his imagined idyll in 'Ithaca'. Although a discussion of transportation and agriculture demonstrates the benevolent uses of technology, this is counteracted by a cautionary note on the dangers of treating water as an expendable resource. This extends to discuss the problem of rationalising forces which, like water, exist beyond the grasp of human control. In turn, this allows *Ulysses* to be understood as a technological organ, which deploys its characters as resources. This creates a framework of mastery, in which technē begets technē.

Aside from the frame of literature, other modes of technological control are discussed, starting with cinema, which exists in *Ulysses* through the analogy of the camera to the power of the Bloomian gaze. The city itself is also a technological entity, the ultimate embodiment of human mastery. This continues the discussion of water with the importance of political debates around waterworks and sewage in Edwardian Dublin, but also notes the importance of urban planning in transforming landscapes and societies. A different conquest is effected by photography, which allows memory to become a physical artefact. This reification of memory allows the capture of anachronisms, memories and even ghosts, albeit in a form which is itself mutable and subject to decay. The presence of photography in *Ulysses* underlines Susan Sontag's assertion that "All photographs are *memento mori*" (Sontag 15), with literal and metaphorical deaths abounding in the novel's photography. This demonstrates one of the limits of technology: the inability

to transcend temporal boundaries, merely supporting fleeting illusions of temporal conquest.

Bloomian Teleology

Bloom's proposals for various developments allow us to explore the specifics of technology while also developing a broader sense of the essence of technology. Bloom's ambitions are coalesced in the physical form of a future property, Flowerville, which is to be built to fit the climate. The extensively detailed plans for Flowerville involve numerous technological developments (including "a lawnmower with side delivery and grassbox, a lawnsprinkler with hydraulic hose" (*U*: 17.1571-72) and "a chainless freewheel roadster cycle with side basketcar attached" (*U*: 17.1575-76) but more fundamentally, the very premise of Flowerville is based on the harnessing of natural resources. Bloom envisions a carefully chosen location, designed to be an optimal distance from Dublin city centre while retaining the climactic benefits of its location, intended to be favourable "to phthisical subjects" (*U*: 17.1518). Its extensively landscaped gardens, enclosed vinery and supply of fresh water are all designed to tame nature, bringing it within the control of the built environment. This reflects one of the most instrumental definitions of technology, as the recognition of a use-value in the natural environment that may be harnessed for human gain.

Although it demonstrates the dynamic thrill of machinery, 'Aeolus' also documents the problems of technology, providing a counterpoint to the array of possibilities presented in 'Ithaca'. The electric trams that open the chapter are left "becalmed in short circuit" (*U*: 7.1047) by a power outage at its conclusion. This ironic realisation of the limitations of technology is supplanted by Bloom's disturbing thoughts on machines. Considering a notice on Dignam's funeral, he contemplates the dangers posed by machines, such as the printing presses in the newspaper office:

This morning the remains of the late Mr Patrick Dignam. Machines.
Smash a man to atoms if they got him caught. Rule the world today.
His machineries are pegging away too. Like these, got out of hand:
fermenting. Working away, tearing away. And that old grey rat tearing
to get in (*U*: 7.80-83).

Bloom ascribes the motive of domination to technology, pitting the machines
against humanity rather than working for its benefit. This ultimately
constitutes another feedback loop, considering technology is the outcome of
humanity's attempts to dominate nature. As is often the case in Joyce's
depiction of technology, the potential for unintended consequences is
apparent, producing a sense of irony that the products of mastery cannot be
fully mastered. Considering Bloom's own desire for mastery, subsequently
established in 'Ithaca,' his fit of pessimism demonstrates the complex and
contradictory relationship between humans and technology.

This idea is developed in explicitly political terms in 'Circe', with Marxist
resonances adding to a febrile passage in which a version of Bloom denounces
industrial capitalism.

Machines is their cry, their chimera, their panacea. Laboursaving
apparatuses, supplanters, bugbears, manufactured monsters for
mutual murder, hideous hobgoblins produced by a horde of capitalistic
lusts upon our prostituted labour (*U*: 15.1391-1394).

The allusions to the original English translation of *The Communist Manifesto* –
particularly the reference to "hideous hobgoblins" – add to the economic
resonance of this passage, connecting technological developments to the
world of political economy discussed by Marx and Engels. The sense of
domination suggested in 'Aeolus' is crystallised here, with the attribution of
economic motives; technology is not an autonomous development that
produces its own challenge to human agency, but rather an offshoot of other
discourses of power and knowledge. The challenge posed by machines is
identified as a reflection of the desires of capitalists to dispossess labourers by
removing them of their strongest asset: their labour-power. Either destroyed

or significantly weakened, the waning of this power emboldens those who control the economic and technological apparatuses. The economic implications of this have been addressed in a previous chapter, but in this discussion, the significant thing is the effect this has on technology and its relationship to those who create and use it. The omission of the oft-quoted "spectre of communism" that features in later English translations of Marx and Engels complicates this engagement, suggesting not only the capitalistic bent to technology, but also the problems with alternative economic modes; after all, the "hideous hobgoblin" in question is communism, which is equally corruptible by technological thinking in Bloom's mind.

A nuanced analysis of the relationship between humanity and technology is provided in Heidegger's essay 'The Question Concerning Technology.' Heidegger's scepticism allows him to interrogate not only the consequences of technology, but also the degree of mastery it truly affords, and its often problematic consequences for humanity. Complicating the view of technology as a purely teleological force, Heidegger claims that beyond this instrumentality, technology "is a way of revealing," (Heidegger, *QCT* 12) its essence linked to the idea of alētheia [ἀλήϑεια], revealing a kind of truth in the process. Breaking the word technology into its component, technē [τέχνη], Heidegger notes that "what is decisive in technē does not lie at all in making and manipulating nor in the using of means, but rather in the aforementioned revealing. It is as revealing, and not as manufacturing, that technē is a bringing-forth." (Ibid. 13) For Heidegger, the danger of technology lies not in its telos, but in the possibility that in the process of revealing, man only reveals himself:

> Man, precisely as the one so threatened, exalts himself to the posture of the lord of the earth. In this way the impression comes to prevail that everything man encounters exists only insofar as it is his construct. This illusion gives rise to one final delusion: it seems as though man everywhere and always encounters only himself (Ibid. 27).

Therefore, the relationship between humankind and technology is one of estrangement; although it creates the illusion that everything displays a human touch, it also denies humanity the opportunity to truly glimpse its own essence. This obfuscatory quality is precisely what provides the danger inherent to technology in Heidegger's view, concealing with one hand what is revealed with the other. It is this tendency that allows technology to conceal the discourses and structures that are embedded within it, such as the labour that produces it and the domination that is contained within its social and economic role.

Despite the emphasis on danger, Heidegger also notes that technology provides the potential for a "saving power".

> If the essence of technology, Enframing, is the extreme danger […]
> then the rule of Enframing cannot exhaust itself solely in blocking all
> lighting-up of every revealing, all appearing of truth. Rather, precisely
> the essence of technology must harbor in itself the growth of the
> saving power (Ibid. 28).

This essential duality at the core of technology underlines the ambivalent teleology of technology, namely that in Heidegger's essay, the ultimate aim of technology is to reveal. The act of revelation produces the danger of alienation, but also the possibility of salvation. Bloom's mixed views on technology reflect both sides of the Heideggerian equation; he fears that humankind will lose control of technology and be enslaved by it, but he also proposes technological solutions to harness the resources stored in nature. In these fantasies, Bloom sees technology only in relation to human concerns.

In both of these cases, the danger lies in the alienation that technology brings. In Bloom's fit of technophobic anxiety, the central worry is that machines will evade human control, such is the lack of self-awareness with which they are conceived. In the proposed schemes of 'Ithaca,' however, Bloom himself displays this lack of self-awareness, neglecting the sense of alienation from nature that would be provided by his desire to reap rewards from the landscape. This is evidenced in Bloom's hypocrisy around the harnessing of

natural resources. One particular form of human intervention, the harvesting and eating of oysters, is especially repulsive to Bloom. In spite of his omnivorous tendencies, he finds them "Unsightly like a clot of phlegm. Filthy shells, Devil to open them too. […] Garbage, sewage they feed on." (*U*: 8-864-65) While this distaste for oysters can be attributed to Bloom's Jewishness[37], D'Arcy has suggested a more practical concern. She notes that sewage seeped out into the Liffey, and it was often "carried by flood tide across Dublin Bay as far as Clontarf with fatal results for oyster lovers." (D'Arcy 257)

The suspicions around oysters are not unique to Bloom. In *Stephen Hero*, Cranly claims "it was nonsense to consider the pig unclean because he ate dirty garbage and at the same time to consider the oyster, which fed chiefly on excrement, a delicacy." (*SH*: 119) Despite his apparent revulsion, Cranly identifies the potential for exploitation from 'unclean' products, mentioning "all the Germans who made small fortunes in Dublin by opening pork-shops." (Ibid.) When the limitations of taste and dietary restrictions may be overcome, there is great economic potential in exploiting products that are otherwise seen as unsanitary or dangerous. While oysters are not specifically mentioned in the vision of Flowerville, Bloom's desire to host lobsterpots on the site (*U*: 17.1563) indicates that kosher rules are not a major factor in his objection to oysters. In a clean environment away from the pollution of Dublin, edible shellfish becomes a symbol of safe water and a thriving ecosystem. Bloom's objection to eating oysters ultimately stems from the consequences of human intervention – both by causing water pollution and in the aberrant act of prising open the creature's shell to eat it live, something which Bloom considers to be downright bizarre. This view is not uncommon, famously advanced by Jonathan Swift's Colonel Atwit, who claims "He was a bold man, that first eat an oyster." (Swift 584)[38] Flowerville offers a vision of human life in harmony with its surroundings, exploiting its resources but not

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[37] Although Bloom clearly does not observe kosher dietary laws, they still appear to have influenced his thoughts to some degree. In 'Lestrygonians', he contemplates "Kosher. No meat and milk together. Hygiene that was what they call now." (*U*: 8.751-52) Bloom is non-observant but retains an awareness of kosher and kashrut.

[38] Bloom's thoughts follow a similar track, wondering "Who found them [oysters] out?" (*U*: 8.865), paraphrasing Swift.

causing undue harm or depleting those resources beyond sustainability. While Bloom's vision is undoubtedly anthropocentric, he also believes that the laws of nature must be upheld, even if this is largely to support the position of humanity. For Bloom, certain forms of exploitation which harness but do not distort nature (such as the maintenance of clean water for swimming) are promoted, but those which run against the grain of nature by directly manipulating natural resources (eating oysters, for example) are seen as unhealthy and aberrant.

Flowerville's location is chosen to be non-threatening (and, specifically, free of disease). Bloom's choice of Drundrum and Sutton as two possible locations for Flowerville is linked to the role of both places as "favourable climates for phthisical subjects." (*U*: 17.1518) These "terrestrial poles" of Dublin provide clean air beneficial to preventing – and treating – tuberculosis. Bloom's apparent decision to choose Dundrum as the community's location (*U*: 17.1613) may well be influenced by the area's lack of hazards[39]. While both locales were noted for their suitability for tuberculosis patients, Dundrum has the added benefit of being situated inland, away from the dangers provided by the sea. The presence of freshwater is a positive attribute, as is a location away from the pollution and dangerous currents of Dublin Bay; the sea is frequently treated as a dangerous presence in *Ulysses*. Bloom's disgust at the thought of eating contaminated seafood is amplified by his recollection of "Poor man O'Connor wife and five children poisoned by mussels here," (*U*: 13.1232-33) recounting the deaths of the family of the journalist and politician James O'Connor from eating tainted mussels at Monkstown in 1890 (Igoe, 'Joyce's use of Lists' 123). Even the hydrophile Bloom acknowledges the potential hazards of seafaring, imagining "Hanging on to a plank or astride of a beam for grim life, lifebelt round him, gulping salt water, and that's the last of his nibs till the sharks catch hold of him." (*U*: 13.1160-62) Once again, the sea is a poisonous force.

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[39] The 1904 edition of *Thom's Directory* recommends Dundrum "for the purity of its air," noting that it is "much resorted to by invalids" during the summer (*Thom's 1904* 1693).

The polluted water that is a significant cause of Bloom's aversion to oysters is a symptom of another feedback loop, considering the pollution in question is largely industrial in origin. Ever the humanist, Bloom promotes technologies which enhance human life, yet even this noble aim is potentially problematic for Heidegger; in fact, it is this anthropocentric tendency that leads to the alienation that Heidegger warns against. What Bloom sees revealed in polluted oyster beds is not the consequence of ecological damage, but the potential cost to human life that results from this damage. Even when he fetishises a pure natural world, he cannot conceive of this world outside an anthropocentric frame. For Bloom, the mere presence of the oysters indicates their potential utility, a purpose which is damaged by pollution. His concern does not appear to impinge on environmental sensibilities, but on the fear that polluted seafood may enter the human food chain. By conceiving of natural organisms as items with an inherent use-value, Bloom hits on another key facet of Heidegger's argument: the idea of standing-reserve. Standing-reserve is precipitated by the extreme objectification of technology, producing a scenario in which "Everywhere everything is ordered to stand by, to be immediately at hand, indeed to stand there just so that it may be on call for a further ordering […] Whatever stands by in the sense of standing-reserve no longer stands over against us as object." (Heidegger, *QCT* 17) The very existence of things is reduced to its potential utility, lying in wait rather than simply *being* on its own terms. In Bloom's view, this even extends to lifeforms such as oysters. While this exploitation may contribute to Bloom's distaste for oysters, the sense of objectification is still present in his worldview.

In Bloom's worries in 'Aeolus,' the image of Dignam's dead body in the machine world brings his own fantasy in direct confrontation with the revelation of a human self-image that Heidegger considers so dangerous. Bloom's belief that "[Dignam's] machineries are pegging away too" (*U*: 7.81-82) has the dual effect of situating human bodies within the domain of the machine, while also connecting the 'dead' state of inanimate machines to the posthumous human body. This corporeal confusion surrounding machines extends into subsequent lines of 'Aeolus,' both in the headline terming the

newspaper "[A] great daily organ" and in the description of Bloom's position "behind the foreman's spare body." (*U*: 7.84-85) The blurring of these lines leads to a view in which the human body itself is objectified and exploited. If we follow the notion inferred from Heidegger that "all technological application is capitalistic," (Slote, 'Questioning Technology in 'Ithaca'') these bodies enlisted into the machinic are actually absorbed into capitalism. The "spare body" of the foreman allows for surplus labour to supplement the labour of the printing presses. Gruesomely, Dignam's body is also put to use, its decay compared to labour and even facilitating potential sustenance for a rat. The decay of flesh provides profit to the earth through a human loss, death becoming a form of recirculation. Even the biological processes at play here lead to the suggestion of use-value (the role of fermentation in brewing, for example). The entire natural cycle of death is co-opted into a means of extracting value, turning the human body – even after death – into an exploitable resource.

In the Heideggerian view, enframing is only one dimension of technology's relationship to humankind. Technology is also imbued with the saving power that "lets man see and enter into the highest dignity of his essence." (Heidegger, *QCT* 32) Although the alienation of humanity is glimpsed in Bloom's technological imagination, he is also deeply interested in the notion of technology as salvation. This saving power is even attributable to Bloom himself: in 'Circe,' he appears as a messiah. Even within the vision he is doomed to failure, and the section is clearly a parody but nevertheless, it allows a vision of salvation to creep into the text. Curiously, when asked to "perform a miracle like Father Charles" (*U*: 15.1838) in order to demonstrate his powers, Bloom eats "twelve dozen oysters (shells included)," (*U*: 15.1843) recalling – and repudiating – his previous disgust. While his previous objections were partially based on the sense of over-exploiting nature, this need not be a concern in the context of the inherently benevolent usage of a messiah. Within this hallucinatory episode, the standards of morality and hygiene upheld by Bloom in the rest of the novel are extremely mutable, allowing for this change in perspective, such is his apparent ability to

manipulate the world at this point. The two sides of Heidegger's coin are visible here: Bloom is repulsed by oysters when they are viewed through the prism of enframing, yet when the saving power of technology is clear and the essence of humanity is not obfuscated, they become far less objectionable.

The messianic scene in 'Circe' allows a degree of agency to intrude into questions of exploitation, making the underpinning intention the most significant aspect of such harnessing. Although the question of intentionality exceeds the framework established by Heidegger, it nevertheless complements the notion of a saving power. Even if this example of saving power is read literally, Heidegger provides a possible counterargument, in which even God may become estranged from the world:

> In whatever way the destining of revealing may hold sway, the unconcealment in which everything that is shows itself at any given time harbours the danger that man may quail at the unconcealed and may misinterpret it. Thus where everything that presences exhibits itself in the light of a cause-effect coherence, even God can, for representational thinking, lose all that is exalted and holy, the mysteriousness of his distance. In the light of causality, God can sink to the level of a cause, of causa efficiens. He then becomes, even in theology, the god of the philosophers, namely, of those who define the unconcealed and the concealed in terms of the causality of making, without ever considering the essential origin of this causality (Heidegger, *QCT* 26).

This loss of holiness is derived from the switch to a teleological modus operandi. Even with his benevolence, the messianic Bloom develops a sense of purpose that places him in this position; the act of eating the oysters has a definite purpose, namely proving his messiah-like powers, driving him to the level of causa efficiens, the cause which finishes the item or effect in question, rendering it complete[40]. In this repudiation of Bloom's previous attitude

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[40] This idea is derived from Heidegger's updating of the Aristotelian notion of fourfold causality, which he explains using the analogy of a silver chalice, in which causa efficiens is the final touch provided by a silversmith (Heidegger, *QCT* 7). This is effectively the final of the four

towards the delicacy, the withdrawal of truth that accompanies causa efficiens is enacted, the danger of malady concealing itself behind the power of the messiah.

This theme of concealment is continued by the physically impossible acts of Bloom as messiah. He "covers his left eye with his left ear, passes through several walls, climbs Nelson's Pillar [and] hangs from the top ledge by his eyelids," (*U*: 15.1841-1843) among other acts. Although this section veers into blasphemous parodies of Jesus, the final act in the sequence – in which Bloom "eclipses the sun by extending his little finger" (*U*: 15.1850-1851) – demonstrates a different attitude. In the context of parallax, it is not inconceivable that, from certain angles, the sun may be blotted out by parts of the anatomy[41]. In the far less hallucinatory terrain of 'Lestrygonians', Bloom enacts a similar eclipse by moving his hand towards the Sun: "The tip of his little finger blotted out the sun's disk." (*U*: 8.566) This simple act demonstrates more about the importance of perspective than it does the power of a particular individual, yet in the context of 'Circe', it is ostensibly a miracle. Within the schema of mastery depicted at this moment in the chapter, it is ultimately a deceptive act, accidentally conferring messianic status. This demonstrates the idea of causa efficiens in relation to power; the messianic context overrides the material reality of the world so much that this simple human act is concealed, instead conflated with concurrent miracles. It is causa efficiens that leads to this conflation, the presence of Bloom as messiah allowing a simple act to be construed as a miraculous one simply by his touch, without which it would not appear in the same form.

