

## Joyce's Triestine Expressionism: The "Circe" Episode

Sangwook Kim

### I

Joyce's stylistic variation of *Ulysses* was so notorious that Stuart Gilbert endowed each episode with a style tag proper to it. The tags by Gilbert range from monologue to catechism. Karen Lawrence notes that the individually peculiar styles of the *Ulysses* chapters conduct "different types of rhetorical performance" (13). Joyce himself even proclaimed his *Ulysses* project to be "writing a book from eighteen different points of view and in as many styles" (*Letters I* 167). The "Circe" episode is undeniably the one that makes the reader take stock of the "rhetorical performance" that its theatrical style activates. Not many of Joycean critics have, in particular, inferred Expressionism from the Circean array of the interpenetration between inner experience and outer object.

The "Circean" drama no doubt reflects the geocultural ambience of Expressionism in Trieste. Ira B. Nadel insightfully reads the Nighttown episode as a literary manifestation of artistic Expressionism.<sup>1)</sup> Nadel makes Zurich of 1917 "a

locus of Expressionism” (143), putting Joyce in league with the Expressionists August Strindberg, Gerhard Hauptmann, Oskar Kokoschka, Max Reinhardt, Frank Wedekind, Stefan Zweig, and Ivan Goll. Four years before his experience of Zurich’s artistic milieu of Expressionism, in 1913, Joyce’s exposure to Kokoschka’s plays and paintings in Trieste is crucial in acculturation of his Irish theosophic symbolism into the Triestine Expressionism:

In late 1913 in Trieste, the young Dario De Tuoni, later to be Professor at Padua, lent Joyce a copy of a monograph recently published in Leipzig and entitled *Oskar Kokoschka: Dramen und Bilder*. This first study of Kokoschka’s work, published while he was still exhibiting Impressionistic as well as Expressionistic paintings, contained twenty-seven plates plus three plays, all of them considered to be fundamental works of Expressionist drama: *Hoffnung der Frauen* (later to be known by the prefix *Möder*), *Sphinx und Strohmann*, and *Schauspiel* (later to be called *Der Brennende Dornbusch*). (146)

Nadel detects the affinity between Kokoschka’s 1908 painting *Portrait of Auguste Forel* and “Circe” in intensifying “the body as part of the psyche” (148), just taking Joyce’s attraction to Kokoschka’s artistic work as merely his first taste of Expressionism prior to his full-scale association with it during his Zurich years. He

---

1) It has been, however, long controversial to put “Circe” under the rubric of Expressionism. Ernest Boyd, an earliest critic, discerns the style of *Ulysses* “akin to that of the German Expressionists” (*Critical Heritage I* 304) but fails to specify its Expressionistic examples, while he labels the fifteenth chapter merely as “fantasmagoria” (305). Frank Budgen supposes the association between *Ulysses* and all kinds of variations of modernistic techniques. Budgen’s claim ironically means Joyce’s narrative experiment is allied to no particular school: “There are hints of all practices in *Ulysses*—cubism, futurism, simultanism, dadaism and the rest—and this is the clearest proof that he was attached to none of the schools that followed them” (198). Budgen brands “Circe” as a representation of some experience of “hallucination” (251), which is part of human mental reality. Making a loose connection between “Circe” and the “use of what seem[s] to be the techniques of stage presentation, and on occasion the abbreviated ‘telegraphic language, of much German Expressionist drama’” (76), Christopher Butler argues for Joyce’s appropriation of “all available modernist techniques.”

makes "Circe" therefore to be the outcome of his Zurich appreciation of Expressionism, and, in turn, overlooks the Triestine multicultural singularity that aroused Joyce's interest in Kokoschka's Expressionism.