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causes which allow something to come into being. The Aristotelian version of causality appears in *Finnegans Wake*, in the distorted form "*efficient* first gets there *final*ly every time, as a complex *matter* of pure *form*" (*FW*: 581.29-30) [my italics]. Aristotle's ideas on causality are found in *Physics* (Aris. *Phys.* II.3. 195-196 trans. Reeve).

[41] Subsequent technological developments have allowed similar gestures to conceal the Earth from an observer on the Moon. The astronaut Jim Lovell recounted how he 'eclipsed' the Earth with his thumb, leading him to contemplate "how small and how significant the body is" (Mosher). Lovell's statement is illuminating, emphasising both the smallness of the Earth on the extraordinary scale of celestial bodies and the relative power of the human body to the observer.

Although Bloom's messianic episode appears far removed from the technologies that underpin much of *Ulysses*, the relationship between his acts, their intentions and the natural world reflects Heidegger's views on technology. From this perspective, "What technology is, when represented as a means, discloses itself when we trace instrumentality back to fourfold causality." (Heidegger, *QCT* 6) Because Bloom's acts here sometimes connect to previous events that are explained in far simpler terms, this causality-based reading of the messianic scene brings the central values of technology to the fore. It is only within the context of causa efficiens that these acts become miracles. To give the example of Bloom blotting out the solar disk with his hand, the four causes are evident: the causa materialis of Bloom and the Sun (the necessary materials), the causa formalis, in this case the form of a miracle, the causa finalis, the intention to perform a miracle and the causa efficiens, Bloom's presence putting the other three causes into motion to complete the act. Within this concluding act of causa efficiens, these other purposes are concealed, but by reading the act in this manner, we may reverse it, discerning the various components that allow this concealment to take place.

Aquacities of Thought: Stephen's Technophobia

Technological anxieties are very much present in Stephen, a character who is less congenial to the developments of the period than Bloom. For Stephen, electricity poses an ontological question. In 'Wandering Rocks,' the Fleet Street power station elicits some worrying thoughts about the nature of being. "The whirr of flapping leathern bands and hum of dynamos from the powerhouse urged Stephen to be on. Beingless beings. Stop! Throb always without you and the throb always within." (*U*: 10.821-23) Stephen compares the throb of electricity and the throb of human existence, but the endurance of the "beingless being" of the power station surpasses the bounds of human life. The technological project of electrical power provides a transcendental force with an energy that goes far beyond humanity's own capabilities.

Electricity exists above and beyond human endeavour, still producing a grave sense of danger to humans who cross its path. The "heart" (*U*: 10.823) of the power station provides a grotesque counterpoint to the human heart, its electrical lifeblood constituting something which both enhances and endangers human life. It develops its own ontology, distinct from and in conflict with the aesthetically-mediated being presented by Stephen up to this point. The dynamism of electricity creates a challenge to his views on creative dynamism.

The "flapping leathern bands" mentioned by Stephen provide a curious link to natural materials and, ergo, broader conceptions of nature. The bands form part of the power station's dynamos, early electrical generators that were already being replaced by systems such as alternators at the beginning of the twentieth century. The use of magnets in alternators removes them even further from ideas of natural resources; while the sound of the leather bands provides a sense of ontological urgency to Stephen, this system itself was moribund by 1904. With items like leather bands largely redundant, the relationship between electrical generation and nature moved to a different order.

The presence of the power station necessitated significant alterations to the surrounding area. Noting the particular dominance of the power station's chimney on the landscape, Weston St. John Joyce claims:

> Most of the old buildings still remain, but the Pigeonhouse of our boyhood days is gone – the sentries no longer guard its portals, its deserted courtyards and dismantled batteries echo no more to the tramp of armed men or resound with salvoes of artillery. The monotonous hum of the dynamos has succeeded, and the whole place, though doubtless fulfilling a more useful purpose than during its military occupation, possessed much less interest than it did as a link with old-time Dublin (W. S. Joyce 12).

This description of the power station is deeply resonant in Stephen's scepticism, identifying the violent history of a British military fortification but

also noting the loss that comes with the switch from a human facility to a largely automated one. Despite acknowledging the significantly more benevolent ideology behind the power station, W.S. Joyce still perceives something as being lost.

The very name Dedalus is suggestive of the origins of technology, borrowed from the great artificer of Greek mythology. Stephen's distrust of "aquacities of thought and language" (*U*: 17.240) and belief in "The incompatibility of aquacity with the erratic originality of genius," (*U*: 17.247) however, suggests a deep-rooted objection to the most basic principles of technology. Aquacity is an ill-defined concept which could equally refer to any number of means of shaping the world, and it is not immediately clear how to differentiate the world-shaping powers of technology from those of creativity. When Stephen's suspicion of water is contrasted to Bloom's hydrophilia, however, a distinction begins to emerge. While Stephen considers water flimsy, fickle and insubstantial, the waterlover Bloom perceives its power to shape the world. The schemes proposed by Bloom in 'Ithaca' often feature water, suggesting its ability to act as a driving force of social and technological change. This difference in perceiving the use-value of a basic resource goes some way to explaining the difference between Stephen and Bloom in technological matters, underlining the particular significance of Bloom in any discussion of *Ulysses* and technology, and Stephen's troubling relationship to this.

Although the vagueness of the word is its strength, nevertheless, Joyce's use of 'aquacity' has specific resonances. John Simpson traces Joyce's contact with the word to his university friend Daniel Sheehan, who extended its conventional meaning to apply "the thin, transparent, or insipid nature of water to 'various statements and platitudes.'" (Simpson) Simpson also notes that the word may have had a relatively widespread usage in Dublin dialect, but this usage does not appear to incorporate all of the connotations given by Sheehan. While Joyce's use of the word 'aquacity' seems novel (and the spelling in question fails to appear in the *Oxford English Dictionary*), he certainly did not coin the word, and its more conventional variant 'aquosity' is found in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, where it is defined as "Moist or watery

quality; wateriness." ('aquosity, n.') The most tantalising example offered is T.H. Huxley's quote "What better philosophical status has 'vitality' than aquosity?" (Ibid.) By equating aquacity (or aquosity) with dynamism, a broader definition of the word begins to emerge, providing a basis for exploring Joyce's usage. While water is the ultimate vital form, allowing life and creation, it is incompatible "with the erratic originality of genius." (*U*: 17.247) This contradiction can only be resolved when it is treated as a reflection of the subjective differences between Stephen and Bloom, rather than a comment by the (typically objective) narrator of 'Ithaca'. The erratic originality of genius in question reflects Stephen's view of creation, in contrast to Bloom's belief in the "democratic equality and constancy" of water (*U*: 17.185). The position of this in a section which often contrasts Stephen and Bloom demonstrates two different views of creation. Above all else, it raises a question of whether the notion of artistic genesis can be reconciled with Bloom's pragmatic use of resources.

The fearsome presence of literal dynamos in the Pigeon House power station provides a point of contrast to Stephen's hydrophobic tendencies, breaking his observations of the cityscape and thoughts on philosophy. Stephen's thoughts quickly turn from the asceticism of Anisthenes to the ontological implications of the power station and his own position, "Between two roaring worlds." (*U*: 10.824) This recounts Matthew Arnold's 'Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse', in which one of the worlds is dead and the other "powerless to be born" (Arnold 289). Arnold's poem draws on the remote location and ascetic values of the eponymous monastery to produce the kind of aesthetic Stephen aspires to, but struggles to attain because of its dependence on quiet focus. This hydrophobic approach to creativity is less about shaping the world than retreating from it, but in such noisy confines, Stephen is powerless to attain the position of Arnold or Anisthenes. The oppressive presence of the power station reminds Stephen that the world is standing in wait to be manipulated, but of course, such acts of aquacity do not interest him; if anything, Stephen's relative passivity here means that he is more likely to be the manipulated force.

The throb of the dynamos penetrates into Stephen's mind, mirrored in his perception of the "throbbing […] heroes' hearts" (*U*: 10.834-835) in the print of boxers that stands in the window of Clohissey's bookshop. The print is a curious counterpoint to the discussion of dynamism, because although it depicts a profoundly physical act, it does so in a state of suspended animation, and has evidently been in the window long enough that it has become faded by sunlight. This print is a memento of a bygone age, depicting a bare-knuckle fight between Heenan and Sayers (*U*: 10.832); Don Gifford and Robert J. Seidman explain that the fight marks "the end of old-style boxing, since after the fight boxing was suppressed in England and was subsequently allowed only under the marquess of Queensberry rules (formulated 1865)." (Gifford and Seidman 276) Even the most physically dynamic acts may be eroded by the forces of time and nature once they cease. Although aquacity is held in low esteem by Stephen, the nature of water offers a greater degree of permanence, its possibility seemingly unlimited by temporal decay.

Further ideas of harnessing resources appear in Stephen's visit to the bookseller. The first volume he examines is an edition of "*The Irish Beekeeper*" (*U*: 10.838), a journal which explores an ancient means of cultivating natural resources. The presence of the publication recalls a brief episode in 1903, in which having offered to translate Maurice Maeterlinck's *La Vie des abeilles* for the journal, Joyce spent twenty-four hours as a sub-editor. (Ellmann 141) This experience is itself a resource, used to contribute to this narrative detail, and also to the entomological bent of sections of *Finnegans Wake*. Apiculture also provides a link between Stephen's thoughts and Bloom's ideas, recurring in the fantasy of Flowerville, which contains "a beehive arranged on humane principles" (*U*: 17.1554). An unappealingly dry subject to Stephen is one worth contemplating from a technological and even an ethical standpoint for Bloom. This multifaceted contemplation of something so functional defines what Stephen would consider to be aquacity.

Another preoccupation for Stephen in this interpellation is his family's increasingly perilous financial predicament. In the bookshop, he thinks "I might find here one of my pawned schoolprizes. *Stephano Dedalo, alumno*

optimo, palmam ferenti." (*U*: 10.840-841) With this anxious thought, Stephen realises his own life and history is itself a resource, able to be plundered by his family in their desperation. The solipsism that marks his previous contemplations of hermitude collapses into a self that is readily exploitable and therefore, emblematic of the aquacity that Stephen rallies against. It is as though part of Stephen is embodied in the prize, which constitutes a reified representation of his academic prowess, and the loss of this artefact of his past delivers a blow to his self-image, ultimately rendering his achievements obsolete. The apparent concreteness of this proclamation is destroyed by its position within a (presumably lost) item that is no longer in his possession. This ability to reify the self within physical objects demonstrates aquacity, namely the manipulation of forms produced by technē, a process from which the self is not immune.

In defining Stephen's use of the word 'aquacity', the most important aspect is its vitality, and precisely what is meant by this. For Stephen, world-shaping vitality greatly differs from the qualities of creativity, which are more readily apparent in close, introspective focus of the sort that is explored in 'Proteus'. While aquacity is an inherently protean concept, its firmly teleological objectives distinguish this form of movement from the intellectual processes that Stephen prioritises. Ultimately, two different forms of change are contrasted; the notion of changing external forces on one hand, and change that comes from within on the other. This contrast – which is most fully realised when Stephen and Bloom are contrasted in 'Ithaca' – explains both Stephen's aversion to the idea of aquacity and also, what aquacity means.

Framing Bees

Although I have already briefly addressed apiculture in relation to Stephen, this ancient means of harnessing natural resources is a significant means of understanding Bloom's view of technology. As Rachel Murray argues, in Bloom's thoughts, bees occupy "a special position in the realm of human-animal relations, existing outside of the systems of control and exploitation to

which 'brutes of the field' (*U*: 16.1797) such as horses increasingly fell victim during the Industrial Age." (Murray 1) This is reflected in Bloom's belief that "Nine tenths of them all [animals] could be caged or trained, nothing beyond the art of man barring the bees." (*U*: 16.1793-95) However, despite the relative autonomy of bees suggested in this passage of 'Eumaeus', the apian discussion in 'Ithaca' provides ideas which challenge this, particularly in the idea of beekeeping.

Bloom's foremost engagement with bees is the sting he received the previous month, which presents itself as a "cicatrice" (*U*: 17.1447). This is a tangible reminder of the relative power of bees, untrainable animals which present an unpredictable (if generally minor) threat to humans. Despite this, Bloom's views on beekeeping significantly complicate the matter. Rather than harbouring any ill will against the species, Bloom advocates for beekeeping to be conducted "on humane principles" (*U*: 17.1554), with a hive arranged in such a manner suggested as a feature of Flowerville. This recognition of the ethical dimension of apiculture reflects Bloom's continual negotiation of moral considerations with economic and technological factors, applying those values to animal husbandry; although bees may be exploited for the value of their honey, this must be done in a humane manner which does not lead them to harm or destruction. This consideration finds a parallel in the values of the Irish Beekeepers' Association, founded in 1881 with the intention of modernising the practice and ensuring apiculture was conducted humanely. An 1881 article in the *Belfast Newsletter* emphasises the dramatic changes the period brought in beekeeping, with modern appliances changing the perception of bees from "a most persistent and useless class of farm and garden intruder" to the centrepiece of "an interesting as well as a profitable pursuit." ('County Armagh Beekeepers' Association Show' 8) This change in perception accompanied a major development in the construction of hives: the movable frame hive, allowing for the production of superior honey but also the removal of honey "without the necessity of destroying the insect." (Ibid.) These factors make the practice far more amenable to the ethical standards suggested by Bloom.

June 1904 saw the publication of *The Irish Bee Guide*, which the *Freeman's Journal* noted was "the most comprehensive book of its kind ever published in this country" (Digges 2), a demonstration of the advancement of beekeeping in Ireland. Although Bloom's interest in the subject is not profound enough for this publication to appear on his bookshelves, the recent publication of such a volume is perhaps enough to put bees in Bloom's consciousness beyond their potential to sting. The sting itself caused enough pain that Bloom visited a hospital to get it dressed (*U*: 6.381), but despite this commotion, the act of stinging itself does not produce a sense of potential for bees; if anything, it leads to Bloom's consideration that, unlike animals such as horses, bees are untameable.

As a relatively sedate pursuit that befits the pastoral environs of Flowerville, beekeeping is a different form of technology to the power and filth of horses seen in 'Eumaeus'. Although technically untameable, these bees would dwell in a far more controlled environment than the wild specimen that stung Bloom at Whitsun. Although the bees become resources useful for their honey, they are also enclosed within other technological organs and discourses, kept in conditions that maximise their utility and minimise their threat. Taken to the ends permitted by modern technology, the ancient technique of beekeeping allows one of the last vestiges of wildness in nature to become subject to increasingly controlled forms of domestication. The 'humane' conditions suggested by Bloom are double-edged: while the word clearly denotes a degree of ethical responsibility towards bees by those keeping them, it also contains the word 'human', noting the dominant party here. Above all else the conditions of beekeeping are held to human standards, improving the conditions for the bees but also nullifying their capacity to subvert control. The most significant aspect of beekeeping, even in its avowedly humane form, is the ability to turn animals and their natural products into objects of use-value – and frequently monetary profit – a tendency which is a key theme of 'Ithaca'.

The richness of technological detail in 'Ithaca' is by no means incidental to the chapter's style. A. Walton Litz notes that 'Ithaca' derives its distinctive style

from "the convergence of myth […] and fact" that defined English fiction from the seventeenth-century onwards, remaining true "to the fundamental paradox of the genre even while every aspect of the genre is being tested by parody and burlesque" (Litz, 'Ithaca' 391). This paradoxical relationship allows the chapter to heavily rationalise the world while also parodying and undercutting attempts to reason with forces which exceed rationality, such as Bloom's elucidation on attempts to resolve "the problem of the quadrature of the circle" (*U*: 17.1071-1072). A similar paradox is established with regard to human agency, a paradox which is consonant with Heidegger's views on enframing. The ideas developed in 'The Question Concerning Technology' are further elaborated in 'The Turning', which evolves into a discussion of the relationship between technology and man, and the paradoxical presence of a 'saving-power' within the danger of enframing. These questions of human agency and the autonomy of technē are mirrored in Bloom's attempt to square the circle, an impossible endeavour which nevertheless appears as a possibility to Bloom by its mere presence; if a force or idea can be perceived, it is presumed that it can be somehow manipulated by human will, an illusion which was supported by the young Bloom despite the immovability of geometric form.

Although enframing necessitates a confrontation between humanity and its own image, 'The Turning' develops a degree of autonomy for technology and humankind alike;

> Does this mean that man, for better or worse, is helplessly delivered over to technology? No, it means the direct opposite; and not only that, but essentially it means something more than the opposite, because it means something different.

> If Enframing is a destining of the coming to presence of Being itself, then we may venture to suppose that Enframing, as one among Being's modes of coming to presence, changes. For what gives destining its character as destining is that it takes place so as suitably to adapt itself to the ordaining that is ever one (Heidegger, *QCT* 37).

The questions of ontology raised in the most technological chapter of *Ulysses* recall this Heideggerian equation, the confrontation of Bloom's being with external forces which, nevertheless, appear entirely within his grasp. The fine line between science, pseudo-science and fantasy developed in 'Ithaca' allows multiple views of Bloom's position in relation to these ontological and teleological issues, his real and imagined self repeatedly blurring into a number of actual and hypothetical examples of harnessing external forces.

Curiously, this notion of harnessing is equally applicable to physical and immaterial forces (the landscaping required to develop Bloomville versus the conquest of time by physical infrastructure in the suggestion of pre-empting the results of English horse races by telegraph, for example). Considering the abstraction of some of these developments, the sheer instrumentality of Heidegger's thought is a natural pair with Bloom's ideas in 'Ithaca', allowing not just the physical artefacts of technology but the motives behind it to be seen.

Dublin Telephone Conversation: Technological Parallax

A different effect is achieved by the telephone, an invention which exerted an enormous influence on social and cultural values. Unlike technologies revolving around recorded or broadcast media, such as the gramophone or radio, the telephone is an explicitly interactive, communicative medium. In Horkheimer and Adorno's discussion of technology, it is contrasted from the radio in its ability to "allow the subscriber to play the role of subject." (Horkheimer and Adorno 122) This denies it the illusory democracy and central control of broadcast media, affording a position of equality to all of its users. In *Ulysses*, telephone etiquette is substantially different from the conventional rules of social engagement. In 'Wandering Rocks,' a telephone rings "rudely," (*U*: 10.388) intruding on Miss Dunne in her workplace, whereas for Blazes Boylan, it is a matter of flirtation with a shop assistant ("May I say a word to our telephone, missy? He asked roguishly." (*U*: 10.336) In fact, Boylan is also the caller to Miss Dunne's workplace, allowing his presence to seep

from one section of the chapter to another. The effect on social relations is demonstrated by Joyce's brilliant use of simultaneity and parallax, allowing us to view both sides of the conversation, albeit asymmetrically. We directly see Boylan prior to the phone call, but only discern his presence through Miss Dunne's side of the conversation during the call itself. While we see Miss Dunne prior to the call, its suddenness means she is unable to anticipate it. A power dynamic is established: Boylan first uses the call as a pretext to flirtation, but then uses it to pursue his business. Although his side of the call is not directly heard, his trace remains in what can be inferred from Miss Dunne's replies.

Telephone calls frequently draw attention to issues of perspective in *Ulysses*. In 'Aeolus,' Bloom's use of the telephone forces the otherwise omniscient narration to reach a limit. While the constant ringing of the telephone contributes to the chaos inside the newspaper office, Bloom's telephone call is virtually drowned out by the surrounding noise. As in 'Wandering Rocks,' only one side of the conversation is heard. "Yes, *Evening Telegraph* here, Mr Bloom phoned from the inner office. Is the boss…? Yes, *Telegraph* … To where? Aha! Which auction rooms? … Aha! I see. Right. I'll catch him." (*U*: 7.411-13) The combination of the noisy environment and the form of the telephone introduces a number of unnatural pauses and gaps into the conversation. As can be inferred from Bloom's awkward tone, the medium introduces issues of comprehension, particularly when factors such as noisy surroundings or technological faults are introduced. These limit Bloom's ability to communicate effectively, just as they limit the narrative perspective in this section. The challenge posed to narrative form by the medium of the telephone must be met by innovative techniques, such as the parallax of 'Wandering Rocks' if the coherence of a telephone call is to be preserved.

R.J. Schork discusses parallax and the telephone, cautioning against the inappropriate "oral-aural parallax" (Schork 407) of scholars who are not familiar with telephones that required the use of an operator. This potential for misunderstanding on how the conversion of telephone numbers are recited to the number dialled introduces a form of parallax at the reader's

end, the technologies of *Ulysses* distorted by the refracted view of subsequent developments. Schork demonstrates that, buried within these misunderstandings, there is a rich seam of Biblical allusion; while some scholars have mistakenly claimed Keyes's telephone number to be 2044, Schork shows the number to actually be 2844, a reference to the 28:44 passage of *Deuteronomy*[42] (Schork 408). Beneath the misapplication of one form of parallax, another parallax is concealed, namely the refraction of telephony through a Jewish lens. In a more prosaic form, the telephone call itself is mediated by multiple perspectives, permitted by the presence of an operator. As Schork suggests, when Bloom says "Twentyeight. No. Twenty. Double four, yes" (*U*: 7.385), he is not thinking aloud, but talking to an operator; it is only through this intermediate connection that intelligible communication by these means may take place.

As Hans Walter Gabler notes, the structure of 'Wandering Rocks' depends on the participation of the reader to construct meaning, bringing reader into collusion with narrator (Gabler 93). The limited perspective offered by the telephone complicates this relationship between reader and narrator, leaving the reader forced to decipher Boylan's position based on the limited information available to the narrator. While parallax is still in effect here in the effective duplication of the telephone call, it is a parallax with a limited view. The panoramic scope of 'Wandering Rocks' is undermined by technological gaps, including the limits of the telephone and the doubled image of Father Conmee boarding a tram. The entire perspective of the chapter is framed by these technological restrictions, creating a picture of the city that is dependent on the efficacy of technology to function as a coherent whole. Clive Hart identifies the structure of 'Wandering Rocks' as depending on a number of interpolations, which recur across different sections of the chapter. Crucially, these echoes form "potential interpolations to be made by the reader himself. Failure to see these relationships necessarily leads to faulty judgements and emphases." (Hart 193) The necessary participation of

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[42] "He shall lend to thee, and thou shalt not lend to him : he shall be the head, and thou shalt be the tail." (*KJV*, Deut. 28:44) Schork considers this curse to parallel the position of Bloom, sleeping at the tail of his bed, also alluding to his 'bottom' position in sexual life (Schork 411).

the reader suggests that perhaps the ultimate parallax of the chapter is produced by the differing perspectives of the narrator and reader, creating a narrative body which must be negotiated between the two. This sense of narrative restriction parallels the technological restrictions that frame the chapter's action.

"Bending sound, dredging the ocean, lost in my circle": Domination and Autonomy

Comparing the views of Marx and Heidegger, Slote notes that although Marx's objection to technology is based on capitalism's uses and abuses of technological means, "Heidegger's argument is that enframing alienates man from the world in which he dwells". (Slote, 'Questioning Technology in 'Ithaca'') For Heidegger, technology is an inherently objectifying force, transforming the natural world into a tool. While this is significant for a general discussion of technology, it has direct implications for *Ulysses* and its characters. Noting that 'Ithaca' produces a unity between Bloom and Stephen (represented by Stephen's footsteps producing a sound similar to "the double vibration of a jew's harp" (*U*: 17.1243-44), Slote claims "The narrative in 'Ithaca' thus treats Bloom and Stephen as resources to be exploited through variable contrived frames." (Slote, 'Questioning Technology in 'Ithaca'') This reflects a technology-driven world in which everything is viewed as a potential resource, placing the entirety of nature within an anthropocentric frame. This creates a view of the world that is filtered through the prism of enframing, ultimately distorting the relationship between humanity and nature.

Bloom's own view of technology is broadly consonant with the idea of it harnessing the hitherto untapped resources of the world, although his technophilia accords less with Heidegger's scepticism. Bloom's numerous proposed schemes for economic benefit and civic improvement revolve around ideas of technological development and utilising natural resources. In 'Ithaca,' Bloom ponders the effects of a "prolonged summer drouth," (*U*:

17.171) that has affected local reservoirs. He returns to the idea of water as a resource later in the chapter, when he proposes the construction of "a hydroelectric plant at peak of tide at Dublin bar or at head of water at Poulaphouca or Powerscourt." (*U*: 17.1712-13) Although the Poulaphouca waterfall has already been anthropomorphised in 'Circe,' (*U*: 15.3298-99) appearing as the living embodiment of nature, Bloom still perceives its existence in terms of the potential benefit for industry. Unfortunately, such proposals are worryingly similar to acts of English imperialism. Indeed, the flooding of several Welsh valleys to provide water for growing English cities in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries displaced numerous communities and caused untold damage to Welsh culture and society, and even the Welsh language, inflaming nationalist tensions (H.P. Jones 238). As it happens, Bloom's proposal for a hydroelectric plant at Poulaphouca was enacted (Weng 46), albeit with less evidence of public dissent. Beyond the environmental consequences of such projects, they can cause significant damage to humanity, despite their supposed benefits. In Bloom's utopia, little thought is given to these consequences. Although he is right to consider water the most significant resource available, it is dangerous to consider water as something which exists solely for the benefit of humanity. If reframed as a healthy respect for the power of water rather than an irrational fear of it, perhaps Stephen's hydrophobia is actually a logical response here.

In his proposals for improving transport links and leisure facilities in Dublin itself, Bloom is on firmer ground. He contemplates "A scheme to enclose the peninsular delta of the North Bull at Dollymount and erect on the space of the foreland" (*U*: 17.1714-16) a variety of tourist establishments, centered on "an asphalted esplanade." (*U*: 17.1717) While there would be an undoubted environmental impact to the kind of land reclamation work this project would entail, Bloom's interest in the burgeoning tourism sector is less problematic, not least as this venture would involve the remodelling of his own city rather than the more vulnerable countryside of County Wicklow. Bloom's economic imagination is especially perceptive when he proposes improved transport links, including "A scheme to connect by tramline the Cattle Market (North

Circular road and Prussia street) with the quays (Sheriff street, lower, and East Wall)," (*U*: 17.1726-28) developing an idea previously suggested by Bloom in 'Hades' (*U*: 6.400-2). The plan extends to incorporate railway termini and Dublin Port, creating an integrated intermodal transport network of strategically based hubs. Bloom's economic logic is clear to see here, particularly as he considers "the cost of acquired rolling stock for animal transport […] to be covered by grazers' fees." (*U*: 17.1740-43)

The exploitation that has already been discussed is used to a particularly clever effect here. Rather than objectifying natural resources, Bloom examines Dublin's pre-existing resources and imagines a way to connect them. As Liam Clare's article 'The Dublin Cattle Market' demonstrates, expansion of the city's livestock markets was a significant political issue for some time, and Bloom arguably finds a means of resolving some of the longstanding problems with the markets, including the "great inconvenience and danger" brought by the driving of cattle down the North Circular Road (Clare 174), which would be circumvented by his proposed tram link. As Bloom recognises, the city's positions as a hub of commerce, trade and transportation are all entwined. In turn, this formidable knot is connected to Ireland's strong agricultural sector, creating a situation in which conduits of trade are formed between rural and urban parts of Ireland, and the rest of Europe via improved transportation. As money creates more money, in Bloom's vision, technology is exploited to create further technological advances; Marx's formula of M-C-M' becomes T-C-T'.

Adorno and Horkheimer claim that technology "does not work by concepts and images, by the fortunate insight, but refers to the method, the exploitation of others' work, and capital" (Horkheimer and Adorno 4) In this schema, the mastery of nature stands for domination and, ultimately, totalitarianism; Horkheimer and Adorno advance the view that "What men want to learn from nature is how to use it in order wholly to dominate it and other men." (Ibid.) This places the enframing of nature within the context of political mastery. The nature of Bloom's technophilia – using the control of nature to benefit humanity – is taken in conjunction with his utopian thinking,

and certainly not this notion of political dominance. His plan for the development of the utopian settlement of Flowerville (*U*: 17.1580), indicates a technological mastery that is used for, not against, humanity. Crucially, while Horkheimer and Adorno's view is tied to ideas of labour, Bloom's is centred on recreation. He imagines a settlement ripe for "cycling on level macadamised causeways, ascents of moderately high hills, natation in secluded fresh water and unmolested river boating" (*U*: 17.1593-95). Without the influence of economic factors, Bloom's vision is beneficial for humanity, despite its exploitation of nature.

Unfortunately for Bloom, the obvious way to achieve this mastery of nature is through labour. Horkheimer and Adorno claim "Nature must no longer be influenced by approximation, but mastered by labour." (Horkheimer and Adorno 19) The mastery of nature achieved by labour also involves a degree of mastery over the labourer:

> The unification of intellectual functions by means of which domination over the senses is achieved, the resignation of thought to the rise of unanimity, means the impoverishment of thought and experience: the separation of both areas leaves both impaired (Ibid. 36).

This notion of thought and experience subjugated to technology and labour bears a difficult relationship to the radical autonomy posited by modernism. It is here that an autonomous art, which bypasses the bad conscience of "economic necessity" (Ibid. 37) serves an important function. However, modernism's symbiotic relationship with technological modernity complicates its ability to adopt this function; it simultaneously challenges domination through its autonomy, while also embodying it by participating in its technological rubric. The optimism about technology held by Bloom reflects this conflicted position of modernism, in a world in which "A technological rationale is the rationale of domination itself." (Ibid. 121)

Reason itself does not allow an escape from this position of domination. As Horkheimer claims in *Eclipse of Reason*, "[If] reason is declared incapable of determining the ultimate aims of life and must content itself with reducing

everything it encounters to a mere tool, its sole remaining goal is simply the perpetuating of its co-ordinating activity." (Horkheimer 63) This instrumental reason digests everything in its path, ruthlessly incorporating everything into its systems. "Domination of nature involves domination of man." (Ibid. 64) This forms a challenge to the notion of subjectivity; while humankind's chief means of asserting its power over nature is through domination, this equally incorporates the domination of human subjects. The very notion of technology – dominating and harnessing nature – forces a similar process to subjugate human subjects, denying them their own 'nature.' In an instrumentalised, dominated landscape, there is no room for an autonomous self. Nevertheless, the aesthetics of modernism allow a means of escaping this bind, creating a sense of autonomy that can transcend humanity's domination of itself.

The tools for autonomy are ascertained by Adorno in *Aesthetic Theory*. In contrast to the subjugation of thought and experience, Adorno demonstrates modernism's ability to address these functions from a different perspective. He claims "If the subject is no longer able to speak directly, then at least it should – in accordance with a modernism that has not pledged itself to absolute construction – speak through things, through their alienated and mutilated form." (Adorno 161) Autonomous modernism *does* speak through things, allowing an escape route from the imprisoned consciousness of the subject. However, this appeal to the autonomy of art suggests it must also be autonomous from technology. When art acquires the teleological framework of technology (or capitalism for that matter), its autonomy is compromised. It is precisely the lack of a definitive purpose that gives art its autonomous qualities, indicating that the confrontation between art and technology poses a challenge to the notion of autonomy. Technology's manifest influence on the nature of perception in *Ulysses* demonstrates the difficulty of this relationship.

Cinematic Style

The technological frame of *Ulysses* extends to its own style. Danius claims "with cinema and related technologies of visual representation, a different optical vocabulary slides into place, a tendency that Joyce's language of precision both draws upon and reinforces." (Danius 167) Joyce's cinematic acuity was such that the filmmaker Sergei Eisenstein became an admirer of *Ulysses* (Ibid.)[43]. Frequently, Bloom's eye becomes the 'camera' of the novel, the fragments of his gaze forming a kind of cinematic montage. Bloom's wandering eye often leads the narrative astray, reading "multicoloured hoardings," (*U*: 5.193) ogling a woman in Dlugacz's butchers (*U*: 4.148-51) or staring at his fingernails, (*U*: 6.200-8) to give but three examples. Indeed, while Danius is correct to claim "eyes in *Ulysses* emerge as characters in their own right," (Danius 160) the technological focus of the novel and the cinematic qualities of its style transform the eye into a camera of sorts, making not just the eye but the camera a character (and, therefore, a perspective) in *Ulysses*. The reader sees not so much through Bloom's eyes as Bloom's *camera*. His sense of perspective is delimited as much by its reflection of media technologies as by his own visual sensibility.

The analogy of cinema indicates the impact of technology on the changes of literary perspective in modernist writing. Colebrook claims "Modernism is littered with speech that emanates from machines and objects, looks that extend from cameras and viewing apparatuses, and quotations that are repeated like so many found objects." (Colebrook 'Inhuman Irony' 125) This "shifts the inhuman point of view, not to a point of higher meaning but to an inhuman machine, where the look is reduced to a lens or camera and the 'voice' is reduced to a recording or slogan." (Ibid.) This demonstrates the process of alienation that is concomitant to modernity; however, Colebrook contrasts it to postmodern pastiche, creating a voice "from which the human might be derived." (Ibid. 126) Like the visual technologies that influenced Joyce's style, his disembodied perspective reflects the interpellation of the world into the framework of modern technology and capitalism.

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[43] Joyce briefly discussed the idea of adapting *Ulysses* for cinema with Eisenstein (Ellmann 654).

While Joyce's techniques reflect a broader process of alienation, the effect of Bloom's cinematic eye is more nuanced than may be infered from Colebrook's view. The earliest films were prized more for their sense of movement than their narrative qualities; affixing a camera to a moving vehicle was a common technique. "Predicated on the inversion of mobility and immobility, [they] produced an optical illusion of movement by suggesting that the environment rushed towards the camera and, by implication, the spectator." (Danius 127) The implicit presence of the spectator is vital, as it asserts the primacy of the audience's subjectivity in the cinematic experience. The power is imbued in the gaze; Joyce conveniently condenses camera and literal eye into Bloom's visual perspective, not only turning into something comparable to the act of viewing cinema but also producing a voyeuristic act. It is no coincidence that Bloom is repeatedly seen indulging in voyeurism, and that many of his visual digressions are tinged with eroticism. If cinema participates in a process that objectifies the world, it also necessarily engages in the objectification of people.

As Hanaway-Oakley notes, in cinema and Joyce's work alike, "there is no simple machine (body) versus human (mind) binary; the human and the mechanical, and the mind and the body, are interlinked in a variety of ways." (Hanaway-Oakley 76) While Joyce's use of language demonstrates this refutation of Cartesian dualism, pioneers of silent film comedy like Charlie Chaplin used machine-like movements and gestures to achieve a similar effect (Ibid.). The consolidation of body into machine has a transformative effect on subjectivity, producing a sense of subject-as-object. Hanaway-Oakley uses phenomenology to explore this modified subjectivity, with particular emphasis on the body-subject posited by Maurice Merleau-Ponty (Ibid. 60). The image of Bloom climbing through his window in 'Ithaca' demonstrates this connection between machine and body, his mechanical movements recalling those of Chaplin and other silent comedians (Ibid. 64). Bloom's actions – described in the pseudo-scientific prose characteristic of the episode – turn him into a free-moving object, blending in with the "union of rails and stiles"

(*U*: 17.86) that forms the approach to his house. His return home is permitted by a departure from Cartesian subjectivity in the form of a mechanised body.

The City as a Technological Entity

The authoritarian nature of much modern urban planning is challenged by Joyce, who repeatedly demonstrates that the city contains the raw materials needed to subvert its power structures. A particularly strong challenge to the power structures implicit in urban control is found in 'Wandering Rocks,' a chapter which is marked by the presence of the viceregal cavalcade. Although this symbolic procession of imperial power runs throughout the chapter, only one of its nineteen sections takes a sustained look at the cavalcade. Curiously, this section does not include Stephen or either of the Blooms, ensuring none of the novel's main characters are tainted by the viceroy's presence. Emphasising the counter-monumental nature of the chapter in relation to the *Dublin of the Future* proposed by the urban planner Patrick Abercrombie, Lanigan notes that in 'Wandering Rocks,' "the city's topography is constantly subject to reinterpretation by a whole host of historical understandings whose extreme subjectivity is utterly incommensurate with the benign authoritarianism of Abercrombie's work[44]." (Lanigan 174) Although 'Wandering Rocks' does impose a structure on the city, it is a structure which allows multiple perspectives to appear, contrasting the monolithic of understanding of a city promoted by planners such as Abercrombie.

The most important weapon in Joyce's arsenal is irony. The viceroy's uncomprehending gaze takes in the gestures of many Dubliners, invariably reading them as symbols of deference but failing to understanding their subtexts. A particularly notable example of this is Simon Dedalus's reaction; he is seen "steering his way from the greenhouse for the subsheriff's office, stood still in midstreet and [bringing] his hat low." (*U*: 10.1199-1201) The

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[44] Abercrombie's attitude to planning was holistic to say the least, even incorporating the influence of fiction in remodelling the cityscape (Dehaene 4). While Abercrombie was an idealist, his vision was one in which the role of the planner was paramount.

greenhouse in question is a public urinal and, unbeknownst to the viceroy, Dedalus is not tipping his hat in deference, but to conceal his open fly. The city itself provides a similar gesture. After the viceroy is "smiled upon" (*U*: 10.1195) by the windows of the Patriotic Insurance Company, "From its sluice in Wood quay wall under Tom Devan's office Poddle river hung out in fealty a tongue of liquid sewage." (*U*: 10.1196-97) This gesture provides both an unsanitary riposte to unionist sycophancy and a counter-narrative to the grander (if equally fetid) Liffey. The presence of the Poddle's tide of sewage brings the subterranean filth of Dublin to life in a Swiftian gesture that pollutes the viceroy's procession with the urban detritus that he would rather not see. There is an ominous political undercurrent to the sewage, recalling Swift's 'A Description of a City Shower,' in which London's "Filth of all hues and odours" (Swift 257) is brought to light (and quickly swept away) by an almost Biblical torrent. With Dublin's political corruption and decay brought to the fore, the possibility of the city's cleansing emerges.

The presence of liquid sewage also demonstrates the failures of urban planning in Dublin, particularly its inadequate sanitation system. Water politics have been a persistent theme in Ireland for much of its history, and they were of the utmost important in Edwardian Dublin. Although the development of the Vartry Reservoir was supposed to improve Dublin's water system, its supply was largely diverted to newer, affluent suburbs (D'Arcy, 'Vartryville' 265); the "seepage of raw sewage and stagnant water from numerous wells abandoned with the advent of Vartry water, resulted in a dramatic increase in enteric fever," especially as it was coupled with naturally retentive soil (Ibid. 275). The existence of such lethal conditions after the development of the reservoir indicated the political failures to truly improve the conditions of Dublin's water supply for all of the city's inhabitants, and it is this political failure that leads the torrent of sewage to be directed at the viceroy. The stagnation of Dublin – and in this case, of its water supply – is largely the consequence of imperial mismanagement. The fact that the Dublin Corporation's tax revenues were steadily increasing (while public water rates themselves were at the low rate of 3p in the pound per annum as of 1904

(*Thom's 1904* 1345) is a testament to the incompetence of the city's administrators. The rather desperate alternative plan as of 1893 – to draw water from the Grand Canal to augment supply when dry weather had reduced water levels at Vartry ('Dublin Water Supply' 643) – demonstrates the inadequacy of the measures taken by those governing the city. While this plan was not enacted, a subsequent report noted that the maintenance of the city's water supply depended upon "a continuance of [this] economy and the coming of a good rainfall," (Ibid. 697) suggesting the inadequate supply that was present, particularly during dry spells.

The question of taxation is addressed by Joyce, who claims the charges for Dublin's plumbing are "to the detriment of another section of the public, selfsupporting taxpayers, solvent, sound." (*U*: 17.181-182) This passage appears to be a satirical jibe at a particular sort of citizen who is reluctant to pay their social dues, but as Michael Rubenstein notes, the word 'taxpayers' alludes to a mythical category; indeed, whether they pay rates or not, all participants in a society pay some form of tax, even if this is only on goods purchased. While noting the utopian thrust behind Joyce's depiction of urban infrastructure, Rubenstein claims this is challenged by his allusion to the "limited and alienated consciousness of the taxpayer." (Rubenstein 60) Furthermore, he calls the entire category of taxpayers into question: "it would be hard, in the temporal and geographical interstices of *Ulysses* and especially in the writing of *Ulysses*, to find anything resembling an actually existing constituency of taxpayers, whether in the petty-bourgeois, statist, or even national sense of the term." (Ibid.) Of course, taxation existed in Dublin, but the concept of a personal or public identity being constituted from the act of paying tax in a city which was a highly contested imperial space seems extremely questionable. What is clear from this interjection is that the universality of public infrastructure is undermined once interest groups – such as 'taxpayers' – emerge to claim their own vested interests. While Dublin's water system was developed unevenly, it still required the premise of universal provision in order to function.

Rubenstein maintains the sense of a utopian community produced by Joyce's use of the waterworks, identifying a perspective which believes that public utilities "bind us together into groups that rely on the same networks of water pipes, gas lines, power grids [and] communication networks." (Ibid. 67) Under the aegis of state-led development, this creates a sense of shared national identity. By affording a 'voice' to the water that runs through the Vartry system, Joyce allows this national consciousness to be vocalised within *Ulysses*. In Bloom's admiration of water – and specifically "Its universality: its democratic equality and constancy to its nature in seeking its own level," (*U*: 17.184-85) the egalitarian spirit that can be attributed to infrastructural developments is seen as an inherent trait of water. Despite this optimism around water, a more cynical argument may also be made. Access to water in Edwardian Dublin was by no means equal, while the very idea of attaching a price to water creates a more fundamental problem. Despite its preponderance and necessity for supporting life, water is also a commodity. With the development of water infrastructure comes pricing issues, which immediately transform the universal dissemination of water supply into an issue of exploitation. The utility of water is supplemented by an exchange-value, bastardising the democratic essence discerned by Bloom.

The economic factors of the Vartry development underline this problem. The improved access afforded to the middle-classes has already been noted; the waterworks had a significant influence on the redistribution of the city's middle-class population. As Rubenstein notes, the scheme's intentions of erasing class boundaries in accessing water by supplying working-class districts, this plan failed. Instead, it led to

> a rapid exodus of well-to-do Protestants from the inner city to suburban townships like Rathmines and Pembroke, leaving the municipal territory of Dublin city – circumscribed geographically by the two canals and the Circular Road – with a poor tax base (Rubenstein 55).

This piece of infrastructural development was the catalyst for accelerating the dichotomy between the inner city and its suburbs, ensuring an uneven spread of infrastructural and economic resources.

Infrastructural developments like the Vartry project show the double-edged nature of technological progress: Vartry necessitated not only a harnessing of natural resources, but also a remodelling of urban space, transforming both the city of Dublin and the natural landscape outside its environs beyond recognition. In huge infrastructural projects like this, both the natural world and the human world are enclosed within the framework of technology, placing both within the same rubric of domination and exploitation. The vast scale of Vartry turns the city itself into a technological organ, an object of the impulse to rationalise, dominate and enframe. Rubenstein's exploration of the resulting socioeconomic impact on Dublin has already been discussed, but the resulting topographical changes are also significant, greatly complicating any attempt to represent the city by adding a significant subterranean layer to its urban space.

Memory Encoded: Photography

While literature is only able to produce the *sense* of presence, film photography's physical process captures a moment by allowing its image to persist after the event. In *Camera Lucida*, Roland Barthes explains this idea: "What the photograph reproduces to infinity has occurred only once: the photograph mechanically repeats what could never be repeated existentially." (Barthes 27) As in processes of memory, the capture provided by photography is ultimately illusory. Nevertheless, its physical form allows at least *some* of an ephemeral past to survive. In *Ulysses*, photography emerges as a form of remembrance, but also as a general signifier of absence. Milly's departure to a photography studio in Mullingar establishes this association (*U*: 4.400-1), and this is only heightened by the lack of a photograph sent in her birthday letter.

While the absence of a photograph can heighten the degree to which an absent person may be missed, the presence of a photograph goes beyond physical representation, even attaining the status of currency. In 'Eumaeus,' Bloom shows Stephen an eight-year-old photograph of Molly, possibly in an attempt to entice him to return to his home for the night. In this context, the photograph constitutes an eroticised token, a single moment of sexual expression preserved in the medium of photography. The description of the photograph parodies erotica. It depicts:

> a large sized lady with her fleshy charms of evidence in an open fashion as she was in the full bloom of womanhood in evening dress cut ostentatiously low for the occasion to give a liberal display of bosom, with more than vision of breasts, her full lips parted and some perfect teeth, standing near, ostensibly with gravity (*U*: 16.1427-32).

Although clearly taken at a different stage in her life, the photograph symbolises Molly's current position, poised between thoughts of the past and the sense of possibility lying ahead. Of course, the latter is emphasised by Bloom in his attempt to ensure Stephen will follow him to Eccles Street.

A more brazen form of sexualised photography emerges in 'Ithaca,' where "2 erotic photocards" are produced from a drawer in Bloom's home (*U*: 17.1809). These images form a pornographic counterpoint to the photograph of Molly. Barthes draws a distinction between erotic and pornographic photography, claiming that, while the pornographic photograph leaves its subject "flattened like an idol that does not leave its niche," the erotic photograph "does not make the sexual organs into a central object; it may very well not show them at all; it takes the spectator outside its frame, and it is there that I animate this photograph and that it animates me." (Barthes 59) This distinction is clear in *Ulysses*: while the image of Molly forms a dynamic point that effects change, the photocards in 'Ithaca' lie dormant in a drawer. The ability of photography to manifest itself beyond the frame and produce a major effect on the observer is crucial to its impact on memory.

For Barthes, a photograph constitutes a literal manifestation of presence. He argues for the primacy of chemical process over painterly framing in the development of photography, noting that "the discovery that silver halogens were sensitive to light […] made it possible to recover and print directly the luminous rays emitted by a variously lighted object. The photograph is literally an emanation of the referent." (Barthes 80) The essential qualities of film photography provide a physical manifestation of memory, allowing a single moment, perhaps even a deceased person, to be preserved in the medium of light. This notion of preservation is defeated by the pornographic photographs in Bloom's drawer, which also contains numerous other attempts at encoding memory which fail to capture an essence, including a childhood drawing of Bloom by Milly (*U*: 17.1775-78), and cameos owned by his parents (*U*: 17.1795-97). Combined with the impersonal photocards, these items fail to achieve the sense of a literal, physical rendering of memory suggested by Barthes's theory.

Despite the flaws of photography, its ability to translate ephemeral physical forms into a more permanent medium allows it to transcend some of the boundaries of time. Despite this, photographs are themselves subject to the ravages of time, prone to decay. Among the objects in Bloom's drawer are "2 fading photographs of queen Alexandra of and of Maud Branscombe, actress and professional beauty." (*U*: 17.1778-81) Despite evidently being stored away from damaging sunlight, the photographs have still suffered decay over time. For Barthes, the decay of a photograph underscores the notion that it is "like a living organism […] Attacked by light, by humidity, it fades, weakens, vanishes; there is nothing left to do but throw it away." (Barthes 93) Despite its ability to transcend time, the photograph is more an extension of mortality than an immortal presence. It is still bound by the limits of its own lifespan.

It is this play between mortality and the appearance of immortality that defined photography for much of its early history; as R. Brandon Kershner states,

So entrenched is the popular assumption that photography is simply an objective means of preserving visual appearances, so embedded in contemporary culture is the ideology of the snapshot, that it is difficult for us to appreciate to what extent photographs in the nineteenth century were charged with mystery and with mortality, with *otherness* (Kershner 267).

Kershner applies this framework to the apparition-like appearance of Rudy in 'Circe,' an appearance which is permitted by the hallucinatory nature of the chapter but grounded in ideas of post-mortem photography. Although Rudy appears to have aged in some parallel dimension, his appearance is rather consonant with funerary photography. As Kershner notes, "Early postmortem photographs could be quite frank about death, although by the beginning of the twentieth century there was a concerted effort, led by funeral directors, to beautify the process." Across the period, "It was common to dress children in favorite or ceremonial clothing and to surround them with their cherished toys." (Kershner 273) Rudy's peculiar dress in the scene reflects a variation on this theme, in which the props of post-mortem photography are merged with some of the fantastical ideas that have inhabited Bloom's consciousness to create the spectral form seen briefly.

Issues of mortality are implicated not just in the content of much photography, but also by its form; as Susan Sontag claims, "All photographs are *memento mori*." (Sontag 15) This applies to the ephemerality captured by the photograph, but also to the specific socio-historic dynamics of photography as a form. Sontag explores what is remembered in the memento mori of the photograph, reaching something approaching a definition of modernity in the process:

Cameras began duplicating the world at that moment when the human landscape started to undergo a vertiginous rate of change: while an untold number of forms of biological and social life are being destroyed in a brief span of time, a device is available to record what is disappearing (Ibid.).

Photography permits acts of memory to take place during times of rapid change, allowing moribund forms to survive through a physically encoded memory.

As depictions of times and things which have disappeared, the memory conferred by photographs can be fickle; Sontag warns that:

> [As] the fascination that photographs exercise is a reminder of death, it is also an invitation to sentimentality. Photographs turn the past into an object of tender record, scrambling moral distinctions and disarming historical judgements by the generalized pathos of looking at time past (Ibid. 71).

The selective memory produced by photography can even induce forgetting. Although the historical inferences of Sontag's suggestion are clouded by the experience of the Second World War, photography in *Ulysses* plays with similar ideas of fidelity. The decontextualised image of Molly treated as currency in 'Eumaeus' is out of date, showing a period in the life of the Blooms that does not reflect their present state as of 1904. The photograph in question depicts a time that has long passed, and bears little resemblance to the contemporary Molly Bloom. While Bloom acknowledges the age of the picture to Stephen, he gives little indication of the changes of the intervening eight years, allowing it to stand as an unfaithful reproduction of his unseen wife. This gives Stephen an idealised picture of Bloom's marriage and, especially, of Molly herself.

Technologies of remembrance contain the suggestion that time itself can be manipulated by technological means. Joyce satirises this in Bloom's imagination of a world in which "every grave" or house has the facility to play recordings of previous generations; he hopes this will "Remind you of the voice like the photograph reminds you of the face." (*U*: 6.963.67) This form of memory is extremely limited, failing to capture the essence of the deceased. Bloom observes this, wondering "Besides how could you remember everybody? Eyes, walk, voice," (*U*: 6.962) suggesting what is lost in the gramophone. Aside from its aural form, the fundamental limitations of the

medium are self-evident: "After dinner on a Sunday. Put on poor old greatgrandfather. Kraahraark! Hellohellohello amawfullygladd kraark awfullygladseeagain hellohello amawf krpthsth." (*U*: 6.964-66) The awkward greeting of the ancestor indicates a stilted formality that is unlikely to capture the actual speech of an individual. Furthermore, the distortion of the recording shows the unwelcome intrusion of technology's limitations into the domain of memory. What initially appears to be a significant improvement on human memory is equally subject to error. The gramophone recording corrupts memory as much as it assists it, producing a distorted, over-formal artefact that is very much a cheap imitation of actual memory. Bloom's thoughts of the gramophone demonstrate a sense of limits, the device's failure to conquer time only emphasising the conditions of material existence and linear time that the gramophone is subject to. It soon becomes apparent that the gramophone exists under the same physical conditions as the human lifespan it seeks to transcend.

The connection between representational technologies, capitalism and spectres of the past is made by Derrida in *Specters of Marx*. Referring to the spectre of communism established by Marx and Engels, he claims:

> All phantasms are projected onto the screen of this ghost (that is, on something absent), for the screen itself is phantomatic, as in the television of the future which will have no 'screenic' support and will project its images – sometimes synthetic images – directly onto the eye, like the sound of the telephone deep in the ear (Derrida, *Specters of Marx* 123).

This places the recording of the deceased grandfather within the domain of ghosts. In their ability to transcend time and make direct contact with the senses, representational technologies such as the gramophone acquire the transcendental power of ghosts. Although Marx and Engels envisioned their ideology as a pre-existing "spectre of communism," (Marx and Engels, *Communist Manifesto* 218) the notion of an ideology inherently imbued with ghostly properties also applies to capitalism. A ghost's ability to transcend

spatio-temporal divides and collapse the boundary between material and immaterial makes it a useful analogy for the transcendental power of capital.

In their various personal, political and historical guises, ghosts exercise an influence throughout *Ulysses*. The lessons learned from the novel's spectres often reflect temporal concerns; even when rendered in the concrete form of a photograph or phonograph disc, they are still subject to the ravages of time, via physical decay and even the decay of memory. These ghostly concerns epitomise the treatment of time in the novel in general: time as something which is ephemeral, mutable and capable of shaping the physical world, evading the capture of humans. Even when time is put under control (by standardisation, for example), its capture is by no means certain; perhaps unwittingly, Bloom manages to construct a means of evading the temporal peculiarities imposed by the presence of Dunsink time, firstly through his confusion around the timeball, and then through the suggestion of a scheme to exploit time zone differences to aid gamblers betting on English horse races.

In the temporal dimension of *Ulysses*, power is more clearly exercised by spectral presences than political ones; the structure of the novel is dependent on apparitional figures, from Hamlet's father to Stephen's mother, and the union of Bloom and Stephen is only completed by the 'presence' of Rudy Bloom and May Dedalus at the end of 'Circe', affording ghosts a privileged position in driving the temporal arrow of *Ulysses*. This union necessitates an escape from the time of contemporary Dublin to a parallel timeframe in which historical signifiers are mingled and the dead live; it is only when hallucination diverts Joyce's realist impulses that all temporal possibilities may be considered. The realm of memory opened up by the chaos of 'Circe' underlines the shadow world that has underpinned the entire novel, the intricate past world invoked by the absences and presences of memory

The transcendence offered by technological powers in *Ulysses* acts as a prelude to the far more substantial technologically mediated worlds of the virtual, creations made possible by the runaway development of technology

throughout the twentieth century. Although the technologies of *Ulysses* are remote to this point, they still display the manipulation of time and relationship to finance that defines the virtual realm of the present moment. While *Ulysses* allows both Bloom and Stephen to take stock of technology and consider its role in their lives, subjectivity has now become so intensely welded to technological forms that such introspection is all but impossible. DeLillo's technological subjects demonstrate the culmination of the narrowing of the gap between technology and the self.

Rupturing the Real: DeLillo's Technology

"sunset was human invention." (*PO*: 22).

"Solve the brain. Solve death. Solve being alive." Mark O'Connell, *To Be a Machine* (O'Connell 180).

The dematerialisation of money precipitated by the abolition of the gold standard in 1973 saw concomitant changes in technology. The anchor of the referent was unmoored in every aspect of life, and the emergence of virtual worlds marked the leaps in technological development that followed. A perfect storm of dematerialisation, neoliberal deregulation and scientific progress allowed the creation of new, virtual worlds to take place. In turn, this technologically-mediated world produced a rupture of the real itself: as Baudrillard puts it, "The real is produced from miniaturized cells, matrices, and memory banks, models of control – and it can be reproduced an indefinite number of times from these. […] In fact, it is no longer really the real, because no imaginary envelops it anymore." (Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation* 2) The hyperreal stands in its place, transforming almost every aspect of life beyond recognition. Yet, despite the enormous changes that have taken place since the 1970s, there is still a clear lineage advancing from the technologically-determined modernity depicted in *Ulysses*. A dialogue between the text (and context) of *Ulysses* and DeLillo's work can help us to understand precisely what has changed, and what this means for the essence of technology.

The technological modulation of relations in *Ulysses*, demonstrated by telephone calls, public transport and sewage infrastructure, as well as representational forms such as photography and phonography, begins to set in motion a process that is seen at a far later stage in DeLillo's post-*Underworld* writing. The technologies that engaged individuals at arms length now completely immerse the subject in virtual worlds, creating the recursively constructed network of replications described by Baudrillard. While the

technologies of *Ulysses* remodel reality, the technological worlds of DeLillo's work demonstrate rupture it altogether.

In *Cosmopolis*, this rupture manifests itself as the conquest of the real by technological forces, which ultimately challenge the insights of Enlightenment thought by radically redefining the self. This enfringement of the self by technology is epitomised by Eric Packer, in many regards the defining literary representation of the technologised subject. Packer's subjectivity is also intrinsically linked to his role within the domain of finance, which is itself often subordinated to technological forces in *Cosmopolis*. This leads to a discussion of the dialectic of materiality and immateriality which defines technology and capitalism alike in the post-industrial world. From the advent of the ATM onwards, technologies of economic importance have increasingly moved money to a virtual domain; in *Cosmopolis*, currency trading through electronic means takes money to extreme ontological ends, asserting the potential for transcending materiality altogether; however, this is ultimately undermined by the counterdiscourse of decumulation via Luddism that pervades the novel.

Similar notions of rupture are explored in *Falling Man*, which uses the violence of the September 11th attacks to explore the idea that technological developments create the potential for their own destruction. While paralleling the dichotomy of accumulation and decumulation that defines *Cosmopolis*, this also invokes Heidegger's warning that through enframing, technology produces the potential for alienation. The attacks – using the emblems of technology against itself – demonstrate this in an extreme form, in which the tools produced by technology are deadly when removed from avowedly benign intentions. This reflects previous DeLillian motifs, such as the airborne toxic event of *White Noise* and the nuclear weapons programme seen in *Underworld*. Additionally, the circumvent of the technologies of state surveillance by the attackers is discussed as another means of evading modern technology, providing another instance in which DeLillo ironically undercuts the power of technology, and also the state.

Point Omega contrasts military and artistic technologies, with the parallel forces of warfare and cinema converging in a dematerialised space that resembles the digital terrain of the financial markets in *Cosmopolis*. In the post-September 11th world, technology has developed new forms of violence; rather than presenting themselves immanently, they allow attacks to be conducted from afar, with drone warfare creating a disconnect between combatants and those killed by their actions. Despite the power imbued here, as Richard Elster suggests in the novel, the increasing move towards digital technologies in the military – and government – also produces a major body of evidence that self-incriminates combatants, whose every move is captured and preserved. This paradox is mirrored by the artistic possibilities of digital media, which are explored through Jim Finley's filmmaking. Finley's desire to make a lengthy, unedited digital video shows new possibilities for technology, contradicting Baudrillard's assertion that such technologies end the possibilities of the avant-garde. This is supported by references to *Russian Ark* and *Inland Empire*, two experimental films which utilised digital film to produce previously inconceivable results.

The path to dematerialisation is taken to greater extremes in *Zero K*, which explores (and critiques) the notion of immortality as attained through technology. The immortality in question is speculative, predicated on the hope of future scientific advances permitting the resurrection of cryogenically-frozen human bodies. Here, death is subordinated to a greater telos: that of an altered future. This forms the most extreme conquest of nature imaginable, transcending the ultimate limit of biology in its corporeal form. Heidegger is invoked again in a discussion on the effect this would have on human society, with a view to the idea that such a corruption of nature would estrange humanity from its own self. Even language is technologised in *Zero K*, where it is suggested that this barely imaginable future would feature a new linguistic paradigm, based on mathematical rather than expressive forces.

This post-human future is invoked with an even greater pessimism in *The Silence*, a novel which imagines the death of modern technology. Despite the

apparent possibilities for redemption in such a scenario, the novel silences the strand of ekphrasis that previously ran throughout DeLillo's late work, suggesting a similarly terminal point for art. The central idea of the novel is that the trajectory of the human race is so intrinsically attached to that of technological development that to imagine the end of technology is to imagine the end of a recognisable civilisation, one in which the idea of subjectivity itself is substantially altered.

Immaterial: *Cosmopolis* and the Virtual

The technologically-driven process by which the real is ruptured is a key theme for DeLillo, particularly in his later work. Curiously, this strand is frequently entwined with his increasingly direct explorations of finance capitalism, most extensively in *Cosmopolis*. Russell Scott Valentino identifies a moral critique of finance capitalism in the novel, predicated by the assimilation of the physical foundations of virtue into the "solipsism of [corruption]" (Valentino 141). The technological progress that has grown as a consequence of Englightenment values has now come to threaten the ideas of republican virtue that also stem from Enlightenment thinking, jeopardising the idea of linear progress. The humanistic moral foundations which allowed technological developments to benefit humanity are now falling by the wayside as technologies grow to serve the needs of capitalism, rather than social bodies or individuals. This leads to the confusion of virtue and corruption established by Valentino.

While a path can be charted from the beginnings of Enlightenment thought to neoliberalism, it is clear that neoliberalism's modus operandi constitutes a rebuke to some of the more idealistic elements of Enlightenment thought, particularly its implicit humanism. What is also clear is that by establishing a schema of progress and development with no effective limits, the Enlightenment sowed the seeds for its own eventual eclipse. This is

particularly evident in the domain of technology, which has reached such a point of development that fantasies of a post-human epoch now seem viable. There are two potential paths for this to occur: in one case, a technological scenario in which humans either manage to merge with technology beyond recognition, or in which human-developed technologies supercede humans; in the other, an environmental situation in which the resources required to produce further technological development exhaust the planet's resources, leading to catastrophe and eventual extinction. While these scenarios remain the domain of science-fiction, DeLillo manages to explore the anxieties around technology and the future, particularly in the post-human trajectory of *Zero K*. While Joyce allows us to explore the worries and possibilities of technology in the machine-age, DeLillo investigates the grave implications of a world in which physical events are underpinned by a sense of transcendence, and reality itself is mediated by a virtual world that is supported by technology.

The process of simulation supports the transformation of the real into the hyperreal. Baudrillard contrasts dissimulation – which "leaves the principle of reality intact" to simulation – in which there is no such distinction (Baudrillard, *Simulacra and Simulation* 3); he uses the analogy of a staged bank robbery to emphasise the problem of simulation. If such an event were staged in a real-world setting, the observer would be unable to distinguish it from a real robbery, meaning the resulting response would be identical to the response to an actual robbery. This confusion returns the situation back to the real, despite the fact that it is a simulation (Ibid. 20). DeLillo's fictions based on real events – most notably *Libra*, examing the assassination of John F. Kennedy and *Falling Man*, a novel about the September 11th attacks and their aftermath – bring this idea of simulation into literary fiction. While they are dissimulated in the sense that they are novels and not claimed to be factual accounts, the delicate weaving of fact and fiction reproduces simulation's effect of distorting the real. This in turn influences the internal structure of *Falling Man*, which repeatedly emphasises the disbelief and detachment of those caught up in the attacks. The effect of this is so great that it then infiltrates subsequent events: in one of the latter sections of the novel, at an

anti-war protest "She felt remote from the occasion even as it pressed upon her." (*FM*: 181) This separation from reality is the outcome of simulation, severing the link between the real and the imaginary and distorting our image of the world.

While an analogy to Marxist theories of alienation may be apposite here, there is also a different mechanism at work. The alienation from labour and production described by Marx and his followers offers a model of detachment predicated by industrial capitalism, but in the post-industrial realm depicted by DeLillo, alienation involves a distancing from reality itself. This modulation is apparent in Baudrillard's formulation of the hyperreal, a concept which owes a debt to Baudrillard's earlier, explicitly leftist work, but which ultimately demonstrates his break from Marx. This rupture in the work of one of the chief theorists of postmodernity mirrors the rupture of the real that parallels the dematerialisation of capital and the decline of industrial production in developed economies. By the time DeLillo picks up the economic baton, most significantly in *Cosmopolis*, industrial capitalism is virtually extinct in the western world. As in previous incarnations of capitalism, these developments were led by significant technological changes.

Just as *Cosmopolis* can be read as a novel of the 2008 financial crisis *avant la lettre*, the technology of the novel is equally portentous, often eerily presaging subsequent developments. The extreme expansion of capital seen in *Cosmopolis* is facilitated by technological factors, which in turn drive the crisis that brings the multi-billionaire Eric Packer to financial ruin. The futuristic technologies that symbolise Packer's extraordinary wealth are frequently depicted with a focus on unusual details, from an elevator that plays the music of Erik Satie (*C*: 6), to cameras which eternally monitor him (*C*: 16), an early smartwatch (*C*: 123) and a state of the art bathroom mirror which monitors his vital statistics (*C*: 153). While the panoptical nature of many of these technologies is apparent, what is especially curious is that Packer himself is the object of their surveillance. This constitutes an extremely early manifestation of the 'quantified self' movement in literature, expressing the way in which contemporary surveillance technologies have become so

widespread that constant vigilance is seen as a sign of subjecthood. It becomes "a disciplinary power traversing the body and all its flows," (Greenfield 35) creating a nodal point connecting body and network (Ibid. 33).

If the infringement of the self by technology is now a sign of the triumph of the individual, Packer is the epitome of the postmodern subject. His subjectivity is largely predicated on the visibility of his physical attributes to himself. Broken down into his individual physical components, he is defined by "his height, weight, heart rate, pulse, pending medication, whole health history" (*C*: 153) as measured by his bathroom mirror and, most significantly, by the asymmetrical prostate that haunts him throughout the novel. I have argued in a previous chapter that this quantification provides a mere illusion of depth, but there are further implications for literary style here. This solipsistic turn leads DeLillo's late aesthetic, which typically combines a minimalist, introspective style with the exploration of broad social and political themes. Rather than forming a contradiction, this combination of introspection and external forces addresses one of the main themes of the present moment: the fact that in an increasingly interconnected world, the subject seems to shrink into itself. Technology's bifocal movements of solipsism and interconnectivity are embodied by Packer, a man whose wealth is based on global movements, but who turns its profits into self-obsession, and has very little concept of the social.

By refusing to smooth over the contradictions of modern technology, DeLillo allows us to question the very idea of progress. Boxall claims:

> [The] sense, however, that history is continuing to progress in DeLillo's writing – that there is an ongoing struggle to discover the counternarrative, to angle oneself against the historical current towards the globalisation of capital – has to contend with the opposite sense that the future is already here, that historical progression is a fantasy, that the very concept of proceeding has become aporetic. DeLillo's fiction suggests a deep underlying connection between

technology, violence and capital, a connection which undermines the possibility of historical progression (Boxall, *Don DeLillo* 7).

While Boxall focuses on the relationship DeLillo's work has to the 'end of history', a more fundamental tension is also at play – that between progress and regression. *Cosmopolis* stages this tension in an extreme form, repeatedly contrasting Packer's rapid accumulation of wealth with Benno Levin's desire to roll back the developments of capitalism and technology. Levin embodies the death drive in capitalism, driving many of its processes and trappings to abolition and extinction. A former "assistant professor of computer application," (*C*: 56) he now writes his confessions with a pencil (*C*: 57); he does not even have any means of timekeeping, claiming "I think of time in other totalities now." (*C*: 59) He lives "without water, heat or lights," (*C*: 150) in an asceticism that explicitly repudiates the world of finance. In Levin's apocalyptic missives, the antonym of capitalism is a primitive world, emptied of technology and even time. The one concession Levin makes is regularly using an ATM, despite the fact that he is "dwindling down financially to nothing." (*C*: 151) He anxiously ensures his finances ebb away, watching the numbers reduce to nothing.

The ATM is an important aspect of finance's reach into daily life, forming a technological symbol of the 'personal banking' that emerged in the 1980s. Discussing the ATM, Leigh Claire La Berge claims "It was a deracinated technology, free from the local constraints of time and space. […] It connected its users to an amorphous global financial network and it disconnected them from their immediate surroundings." (La Berge 44) DeLillo's *White Noise* is notable for containing one of the earliest depictions of an ATM in literature; Jack Gladney senses "something of deep personal value, but not money, not that at all, had been authenticated and confirmed" (*WN*: 46) when using the machine. Although he finds the experience places him "in accord" with the underlying "networks, the circuits, the streams, the harmonies" (Ibid.) of technology and finance, Levin's engagement with the ATM is curiously similar, despite his obviously discordant relationship with finance and his rejection of modern technology. For both men, using the machine is a matter of

reassurance. More significantly, it intrudes into the narrative frame of both novels, automating the narrative function (La Berge 47) that both Gladney and Levin struggle with. La Berge notes that the teller removes Gladney "from the affective charge of his own narration," removing him from his local context but nonetheless, providing a source of narrative energy (Ibid. 48). For Levin, the machine imbues him with the self-reflection that allows his narrative to exist. Already removed from society and its temporal framework, it is the one network he still engages with; while Packer has a state-of-the-art bathroom mirror to read out his vital statistics (*C*: 153), Levin uses the ATM to measure the success of his failure.

Now ubiquitous, ATMs blur the lines between public and private, accelerating the decommodification that marks the changes in capitalism that occurred with neoliberalism. A consequence of financialisation, decommodification eliminates the process of the commodity's production by labour and the obfuscation of its origins as described in classical Marxist theory. La Berge states that "When the commodification of labour allows for social reproduction, its decommodification must signal a transformation of that process. At least commodified labor pays its workers to work. But decommodification has no need for the wage." (La Berge 49) This effective automation of labour – encouraging labour on the consumer's behalf under the guise of 'self-service' – is indicative of a world in which production is no longer the driving force of capitalism. This challenges the idea of the neoliberal world as one in which everything is for sale; rather, it can be conceived as a world in which everything is a matter of (frequently unpaid) labour. Of course, this is far removed from labour in a traditional sense, but what is demonstrated is not that labour is absent in neoliberalism. Instead, the role of labour is further obscured, often provided by the consumer themselves, normalised as a matter of choice and autonomy. Despite this illusion, using an ATM is a relegation from face-to-face interactions with bank staff. In *Cosmopolis*, it is significant that Levin uses an outdoor ATM to check his bank balance after a security guard denies him entry to the bank itself (*C*: 151), presumably on account of his dishevelled appearance. Levin's status is

such that he is not even able to enter a bank, effectively expelled from the territory of finance.

Inevitably, Levin's path converges with Packer's, culminating in Levin's assassination of Packer. Despite Levin's desire to live at "the ends of the earth philosophically," (*C*: 57) he reflects the death drive intrinsic to capitalism. The idea of creative destruction is vital to the development of capitalism, and this imperative is discussed by Levin. He claims "Even when you self-destruct, you want to fail more, lose more, die more than others, stink more than others. In the old tribes the chief who destroyed more of his property than the other chiefs was the most powerful." (*C*: 193-94) In this sense, Levin's desire to reverse the developments of capitalism is itself consonant with the aims of capitalism; in order to continue its development, it may need to shed its own skin. While capitalism by nature does not have a limit to accumulation, the oscillations of markets create a de facto limit, allowing capitalism to destroy some of its own matter in order to expand again. Arguably, the chief function of finance is to facilitate this process, supporting the illusion of infinite growth while quietly ensuring any growth remains manageable.

While financial crises provide a discrete insurance that capitalism's self-regulating tendencies may always function, preventing it from meeting its hidden boundaries, technological development is a much more difficult force to regulate. If treated as a straight arrow heading towards an invisible horizon, technological development appears to offer endless possibilities. The most apparent limit – the depletion of natural resources – may have already been reached, but the effects of this are unclear. While there are increasing anxieties about the environmental consequences of the energy usage required to maintain a virtual world, the illusion of the virtual supported by technology also provides an escape from – and to some, even a solution for – these problems. With this uncertain future fast approaching, it appears that Levin's regressed, hermetic life may be a better reflection of future tendencies than Packer's absurd chrematism. Even if we assume that globalisation has collapsed the oppositions that drive history "into an exhausted, tautological unity," (Boxall, *Don DeLillo* 159) as is suggested by

Boxall, the more dynamic path offered by technology appears to offer a way out. Whether this path leads to further development or total annihilation is open to debate.

Comparing the immateriality of finance capitalism in *Cosmopolis* to the reification of thought in the B movie *Forbidden Planet*, Valentino notes the implications for the sense of a material reality itself. In this world,

> the veneer of solidity, so DeLillo's depiction would imply, begins to peel away in the realm of cyber-capital, where present consensual fancies concerning things without material foundation become the basis for future consensual fancies concerning things without material foundation. In focusing our attention on this concrete fact of modernity, DeLillo's account draws into question contemporary assumptions not only about the reality of a technologically mediated commercial life but about the implications of modern de-corporealization for psychological, social, and political health (Valentino 145).

At its zenith, the virtual is not a prosthesis for the real, but a force which supersedes it altogether. This sense of dematerialisation is so great to Packer that even the physical manifestations of technology often present themselves as virtual. A protestor who attacks his limousine is tasered by police, who use "a stun gun to subdue him and the voltage delivered the man to another dimension." (*C*: 96) This act of physical violence, presumably inducing extreme pain, becomes a matter of transcendence, a portal to another dimension which is only accessible via direct contact with the source of power: a technological organ.

The drive to transcendence present in the technology of finance parallels Packer's own desire. Despite this, the underlying physical infrastructure – whether the human body or the necessary concrete substance that underpins virtual technologies – is a constant, if often subliminal, presence in *Cosmopolis*. Despite his money existing almost entirely as virtual capital, its security still depends on the structure of a bank with "marble and glass and

armed guards" (*C*: 151). This heavily-guarded structure reifies Packer's uneasy relationship to the outside world in a way that cannot be manifested within a digital realm, with its hard surfaces and militarised guards demonstrating his fragility and need to be protected in a similar manner to the preposterously outfitted limousine. Ultimately, these material structures are an inconvenience to Packer; despite their necessity to protect his physical form, they undermine his efforts to transcend the concrete world. The virtual may well overtake the concrete and tangible, but its very existence necessitates a hidden material infrastructure that ultimately leads to power plants, server farms and human bodies. The ultimate fate of Packer in the novel – shot by a Luddite assassin, "dead inside the crystal of his watch but still alive in original space" (*C*: 209) – reflects the dialectic of concealment and revelation that constantly accompanies physical infrastructure in *Cosmopolis*. Even in the state of death, a forced return to materiality, the possibility of some sort of transcendence of the body is maintained. It is through his willingness to probe the limits of materiality that DeLillo provides a critique of the limitations and illusions of the virtual.

Falling Man's Technological Irruption

Throughout DeLillo's oeuvre, disaster is a lingering presence. A vision of environmental disaster is seen in *White Noise*, a novel which is shaped by the evacuation of a town after an 'airborne toxic event'. Prescient of the Chernobyl disaster that occurred a year after its publication, the environmental catastrophe of *White Noise* influences the world in barely perceptible ripples. On seeing no trace of the event on his body in a medical check-up, Jack notes that "This death was still too deep to be glimpsed." (*WN*: 204) Despite the dramatic scene of the disaster, forcing the protagonist's evacuation from his home for nine days, its long-term effects are too small to be seen. This demonstrates the ultimate environmental implications of development, imprinted on the internal codes of nature in ice cores and tree rings, but with no superficial consequences appearing until its development

had become virtually unstoppable. Anthropogenic climate change has its roots in developments which date back to the industrial revolution, yet its hallmarks were invisible until those developments reached overdrive. The death of the planet is too deep to be glimpsed.

Despite the largely environmental nature of the airborne toxic event, it is only when its effects are demonstrated by technology that it becomes a genuine matter of concern for Jack and his family. The initial air-raid siren – sounding "like some territorial squawk from out of the Mesozoic. A parrot carnivore with a DC-9 wingspan." (*WN*: 118) is ignored by the family. It is only the presence of a second, more alien sound (revealed to be a distorted human voice) that prompts them to evacuate. The evacuation itself is mediated by technology, soon becoming an enormous traffic jam. This produces its own miniature disaster, a car accident which takes on "the eloquence of a formal composition." (*WN*: 122) Jack finds the accident stimulating, even comforting, contained within the rigid built environment of roads and vehicles, in contrast to the blurring of boundaries produced by the leaking chemical gas. There is a clear distinction between an event which occurs within the technological realm (albeit with genuine human consequences) and an event which punctures it altogether. The airborne toxic event produces a state of technologically mediated abjection, in which the by-products of technological development breach the boundaries of the lived environment.

The ultimate rupture of the lived environment is embodied in the September 11th attacks, a horrifically violent penetration into the urban space territorialised by capitalism and technology. The attacks have a haunting presence in DeLillo's work, changing the topographical and mental landscape of his native city beyond recognition. Their future spectrality is seen in *Cosmopolis*, DeLillo's first post-September 11th novel (which is actually set in 2000), and is more directly addressed in *Falling Man* and the essay 'In the Ruins of the Future'. In the essay, DeLillo perceives a change in the order of things that means "the world narrative belongs to terrorists," ('ITRTF') surpassing the previous hegemonic narrative of globalisation. However, he

also asserts that the main target of the terrorists was not the economic paradigm epitomised by New York's centres of finance:

> It was America that drew their fury. It was the high gloss of our modernity. It was the thrust of our technology. It was our perceived godlessness. It was the blunt force of our foreign policy. It was the power of American culture to penetrate every wall, home, life and mind (Ibid.).

The attacks are considered to be an assault on the political, technological and cultural modernity symbolised by the United States.

If the attacks are treated as an attack on technological modernity, it is crucial that the weapons used – jet aeroplanes – are themselves the products of modern technology. The immanence of modern technology creates the tools for its own demise, sowing the seeds of its own destruction. In his essay, DeLillo pays particular attention to the formidable technological force of the original World Trade Centre:

> The World Trade towers were not only an emblem of advanced technology but a justification, in a sense, for technology's irresistible will to realise in solid form whatever becomes theoretically allowable. Once defined, every limit must be reached. The tactful sheathing of the towers was intended to reduce the direct threat of such straight-edge enormity, a giantism that eased over the years into something a little more familiar and comfortable, even dependable in a way (Ibid.).

The theoretical possibilities presented by technology include the destructive impulses of terrorists, placing the means for destruction within the creation of technology. Despite the formidable physical presence of the towers, the equally formidable technology of air travel allows the breach of their physical boundaries. The attacks demonstrate the darkest possibilities presented by technology, the forcible pushing of technological limits and the destructive power that is always a latent presence in objects of technology.

For DeLillo, every technology contains the potential for many uses. *Underworld* provides a particularly strong sense of the means by which technological mastery can be used for military, civilian, economic and even creative purposes. Although much of the novel concerns itself with the American nuclear weapons programme during the Cold War, the possibilities generated by this programme filter into other areas. The artist Klara Sax repaints disused military aircraft in order to reveal a latent artistic quality in the structures (*Uw*: 77). This harnessing of military technology also pulls in the opposite direction, allowing martial thoughts to intrude into other areas, even sexuality. Brian Glassic claims the latex used to produce condoms was developed from a military purpose: "This was technology they wanted to wrap around my dick. This was mass-produced latex they used to paint battleships." (*Uw*: 110) The product in question is neutral but nevertheless, contains the potential for many purposes, ranging from the military to the sexual.

For Virilio, the military implications of technological changes were inevitable. The Cold War era saw enormous leaps in civilian and military technologies, significantly improving worldwide connections in many areas "but in the ballistic progress of weapons, the curvature of the earth has not stopped shrinking. It is no longer the continents that become agglomerated, but the totality of the planet that is diminished, depending on the progress of the arms 'race.'" (Virilio, *Speed and Politics* 151) This allows the entire world to be viewed within a single frame, placing all of its surfaces in contact; the possibilities, both for civilian communication and military conquest, are virtually endless. The equal presentation of these opportunities to the military and civilian spheres in turn allows them to overlap, producing the strange conjunction of consumer goods and military technology seen in *Underworld*. What is shared by the novel's many examples of multipurpose technologies is their sense of potential, the reflection of a desire to transform the world by utilising its own resources.

The alienation precipitated by this perception of world-as-object is produced by a change in human subjectivity, an alienation from the world and from the

self that both obscures and reveals the mechanisms that allow the world to be manipulated to suit human endeavour. Alienation is a key theme of DeLillo's work, particularly *Underworld*, and it is his lucid account of alienation that allows the sinister potential lurking behind everyday technologies like refrigerators and vacuum cleaners to become apparent. For DeLillo, the American experience of the Cold War shows technology at the height of its powers, expanding consumer capitalism to unprecedented heights while also producing military technologies of terrifying scope. The possibilities of a better life for many, and annihilation for all are equally imbued in this period of technological development.

This tension between creation and destruction is an extreme postscript to the technological debates of *Ulysses*, in which the mostly benevolent humanism of Leopold Bloom is pitted against the terrifying possibilities of machines. While it would be historically disingenuous to compare the specific examples posited by DeLillo and Joyce, both writers share a sense of the wide range of outcomes permitted by technological development. Despite the alienation provoked by technology, its ultimate consequences are open to whatever humanity makes of them. Within this sense of possibility, however, there is a necessary caution. Rather than acting as a consequence of other developments, technology is a cause. Heidegger inverts the idea that modern technology follows scientific development, calling this an illusion which "can maintain itself only so long as neither the essential origin of modern science nor indeed the essence of modern technology is adequately found out through questioning." (Heidegger, *QCT* 23) Technology is a means rather than an end, forming a framework of exploitation and alienation which cannot be easily overcome. While presenting opportunities and possibilities, it can also alienate us from the world at large and from ourselves.

The dark potential of technology finds a cruel outlet in *Falling Man*'s discussion of the September 11th attacks and their aftermath. The hijacker most closely followed in the novel, Hammad, is a veteran of the Iran-Iraq War, a bloody but conventional conflict waged with "Kalashnikovs, too heavy to be carried very far." (*FM*: 77) The image of "thousands of shouting boys" (Ibid.)

carrying cumbersome weapons provides an immediate contrast to the extraordinary force of his subsequent actions in a hijacked aeroplane, a very different act of violence using an extremely sophisticated weapon, albeit one that was not designed as such. The use of a typically benevolent vehicle rather than more nefarious amplifies the terror of the attacks, turning a mundane object into a horribly powerful weapon through the causa efficiens of the presence, actions and intentions of the hijackers.

While the symbolism of the aeroplanes crashing into the World Trade Centre is epoch-defining for many, the method also holds a significance as a means of circumventing networks of power, attaining a physicality that slips through the nets of surveillance cast by governments and militaries. Hammad identifies his meetings with fellow terrorists as another means of evading surveillance technologies:

> we encounter face to face. A man turns up from Kandahar, another from Riyadh. We encounter directly, in the flat or in the mosque. The state has fiber optics but power is helpless against us. The more power, the more helpless. We encounter through eyes, through word and look (*FM*: 81).

This menacing paragraph makes it apparent that digital technology is the battlefield of this particular conflict, but it is one which may be evaded by simple avoidance of electronic communication. The desire to "encounter through eyes" was forced on the public of New York City and – through endlessly reproduced photographs and videos – of the world's viewers, an unavoidable gaze fixed on unadulterated violence. Although the attacks themselves were technologically mediated, their avoidance of electronic media until the moments of impact meant that other technological means were useless. Used as a weapon, a commercial aircraft is a virtually unstoppable force, a means of harnessing the energy of technology and directing it against itself. This ouroboric act constitutes the ultimate corruption of utility, turning an vehicle of transportation into one of

destruction. On an extraordinary scale, the attacks demonstrate the danger inherent to technological forces.

Perversely, the attacks constitute a demonstration of technology's power. Heidegger's example of a hydroelectric plant harnessing and distributing natural resources comes into play here. Heidegger uses this example to demonstrate the revealing power (*alētheia*) of technology, which produces "a challenging-forth."

> [This] challenging happens in that the energy concealed in nature is unlocked, what is unlocked it transformed, what is transformed is stored up, what is unlocked is transformed, what is transformed is stored up, what is stored up is, in turn, distributed, and what is distributed is switched about ever anew (Heidegger, *QCT* 16).

The adoption of aeroplanes as a vehicle for terrorist action enacts the same process, albeit at a level of remove from nature. Instead of unlocking the potential within nature, the energy of technology is manipulated to attack itself. Rather than forming an assault on technology from the outside, it sets in motion a process of immanent feedback, in which technology's resources simultaneously produce creation and destruction. Technology contains its own standing-reserve, in which the germination of its own destruction is always-already present.

Point Omega: Digital Art, Digital War

Artistic and military iterations of technological development define *Point Omega*, with the fundamental tension of the novel occurring at their intersection as embodied in the meeting of the artist and filmmaker Jim Finley with the "defense intellectual" (*PO*: 35) Richard Elster. Although the novel takes places at a geographical remove from the centres of art and war, the dependency of both men's jobs on technological factors makes technology vital to understanding the dialogue between culture and warfare that emerges.

Unlike DeLillo's previous writing on warfare, which typically follows the path of nuclear weapons in the Cold War (as in *Underworld*), the war of *Point Omega* is waged on different terms, dematerialised but also distinct from the war-as-media-simulation scenario described by Jean Baudrillard and Paul Virilio in the 1990s. In his essay on the asymmetry of the Iraq War, Mark Greif explains how developments in the American military from the end of the twentieth-century onwards exceed both the traditionalist work of popular military historians and the scepticism of Virilio and Baudrillard. Greif notes the importance of "a small number of frontline fighters, heavily equipped with technology, who are rewarded with a special kind of status." (Greif 250) This technology assists acts of slaughter, but it is also frequently defensive, protecting American soldiers from death or injury while also allowing them to kill with a greater intensity and speed.

> US soldiers wear body armor of great technical ingenuity, flexible, miraculous. They fight with powerful, almost preternatural weapons, in episodes of virtuosic slaughter, until they withdraw to safety. Eyes circle overhead to guide them, superiors to whom they can appeal in times of trouble. Medicine makes more wounds repairable, so long as they are not instantly fatal (Ibid.).

Since the original publication of this essay in 2004, the rise of drone warfare has made this domain even more technologised, adding the video game-like qualities described by Baudrillard and Virilio to the sense of artificial protection that Greif emphasises. These new technologies require new theories; it is this niche that is filled by Elster, a philosopher rather than a strategist, who focuses on the intellectual considerations that underpin warfare.

Despite this sense of a technological shift, Elster's own engagement demonstrates a degree of scepticism about technological development. He even goes so far as to send Finley "a hand-drawn map", depicting "roads and jeep trails" (*PO*: 78) when arranging a meeting. With technologies of unbelievable power come attempts at circumvention; within warfare, this is

demonstrated by the rise of improvised explosive devices, primitive booby traps which ensure that "Americans' higher register of life can be used against [them]." (Greif 266) As with drone warfare, the setting of these traps allows a physical distance between combatants and their targets, finding a cheaper and less efficient alternative that nevertheless aims to produce the same results. The most significant aspect to these devices and high-tech combat alike is their desire to inflict damage without loss, a form of violence conducted remotely in order to minimise risk.

Despite his role behind the scenes of warfare, Elster demonstrates a strong aversion to violence, claiming "I hate violence. I fear the thought of it, won't watch violent movies, turn away from news reports on television that show dead or wounded people." (*PO*: 63) The fact that this apparently paradoxical position is possible at all is a testament to the devolution of warfare from its physical presence; Elster has managed to spend a career advising on the conduct of wars while enjoying the privilege of being able to avoid the sight of violence simply by turning away from the television screen. Although there is of course a physical reality to acts of violence, the disembodying qualities of media technologies, as well as new military tools like drones and improvised explosive devices, makes this reality seem all too remote for many. Both physically and mentally, technological mediation provides a protective barrier against the consequences of violence.

As tactics shift, anti-drone measures develop a new technological area, allowing the counteraction of the technologies produced by wealthy, hegemonic forces. Grégoire Chamayou explains that this has been produced by the development of anti-drone clothing, "made from a special metallic fabric that renders the body practically invisible to drones' thermal-imaging cameras." (Chamayou 204) Technological responses like this create a dialectic of response and revision, in which one heavily-invested technology is implemented, leading to the development of cruder strategies in reply. Elster's career displays a similar tension: his life's work produces violent consequences, which he avoids through simple emotional defences.

In spite of these avoidant tendencies, Elster's work demonstrates a great understanding of the ultimate consequences of his theories. Finley discusses an essay called 'Renditions', in which Elster concludes

> In future years, of course, men and women, in cubicles, wearing headphones, will be listening to secret tapes of the administration's crimes while others study electronic records on computer screens and still others look at salvaged videotapes of caged men being subjected to severe physical pain and finally others, still others, behind closed doors, ask pointed questions of flesh-and-blood individuals (*PO*: 41-42).

Despite the essay chiefly forming an apologia for the rendition and torture of suspected terrorists, Elster still believes that future generations will perceive this conduct as criminal. The digital paper trail of modern government allows such an investigation to take place, meticulously recording these very corporeal acts of violence despite their illegality. In the scenario described here, the technological measures which underpin such a regime are effectively self-incriminating, developing a body of evidence that can be subsequently used against itself. Despite this acknowledgement, Elster's argument is focused on semantics, with "no specific mention of black sites, third-party states or international treaties and conventions." (*PO*: 43) Without direct involvement in the physical substance of war, Elster manages to treat it as a theoretical entity, an abstraction that cannot be approached directly. This estrangement from reality is the consequence of technologies which make conflicts increasingly remote from their material consequences.

With an intellectual vagueness that verges on the disingenuous, Elster manages to stumble upon broader conceptions of technē than would normally be discussed within a military context. In an early stage of their interaction, Finley claims "To Elster sunset was human invention, our perceptual arrangement of light and space into elements of wonder." (*PO*: 22) Such a fundamental aspect of nature becomes technological in Elster's frame, inasmuch as its existence as a sunset is predicated on the moment at which

humans recognise it as an object of wonder. Although broadly consonant with Heidegger's description of enframing, the example of the sunset deviates from this in one aspect: it is not a useful object that may be exploited by humanity, but a natural phenomenon which induces an aesthetic sensibility. The result is somewhat similar (a loss of self-reflexive power in supporting the illusion that the sunset somehow came into being by human recognition rather than as an autonomous phenomenon), but the switch to an artistic trajectory is a curious one in the context of warfare, the most terrifying means of harnessing nature within technology. The aesthetic bent of this idea allows a parallel to be drawn between the technologies of war and the technologies of art, specifically those used in *Point Omega* by the filmmaker Finley.

Finley's desire to make a film of Elster demonstrates the increasingly slippery boundaries between art, war, politics, documentary and various other forms. Jean Baudrillard addresses condensations of this kind in his essay 'After the Orgy', claiming

> The law that is imposed on us is the law of the confusion of categories. Everything is sexual. Everything is political. Everything is aesthetic. All at once. Everything has acquired a political meaning, especially since 1968; and it is not just everyday life but also madness, language, the media, even desire, that are politicized as they enter the sphere of liberation, the sphere of mass processes (Baudrillard, *The Transparency of Evil* 9).

The difficulty of delineating categories has significant implications for art, particularly when it attempts to transgress norms and boundaries. Baudrillard gloomily explains that consequently, there "is no longer an avant-garde, political, sexual or artistic, embodying a capacity for anticipation; hence the possibility of any radical critique - whether in the name of desire, of revolution, or of the liberation of forms - no longer exists." (Ibid. 10) In his attempts to restore a degree of social critique within his own art, Finley enlists cinema to reclaim the lost possibilities of the avant-garde, despite clearly existing in the blurry space between collapsed categories. Although *Point*

Omega demonstrates the attempt to reclaim the avant-garde through the interstices of art and technology, this process is by no means straightforward. In an analogous discussion on the status of electronic music, Greif sounds a note of caution that "The political problem of an artistic avant-garde, especially when it deals with any new technology of representation, has always been that the simply novel elements may be mistaken for some form of political action or progress." (Greif 108) Therefore, technological novelty is not an intrinsically useful tool in the artist's armoury. Finley's work complicates this idea, using an established medium – cinema – to achieve a new synthesis of forms, thereby subordinating the technological components of his work to a different sense of novelty that is derived from its play of duration and genre.

If anything, Finley's film idea is minimalistic to the point that it begins to erode many of the familiar elements of cinema. With no editing, it is proposed to be filmed by a "camera with a hard drive. One continuous take" (*PO*: 27) of Elster talking in plain surroundings. Two very different reference points are invoked in the novel: Douglas Gordon's artwork *24 Hour Psycho*, an installation which stretches Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho* to a twenty-four hour duration[45], and Aleksandr Sokurov's film *Russian Ark*, which surveys an enormous mise en scène in a single ninety minute shot with no cuts (Efird 235). While Sokurov's work is in many regards the antithesis of what Finley hopes to achieve, they share a matter of technological necessity: the use of digital video. Without the barrier of a physical reel of film, the duration of a single cinematic shot is extended to virtual infinity, save for the limits of digital storage. Although noting that attempts to produce one-shot films were made in earlier periods by Alfred Hitchcock, Michael Snow and Andy Warhol, Robert Efird argues for the importance of digital technologies and the handicam in allowing such endeavours to succeed. Sokurov's film takes the idea to an extreme;

> there is a profound disparity in narrative subjectivity, one which in
> *Russian Ark* seems to dissolve the fundamental distinction between

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[45] I have already discussed the relationship between Finley's ideas and Gordon's work in relation to ideas of duration.

story and discourse, ultimately encroaching upon areas previously considered hypothetical in structuralist narratology (Ibid. 236).

With digital technology, the hypothetical becomes actual, substantially shifting the horizons of cinema. Nevertheless, the innovations of Sokurov – and indeed Finley – are rooted in formal considerations rather than technological ones; it is simply that technological development has allowed these forms to move from theory to praxis.

Sokurov's film produces a sense of excess, in which multiple historical periods are condensed within a single take, yet Finley's idea is one which depends on the long take as a means of emptying cinema of its mise en scène, leaving only the bare bones of Elster and his testimony. While paralleling the minimalism of DeLillo's prose in *Point Omega*, this sense of reduction within the cinematic frame demonstrates the agency afforded to the artist within a technologised domain. Finley's use of digital media to remove rather than add demonstrates an ironic control of the technology at hand, the fact that the increased possibility of duration is used in this case to subtract any extraneous material from the film. His claim to Elster that "Any pauses, they're your pauses, I keep shooting" (*PO*: 27) demonstrates this desire to reduce, allowing silences to play out unedited and unmediated. While films like *Russian Ark* expand narrative to fill the increased possibilities afforded by technological development, Finley's film retains an uncompromising desire to depict something almost resembling nothingness in the image of Elster standing in front of a wall. When taken in conjunction with Sokurov's film, we have two views of narrative in the light of digital film: one which explodes into a phantasmagoria of excess, and another which withers away to the absolute minimum.

The minimalism of the film contrasts with Finley's youthful experiences of watching films and waiting to see the credits roll in their entirety.

> It was part of the experience, everything mattered, absorb it, endure it, stunt driving, set dressing, payroll accounting. I read the names, all of them, most of them, real people, who were they, why so many,

names that haunted me in the dark. By the time the credits ended I was alone in the theatre, maybe an old woman sitting somewhere, widowed, children never call. I stopped doing this when I began to work in the business, although I didn't think of it as a business. It was film, only that, and I was determined to do one, make one. *Un film*. *Ein film* (*PO*: 80-81).

Although the image of one or two lonely figures sat in an empty cinema accords with Finley's aesthetic, the sheer volume of information in the credits underlines a much larger creative and commercial process. The intimacy of one man filming another with a single camera is far removed from the scale of commercial film; indeed, Finley's method would make virtually all of the people in any film's credits redundant.

For filmmakers like Finley, the shifting sands of possibility are tied to technological developments, but rather than shaping his vision to mirror the technology, he finds the technology is capable of permitting his art to move to new extremes. This makes the artistic aspect of *Point Omega* uncommonly balanced in terms of DeLillo's writing on technology: there is a harmony between the concept and the tools used to realise it, a symbiosis of medium and message. Despite the relative optimism for the possibilities of art here, digital video is a controversial medium among cinema scholars and filmmakers, altering the existence of a film by denying it a physical form. Aside from Sokurov's extreme use of the form, other major filmmakers have used digital video as an aesthetic choice. David Lynch's *Inland Empire* is an especially notable example, producing a deliberately low-fidelity visual style that adds a layer of complexity and confusion to the narrative. Anthony Paraskeva identifies a number of reasons for Lynch's decision to use low-resolution digital cameras for the film:

> [*Inland Empire*'s] paradigm-shifting use of digital technology, allowing Lynch total freedom from obligations towards Hollywood genre and classical structure, unmasks the structures and processes of filmmaking by showing forth the actor's performance as an ongoing

series of rehearsals in progress and foregrounding production methods and medium specificity in a manner that recalls the radical experiments in narrative of the sixties (Paraskeva 3).

Finley's ideas impose similar concepts onto the genre of documentary, hoping to reveal the mysteries of the medium and of Elster in the process. The possibilities for play with duration and form provided by digital video ultimately permit many of the theoretical insights of previous avant-garde filmmakers to be actualised in new forms, allowing technological development to push the boundaries of art not by obstructing its mechanics, but by exposing them to the audience.

"A dumb blankness, full of meaning": Speculative Immortality in *Zero K*

The speculative technologies of immortality make *Zero K* one of DeLillo's deepest forays into something resembling science fiction, developing a view of a technologically-dependent future that ultimately reveals the fraught relationship between human life and technologies of life extension. At the forefront of the novel is The Convergence, a facility where living subjects are put into suspended animation, cryogenically frozen with the hope that future developments will permit their resurrection. The teleological thrust of these technologies is the raison d'être of the facility at the novel's core, but by contrasting the desire for immortality shared by Ross Lockhart and his wife Artis with the presence of Ross's more sceptical son Jeffrey, DeLillo interrogates the almost mythological network of beliefs that defines this drive for everlasting life as achieved by technological means.

On the instrumental level, *Zero K* is about the manipulation of nature. This extends not only to the chief purpose of the facility, but also to the various supporting technologies in evidence there. Located on the border between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan (*ZK*: 29), the inhospitable terrain of the area makes any form of human habitation difficult, ultimately depending on elaborate

technologies to meet even the most basic human needs. The location of a facility which aims to challenge the most fundamental assumption of human life – death – in such miraculous confines is not a coincidence; the setting of the novel demonstrates the degree to which the conquest of nature is already in effect. The description of the Kazakh capital Almaty as a city of "gold skyscrapers and indoor shopping malls where people lounge on sand beaches before plunging into wave pools" (Ibid.) underlines the extraordinary development of Central Asia, a geographically and climatically challenging region which has dived headlong into postmodernity and its technological trappings.

The most basic details of The Convergence all betray some form of technological advancement. On its walls, footage of disasters and other news events is projected, but even this footage is deeply embedded in new forms; it is composed of "a digital weave, every fragment manipulated and enhanced, all of it designed, edited, redesigned." (*ZK*: 152) This video footage is generated by technologies which manipulate the past at the level of the image, allowing human intervention to invent pasts, "visual fictions" (Ibid.) that appear to recall previous events but which are actually computer-generated. The suggestion of a human touch, however, provides a degree of solace that may not be as likely to result from stochastic processes. If the images are designed rather than randomly generated, questions of origins and meanings may still be asked in a way that is not possible in response to aleatoric forms. The images produce a sense of quasi-randomness but still display enough of a human imprint to place them within recognisable aesthetic and intellectual frameworks.

In an article focusing on tautology in DeLillo's late work and, specifically, on its importance to *Zero K*, Peter Boxall notes "the tendency for its closed boundaries to open onto other dimensions" in DeLillo's post-millennial style (Boxall, 'A Leap Out of Our Biology' 548). This dialectic of contraction and expansion is defined by the role served by death in the novel, namely that it is no longer the terminal point but subordinated to a greater telos; despite this, that telos itself is inherently linked to death through the ultimate goal of

immortality. The loss of consciousness necessary to prepare for the cryogenic process that takes place in The Convergence resembles death, yet it opens up the possibility of further life. At this moment, the apex of life and death allows this sense of tautology to expand.

Technology itself is a tautological presence in *Zero K*, with the Convergence's dependence on technological developments concealed by the preoccupation with nature held by many of the philosophical guardians of the project. One of those figures, Nadya, explains this idea:

> Technology has become a force of nature. We can't control it. It comes blowing over the planet and there's nowhere for us to hide. Except right here, of course, in this dynamic enclave, where we breathe safe air and live outside the range of the combative instincts, the blood desperation so recently detailed for us, on so many levels (*ZK*: 245).

This statement is doubly tautological. Nadya collapses the binary of nature and technology under the auspices of nature; despite this, she continues to pursue oppositional thinking here, distinguishing the nature found within the compound from the technological world beyond. However, this fails to recognise the dependence of the Convergence – practically and conceptually – on technological means. Without the ability to see potential in a desert wasteland and a seemingly impossible idea, the facility could never have been built. The nature found on the site is introduced, tamed and cultivated to meet the needs of its inhabitants, an illusion that is supported while work to break one of nature's most significant barriers continues.

The discourse of control that defines the Convergence in the intellectual terms of its defenders leads to one such person, Ben-Ezra[46] claiming "The site is fixed, we are fixed", with details such as anti-seismic measures ensuring the safety and endurance of the facility (*ZK*: 129). In this sense, the Convergence is fixed both in spatial and temporal terms, with control exerted over both of these axes. Much as the frozen bodies within are protected from the ravages

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[46] The character's name is suggestive of Robert Browning's poem 'Rabbi Ben Ezra', which begins by urging "Grow old along with me!" (Browning 383)

of time, so are these buildings and the landscape which surrounds them, protected in the short-term at least from forces of nature which could lead to erosion or even annihilation. The resulting emergence of "ahistorical humans" (*ZK*: 130) from the capsules would complete the technological conquest of time, imposing an artificial barrier on the almost imperceptible cellular processes which slowly erode every living organism, effectively circumventing the Hayflick limit[47]. By halting the influence of external temporality on the human body, the freezing enacted in the Convergence aims to forcibly deny this process.

The unspecified (but presumably lengthy) temporal frames required to allow the development of technologies which may permit the revitalisation of the frozen bodies raises questions of the upkeep of the facility, and what may change in the external world, which is not protected against decay. These unanswered questions recall the discipline known as nuclear semiotics, which aims to develop enduring mechanisms to warn future generations of the threat of nuclear waste repositories, typically attempting to account for the social and linguistic changes that are likely to occur in the interim. Speculative ventures such as these form peculiar technological endeavours, with uncertain futures as their object. DeLillo's late shift in focus from the nuclear anxieties of the Cold War age in novels like *Underworld* to the speculative immortality of *Zero K* demonstrates a change in the relationship between technology and the future. Although nuclear weapons still exist, the more immediate threat is in the unseen consequences of supposedly beneficial technologies, the potential corruption of saving power. In *Zero K*, it is this unknown future that provides both the potential purpose and potential danger of the project; the faith that allows characters such as Artis to take such a bold step into the future is a shibboleth that allows some to believe in this future, while turning others away, only reflecting potential pitfalls to the uninitiated.

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[47] The limit on the number of times human cells may divide before undergoing apoptosis (death), in essence the necessary mortality of healthy cells, a biological memento mori.

The Heideggerian double edge to this technology is not lost on DeLillo, who explicitly engages with the philosopher and his work in the novel. Jeff introduces a distinctly Heideggerian explication of ontology to his stepson Stak, stating "Man alone exists. Rocks are, but they do not exist. Trees are, but they do not exist. Horses are, but they do not exist." (*ZK*: 213) This alludes to Heidegger's discussion of Seneca's distinction between humans and God from plants and animals[48] on the basis that they are "endowed with reason"; however, a further distinction is made: the immortality of God contrasting to the mortal nature of humans (Heidegger, *Being and Time* 192). Even within this superficially anthropocentric scheme, humanity is defined by its limits, especially mortality, the outermost boundary that separates humans from deities. It is through this limit that the physical conditions of existence are delineated.

The possibility of humanity exceeding this limit creates a difficulty for conceptualising nature. In Heidegger's terms, nature [*Natur*] refers to the idea of utility, inherently relating to the human perspective. He claims:

> 'Nature' is [also] discovered in the use of useful things, 'nature' in the light of products of nature.
>
> But nature must not be understood here as what is merely objectively present, nor as the *power of nature*. The forest is a forest of timber, the mountain a quarry of rock, the river is water power, the wind is wind 'in the sails.' As the 'surrounding world' is discovered, 'nature' thus discovered is encountered along with it. We can abstract from nature's kind of being as handiness [*Zuhandenheit*[49]]; we can discover and define it in its mere objective presence [*Vorhandenheit*]. But in this kind of discovery of nature, nature as what 'stirs and strives,' what overcomes us, entrances us as to landscape, remains hidden (Heidegger, *Being and Time* 70).

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[48] This is discussed in Seneca's 124th Epistle (Seneca 435-49).
[49] 'Readiness at hand'.

The sense of nature evoked in this passage expands upon the notion of enframing, specifically addressing the position of nature in relation to what is lost and what is gained. The use-value of nature permits its objectification as technology, but this does not fully encompass the breadth of nature in the human imagination. The reduction of nature to its products obfuscates a greater understanding, clouding and undermining the very sense of reason that allows humans to exploit natural resources in the first instance. There is an uncapturable essence to nature that resists technological impulses.

In its unmodified form, human life is itself a force of nature. Although a philosophical tradition extending back to Aristotle argues for the differences between humans and other organisms, the cellular structures underpinning the forces that drive *Zero K* are common to all lifeforms. The nature of human life in the Convergence and in this imagined future rests not on experiential factors, but on biological terms which can be rationalised; even language is presumed to adopt a more mathematically-oriented trajectory in this future, approximating "the logic and beauty of pure mathematics in everyday speech" (*ZK*: 130). This applies the logic of technology to human development, creating a paradoxical relationship between the biological realities of cryogenic freezing and the transhumanist fantasies that follow. It is through the reduction to corporeal forms that their transcendence begins; nature is the starting point of artifice.

With Heidegger's discussion of nature in mind, the possibility of enacting a truly transhuman future is greatly complicated, such is the degree to which human life is already rooted in its relationship to nature and natural resources. For Heidegger, practicality is a factor which obstructs true understanding:

> That which is handy is not grasped theoretically at all, nor is it itself initially a circumspective theme for circumspection. What is peculiar to what is initially at hand is that it withdraws, so to speak, in its character of handiness in order to be really handy. What everyday dealings are initially busy with is not tools themselves, but the work.

> What is to be produced in each case is what is primarily taken care of and is thus also what is at hand. The work bears the totality of references in which useful things are encountered (Heidegger, *Being and Time* 69).

When humans themselves are 'at hand', the work in question moves self-awareness even further from sight, receding human factors to a dim horizon. In the biological, social and cultural remodelling that is the goal of the Zero K project, humans are both the driving force for manipulation and its raw materials; this makes such an endeavour doubly dangerous, effectively giving two opportunities for alienation to occur. The danger here extends not only to unawareness of mastery, but also unawareness of being mastered, in a dialectic which is predicated on the confusion of subject and object.

The technologisation of language in the future suggested within *Zero K* demonstrates the central role of language, both to DeLillo's aesthetic and to the framework of awareness and unawareness elucidated by Heidegger. This remodelling of language would lead to it developing a 'practical' aspect, losing the capacity for sight inherent to more theoretical forms. It is a language "that will not shrink from whatever forms of objective truth we have never before experienced" (*ZK*: 130), but despite the grandiosity of such claims, there is also a necessary loss. To recalibrate experience in order to focus on objective truths is also to lose sight of subjective ones; the rational orientation of this language makes DeLillo's use of the word 'experience' somewhat ironic, suggesting the possibility of this in a quantified domain that amputates the phenomenological qualities of language in order to emphasise mathematical modes. Without "similes, metaphors, analogies" (Ibid.), experiential truths would become almost inexpressible, defeating the purpose of language altogether. By transforming it into another technology, language would become barren, attaining the level of computation rather than communication. The position of language in this transhuman future demonstrates a loss of what we recognise as fundamentally human, such is the degree to which it ceases to be a tool for understanding and instead becomes a means to an end. The reduction of language to the instrumental

level turns humans into the objects of technology, ultimately destroying the sense of mastery required to attain such a development in the first place.

Black Screen: *The Silence* of Technology

DeLillo's most recent novel, *The Silence*, strips technological structures bare, looking at a catastrophic situation in which all electronic and electromagnetic systems have failed. This slim tome reverses the arrow of progress, exhausting all of the possibilities that have been surveyed by DeLillo in his late fiction. The presence of art and artists normally confers an extra-technological dimension to progress but unusually for DeLillo, art is also silent in this novel, only seen through the poet Tessa Berens jotting a few lines in a notebook on a transatlantic flight. The most enduring flame that flickers throughout DeLillo's oeuvre is extinguished here. The "Lost systems in the crux of everyday life" (*TS*: 55) that pervade the novel are not only technological systems but social and cultural ones; although the novel only addresses the immediate aftermath of the event, the enduring ramifications are not difficult to imagine, not least because it can be readily assumed that all digital media will have been erased in such a scenario. The implications for art are grave, and artistic forces are conspicuous by their absence here.

It is unclear what the event is, but its magnitude is such that it evidently destroys electronic systems on the ground and in the atmosphere, cutting out the hydraulics of aeroplanes. A cryptic description gestures towards possible human intervention. While settling down to watch the Superbowl on television, a group of friends observes a strange phenomenon:

> The images onscreen began to shake. It was not ordinary visual distortion, it had depth, it formed abstract patterns that dissolved into a rhythmic pulse, a series of elementary units that seemed to thrust forward and then recede. Rectangles, triangles, squares (*TS*: 25).

The geometry involved seems to betray hidden meanings, albeit inaccessible ones. This idea is continued after the event; with all electrical systems

apparently terminated, a voice somehow appears through the television, speaking in an unidentifiable language (*TS*: 27). Despite these apparent human touches, the forces behind the event are substantial enough to affect the functioning of aircraft; it is highly unlikely that human intervention could cause such effects. The title of the novel may offer an answer, perhaps referring to Ingmar Bergman's film *The Silence*, which alludes to the silence of God.

Despite the brevity of the novel in scope and length, it opens up questions of permanence. Whatever has caused the outages, they appear to be irreparable. Gesturing to a bank of dead electronic devices, Diane notes the apparently terminal impact on technology:

> I can tell you this. Whatever is going on, it has crushed our technology. The word itself seems outdated to me, lost in space. Where is the leap of authority to our secure devices, our encryption capacities, our tweets, trolls and bots. Is everything in the datasphere subject to distortion and theft? And do we simply have to sit here and mourn our fate? (*TS*: 59)

With the totality of technologically-mediated subjectivity absent, the experience of life itself is significantly modulated, leading to such questions of distortion. Considering the velocity inherent to technological development in the current world, to drop off such a sudden cliff would surely precipitate an extraordinary crisis in humanity, shorn of the identity we have cultivated for ourselves in the interstice between the physical world and its virtual counterpart. To lose this in an instant would be a barely survivable shock, a forced confrontation with the bareness of being that lies beneath its technological cloak.

In *The Silence*, technology is largely a human prosthesis, but it also maintains a degree of autonomy; the lack of clarity around the cause of the novel's events makes it difficult to explicitly attribute human motives to the termination of technology. What is clear is that the relationship between humanity and technology is central here, as it is to much of DeLillo's late writing. Without

recourse to technological means, the novel's characters attempt to replicate them, conducting a fictional commentary for the American football game they were due to watch on television. This cargo cult-like recreation views technology as a kind of fetish object which will persist if human behaviour continues to facilitate it. The fictional commentary is devoid of meaning, yet it continues unabated, resembling "a kind of plainsong, monophonic, ritualistic" (*TS*: 46) in its chantlike repetitions. This activity does nothing to access the essence of technology, acting as a pale imitation rather than an actual act of creation.

The lack of agency seen in the recreation scene is strangely resonant of the present moment in technology. In his work proclaiming the dawn of a new Dark Age, James Bridle identifies a tendency to subordinate human factors to modern technology. The disturbing scenarios explored by Bridle frequently have an economic motive, but this is often deeply submerged beneath a technological rubric: "To the capitalist ideology of maximum profit has been added the possibilities of technological opacity, with which naked greed can be clothed in the inhuman logic of the machine." (Bridle 118) While ruthless profiteering can be understood in terms of human desires, the increasingly algorithmic nature of these processes surpasses the human forces that set them in motion. Bridle explores a number of examples of computation run amok to advance the idea that complexity has reached such a point that many of these processes now exceed human understanding, leading to technologies behaving in inexplicable ways, influenced more by the chaos of the network than the orderly purposes that led to their creation. Although *The Silence* is vague about the cause of its events, it is clear that the fact of such technologies being created also implies the possibility of their destruction, or at the very least their ability to exceed human grasp. Discussing the social effects of these tendencies, Bridle notes that the acceleration of technological complexity "is itself a driver of inequality [...] the logic that drives technological deployment might be tainted at the source. It concentrates power into the hands of an ever-smaller number of people who grasp and control these technologies" (Ibid. 132). This raises the possibility of that

shrinking number dwindling to nothing, cleaving these technologies off into an autonomous domain and silencing humanity in the process.

This post-technological domain shifts DeLillo's focus from the late to the post; beyond the speculative posthumanism of *Zero K* is the post-technological world depicted here. While lateness – late modernity, late capitalism, late technology and any number of similar ideological formulations – is one in which the condition of humanness is increasingly concealed, *The Silence* entirely changes the terms on which a ontological confrontation with humanity can occur. The dynamic of enframing and unconcealment suggested by Heidegger is at the very least greatly complicated by and perhaps even rendered impossible in these terms. It is not that technology has entirely ceased to exist in *The Silence*; engines keep running, non-electronic items presumably function and the fossils of computation remain. However, the regression seen here reverses the momentum of technological development, entirely altering what it means to enact technē. With so much infrastructure rendered inoperable, it can no longer be said that the world is called into being as standing-reserve, so inaccessible are these resources. The context of technology is greatly changed at the moment of its collapse.

Although the events of the novel strip away the obfuscating layers of technological development, they also deny the opportunities for salvation offered by technological means. A renewed focus on the human body is one of the immediate outcomes of this technological collapse. DeLillo repeatedly describes a running figure, first seen by the passengers of a minibus carrying the injured passengers of a crash-landed aeroplane. "It was cold and dark but there was a jogger in the street, a woman in shorts and a T-shirt moving at a steady pace in the lane reserved for bicycles." (*TS*: 39) This mundane image is strangely powerful in the context, providing a stark contrast to its surroundings. The power and velocity of the human body is suddenly emboldened by the demise of so many forces that outpace it; the fact that the woman runs in a bicycle lane offers a challenge to technology, finding an alternative that is provided by the inherent qualities of the human form. It also provides a more direct contrast to the image of the injured passengers,

who are en route to a clinic (*TS*: 38). Their injuries, the indirect consequences of the technological blackout, make the effortless movement of the woman seem all the more impressive.

The changed sense of self brought about in *The Silence* is made apparent in Jim's appearance in the clinic, a "tall white android." (*TS*: 52) As with the running woman, there is a convergence between people and technology, with the human body attempting to fill the void. The silence of the city, however, denies this possibility germination. On leaving the clinic, Jim and Tessa see deserted streets, only encountering "a hobbling man pushing a battered cart that probably contained everything he owned." (*TS*: 63) The man has already withered away to nothing, a physically damaged homeless person who nevertheless, presumably has been affected far less directly by the blackout than most, albeit only because his life was already in crisis. Human dynamism is a counterpoint to crisis, offering the possibility of escape, but with the technological outlet of human ingenuity silenced, this crisis becomes a prison.

Bridle's emphasis on the socioeconomic inequalities that often lie beneath technological innovation provides a useful means of interrogating the true possibilities of this technological dynamism. With this in mind, there is even a possibility for liberation for many, providing some sense of hope. Tessa ponders the potential reactions to the blackout, wondering "will people in the streets become flash mobs, running wild, breaking and entering, everywhere, planet-wide, rejecting the past, completely unmoored from all the habits and patterns?" (*TS*: 87) Habit, private property and basic behavioural standards are all subordinated to the logic of the network; without recourse to the regulating tendencies of technology, all of these forces may slip into chaos. This state of entropy has a paradoxical existence as the convergence of the absence and abundance of possibility, terminating the trajectory of human history and all of the concomitant forces which evolve alongside it. In the absence of the incomprehensibly complex algorithms that drive the (often apparently chaotic) systems that regulate modern life, a more human sort of chaos might emerge, as speculated by Tessa. Ultimately, this decisive break would forcibly end the process by which humans and machines have begun to

mirror each other; if we are currently moving towards a singularity at which "it becomes impossible to determine the degree of automation that is at work, or how to parse out the gap between human and machine," (Bridle 223) the scenario of *The Silence* halts this process dead in its tracks.

Despite this forced separation, the re-enactment of the Superbowl commentary eerily demonstrates the attempt DeLillo's characters make to re-embed themselves within the world of media technology. Bridle chronicles analogous activities, in which human internet users follow "the inhuman logic of algorithmic recommendation" (Ibid.) in order to successfully compete against lucrative algorithmic accounts that generate content based on their own (often deeply flawed) terms. These imitations of machine-like 'thinking' demonstrate the degree to which human society has become governed by systems that are increasingly automated, only tangentially related to human concepts or needs at all. Without access to such systems, human minds distort themselves to replicate the perceived logic of the machine. In *The Silence*, the estrangement from self that defines technology is so great that even in the absence of technological forces, the essence of humanity is remote.

This estrangement appears as something resembling death. Martin focuses on the mortal qualities of the event, claiming "When we're finished with all this, it may be time for me to embrace a free death. *Freitod*." (*TS*: 102) This word – a German euphemism for suicide – is bleakly apt, suggesting the ontological liberation that may be expected once all of the appendages of the virtual world are removed, pure being freed from its external constraints in the form of technological appendages that obfuscate its true nature. The difficulty of accessing this even in the apparently post-technological realm of *The Silence* leaves Martin contemplating death as the ultimate means of achieving this. The artifice of human life is so great that even without the obfuscating qualities of modern technology, Martin sees the only means of true communion with self as coming through death.

This desire to confront death is mirrored in the experience of Tessa and Jim. Describing the signs that their aeroplane was doomed, Jim says

> This is how it begins, this is how it feels, all those many thousands of passengers before us who have experienced this and then were silenced forever [...] the crash landing, a huge sort of rocketing noise and the impact that felt like God's own voice (*TS*: 106-7).

This proximity to death brings about a change in being, briefly turning his mind to pure images: "the van, the clinic, the woman talking talking talking, the man in the baseball cap bandaging my head. Into the street. A young woman jogging." (*TS*: 108) This state of pure being allows Jim an unmediated view of reality, precipitating the flood of images that follows the traumatic crash landing; although a degree of mental structure has returned by the time Jim manages to verbalise these thoughts, his long, almost stream of consciousness speech retains the qualities of this state, the immediacy of a life that is lived in the human mind and the perceptions and sensations that feed it.

Although *The Silence* specifically addresses the sudden end of modern technology, the paucity of artistic references in comparison to other DeLillo works suggests a broader extinguishing of possibility that allows us to consider technology on the instrumental level. Indeed, the idea of creation is very remote from this novel, perhaps only truly possible through the acts of self-destruction suggested by Martin. Rather than presenting itself as an abundance of potential, the world itself is reduced to the level of pure being, experienced as a set of fleeting images. The level at which these images are narrated by Jim is so blandly factual that there is barely any room for creative representation beyond the fact of being. This reality is a harshly unmalleable substance, resistant to human manipulation. Although the world is seen with a renewed truth without such trappings, this in turn precludes it from direct human engagement, instead leading to a different form of estrangement, in which external reality presents itself as an inaccessible stream. The technological dimension to thought has reached such a point that without

recourse to technological means, the characters of *The Silence* cannot reconcile themselves with nature but instead, are left estranged from the world, waiting for a deus ex machina to intervene and restore their control. The final image of the novel – Max staring "into the blank screen" (*TS*: 116) of the television – reflects the emptiness of this post-technological existence, a paralysed humanity unable to restore its ability to create.

The ever-tightening knot of money, time and technology is increasingly stretched to breaking point, making the apocalyptic scenario of *The Silence* appear shockingly plausible. With its role in anthropogenic climate change, technology now threatens to overthrown itself – and the entire world – into disarray, perhaps even extinction. This overdriven technological frame is also intrinsically linked to temporal and financial acceleration. Perhaps the defining example of this is in the physical infrastructure of digital finance. Cryptocurrencies are a volatile, rapidly-changing form of investment that are dependent on blockchain technology, which requires an enormous use of energy to remain operable; by accelerating computing power to achieve this, cryptocurrency 'mining'[50] has also begun to cause deleterious environmental effects, also accelerating climate change. Even within this environmental context, the will to technē triumphs: many large companies have now moved their data centres to cooler countries to evade rising temperatures and save money on the ambient cooling required to provide large-scale computing. By solving these problems within the technological realm, the material effects on other areas are only exacerbated.

The expanse of finance is in a similarly perilous position, where absolute limits appear almost palpable. Monetary gain is the motor behind most of the developments that have led to the acceleration of anthropogenic climate change, and the consequent depletion of natural resources means financial expansion is now largely dependent on the digital realm, where these resources are still in effect in a hidden form. The inherent volatility of cryptocurrencies underlines the condition of crisis that has come to define

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[50] An apposite term considering the grave environmental consequences of many forms of physical mining, as well as the hidden, subterranean nature of much of its infrastructure.

capitalism in recent years. The 2008 financial crash casts a long shadow, and when combined with the extraordinary losses suffered by markets in the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, finance may be in an almost terminal decline. While growth remains possible, this is merely illusory, recouping losses. If finance capitalism's survival is now reliant on the self-regulating tendencies of loss, it may have already reached a limit of growth.

Temporal acceleration has been an adjunct to financial and technological growth, and the ideas of simultaneity that were the source of ironic potential for Joyce are now viable. As computing power has steadily increased, data latency has greatly reduced; this has been taken to extreme levels by finance companies, who have invested enormous sums of money in subterranean infrastructure to ensure trades are conducted and information is received in almost real-time. The old maxim that time is money remains prescient. The development of a twenty-four hour work culture combined with the ubiquity of high-speed internet connections means the temporal barriers that existed in earlier modernities have all but vanished, conquered by technology and finance.

The increasing prominence of data centres in Dublin provides an unlikely postscript to Joyce's discussion of the remodelling of the city, a place which has now been rendered unrecognisable due to the efforts of finance and technology multinationals. Dublin is now at the centre of many financial and technological networks, closer to the centre than the periphery; the inchoate modernity of Joyce's city has taken on an intensely overdriven form since the developments of the last century. Self-contained infrastructural projects like the Vartry scheme have now given way to networks which move money and data between Dublin and the rest of the world at extreme speed, underlining the extent of change since the days of *Ulysses*. The very reservoirs that were developed as Dublin grew are now under pressure to provide water to cool data centres; although Ireland's cool climate has been a selling point for technology companies, on the hottest days of the year, such facilities require extraordinary amounts of water, with one centre using 4.5 million litres at its peak ('Data Centre Water Usage'), putting pressure on local supplies. The city

is now emblematic of the knot of finance, temporality and technology, occupying the point where these forces converge

Although there is an inherent undecidability to the relationship between the forces I have described in this thesis, *The Silence* makes it apparent that the technological domain is the area in which modernity's flame is likely to be extinguished; the experience of life is so tethered to technological means in the present age that to reach a limit of technology is to reach a limit of modernity itself, perhaps even a limit of civilisation in its current form.

Conclusion

Throughout this thesis, the intersection of finance, temporal acceleration and technological development is shown to produce the acceleration of modernity as it developed from the inchoate form seen in *Ulysses* to the overdetermined conditions depicted in DeLillo's late novels. By comparing an earlier vision of modernity with its present position, we may discern its trajectory and even consider where it will lead; the ever-tightening knot of forces that constitutes modernity suggests the transition to an inherently undecidable relationship between these forces where their boundaries are intrinsically blurred and perhaps even an eventual singularity. Subjectivity is now so substantially modulated by technological factors that although there is a substantial interdependency to these forces, technology is likely to induce the transition to another sociocultural mode.

The comparative analysis presented in this thesis allows the development of modernity to be tracked through literary study, but the dialogue between Joyce and DeLillo that is produced also allows for the consonances between the two writers and the landscapes they survey to be understood. The uneven development of the Dublin of *Ulysses* demonstrates the early throes of modernity, while the uneven development seen in DeLillo's writing displays one of the tendencies of neoliberalism as defined by David Harvey (uneven geographical development) and perhaps even the incomplete transition to something that is literally post-modern. DeLillo's decision to self-consciously imbue his work with references to modernist literature allows this discussion of modernity to enter an aesthetic domain, in which DeLillo's late tendency to minimalism nevertheless reflects an overdetermined miasma of ideas and influences. This aesthetic decision reflects the insight of *Cosmopolis* that finance capitalism necessitates two parallel trajectories: one leading to totality, the other to oblivion.

For Joyce and DeLillo alike, the gaps of modernity provide ironic potential. The colonial conditions of *Ulysses* are decidedly unpromising for many Dubliners, yet loopholes provide opportunities; when Bloom considers using telegraphs

to bet on horse races that have already concluded, exploiting Dublin's idiosyncratic time zone, he uses the incompleteness of modernity to engage in a decidedly modern pursuit: speculation. Even in DeLillo's apparently totalised vision, premodern residue challenges the conquest of the world by technological, financial and temporal forces. The scarred victims of conflict haunt *Cosmopolis*, while its antagonist Levin aims to subvert the logic of financial speculation by reducing himself to an almost primordial state of asceticism. Even in the speculative immortality of *Zero K*, there is a notable minimalism, both in DeLillo's prose and in the aims of the centre's project, which reduces human bodies to hairless, immobile vessels of potential and wishes to conquer language itself, bringing humanity into a mathematical form that appears almost prelapsarian in its purity. It is through its lacunae that modernity offers its greatest potential.

Although the temporal play of *Ulysses* is often (rightly) asserted as a high point of modernist writing, the forces of contraction and dilation employed by Joyce also find parallels in DeLillo's work. Largely dependent on technological factors, temporal control is still a largely unattainable goal. Despite the reach of globalisation clearly modulating temporal experience in the present era, DeLillo's temporal imagination asserts that art rather than technology presents more possibilities for the manipulation of time. While the possibility of technological immortality is debunked by DeLillo, his artist characters, particularly Lauren in *The Body Artist*, manage to distort the temporal fabric. This is enacted not through technology but by a return to the experiential level, recalling the merging of aesthetic apprehension and subjective experience posited by Stephen Dedalus. The limitations of modernity in a later form allow DeLillo to return to the aesthetic values of modernism, demonstrating their continued viability.

The vision of modernity provided by this project does not allow for one force to dominate in defining modernity but rather, it is produced by the interdependency of finance, technological development and temporal acceleration. These forces already overlap in *Ulysses*, but as the comparative elements of this thesis demonstrate, the tightening knot of these three

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elements is the driving force behind the intensified, overdetermined modernity of the twenty-first century as embodied here by DeLillo's late novels. It is the extreme interrelation of these forces that produces the sense of lateness in DeLillo's recent writing, in which the fragility of modernity is made apparent by the stretching of this knot to breaking point. Even when the sense of dissolution is not present, DeLillo's writing shows the possibility of a singularity in which these forces of modernity have reached a point of totality, potentially draining modernity of the accelerative power needed to ensure its continuation.

By exploring the work of two writers who are self-consciously engaged with the processes of modernity, this thesis shows modernity at two different historical points: its early development, in *Ulysses*, and its possible zenith, in DeLillo's late novels. In the consonances and contrasts between these two different modernities, we may begin to assess the changes in modernity, specifically in its depiction in literature. This allows a broader conception of modernity to emerge, also providing some suggestions as to what may follow this historically specific form. The chain of literary influence between Joyce and DeLillo allows this exploration to assume an aesthetic dimension, developing a view of literary style as modulated by external events which is defined here by two canonical writers of the twentieth and twenty first centuries, both of whom allow the knot of modernity to exert pressure on their writing.

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