Diverging from Nadel's study on the stylistic comparison between Zurich's Expressionist paintings or plays and the Nighttown episode, this essay is attempting a geocultural study on the Triestine intellectual backdrop of "Circe" as Joyce's Expressionist drama. "Circe"'s psychosomatic accounts of subjective experience indeed display the *zeitgeist* of the multiplicity of the self that incorporates both Joyce's theosophical metempsychosis and Triestine men of letters' multicultural logic into conceiving a vision of the flexible self from the locale's geocultural condition. During the Triestine years, Joyce was initiated into Benedetto Croce's *Aesthetic as Science of Expression and General Linguistic* whose Expressionist doctrines of art bluntly saying, "Every true intuition or representation is [...] expression" (13). For Croce, "Art is the expression of impressions" (21) in which "Being heavily focused on the human soul and the pains and pleasures it [Expressionism] is prone to, E. [Expressionism] is a distinctly anthropocentric art for which [...] man is the 'Ausgangspunkt [starting point], Mittelpunkt [center], Zielpunkt [goal]' of the creative process, even to the point where landscapes, animals and inanimate objects [...] are 'vermenschlicht [humanized]'" (Weisstein 24). The Expressionism's artistic principles clearly illuminate the anthropomorphism in the "Circe" episode. In "Circe," the very Expressionist metamorphoses theatrically actualize Joyce's theosophical metempsychosis and, at the same time, cross-culturally echo Triestine multicultural logic of the self.

The "Circean" Expressionism is to theatrically present the multi-faceted self of "one person [...] composed of persons" (*Letters I* 147) by the anthropomorphism of "the cycle of human body." For Joyce, Expressionism is not merely the artistic style of "the liberation of the body as much as the excavation of the psyche" (Bassie 7), but an artistic means of embodying the transnational hybridity of the self on the interracial level by the Expressionist techniques of the anthropomorphic metamorphosis. Joyce's vision of the multilayered self is clearly an intellectual

influence from Trieste as the place of racial admixture, one of whose examples was Ettore Schmitz, a Triestian writer who wrote under the pseudonym of Italo Svevo. It is well known that Joyce was intrigued by Schmitz's racial hybridity as an Italian Jew of Hungarian origin under the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Joyce built up so tremendous comradeship with him that he was an encouraging reviewer of Schmitz's unpublished novels. As a philosophical ramification of the Triestine Jewish literary circle, Carlo Michelstaedter was one of the Jewish intellectuals who were interested in Otto Weininger's *Sex and Character*, who surmised the metaphysics of Jewish nobodiness from the Jewish dexterity in becoming anybody, which also fascinated Joyce. Joyce and Michelstaedter never made any personal contact but Joyce may have heard about him, given that there were a relatively small number of Jewish men of letters in Trieste. Michelstaedter's 1910 *Persuasion and Rhetoric* is indeed an Expressionist exposition of the transformative self signifying Triestine Jews' multinational nature, a Triestine ratification of Weiningerian flexible Jewishness. His *Persuasion and Rhetoric* is also strikingly reverberating with "Circe" in the matter of an Expressionist style and a vision of the becoming of the self. Joyce's literary "Circe" and Michelstaedter's philosophical *Persuasion and Rhetoric* are intertextually illuminating each other in the light of the transformative nature of the self, which reflects a visionary rapport between them on Expressionism.

## II

"Circe" is a Joycean wonderland in which anthropomorphism makes its way through personifications of ether inanimate or animate objects. The "moth," "fan," "hoof," "yews," "waterfall," and photo (the "nymph") strikingly enter human life to speak in the voice of a human being. The anthropomorphized objects are, to use Karen Lawrence's expression, the instances of the rhetoric of "metaphoric substitution and hyperbole" (146), which act out the "symbolic, indeed hyperbolic,

projection of feelings" (147). In "Circe," the "yews" are markedly personified by what Bloom makes them to be in his emotional responses to social circumstances: in Bloom's mind, the yews turn into a person who is mocking his debilitated masculinity that he would wish to hide—"(*Their leaves whispering*) Sister[Bloom]. Our sister. Ssh!" (15.3238). The same "yews" are, for Bloom, also a reminder of his "HALCYON DAYS" when he came to the Poulaphouca waterfall on a high school excursion: "(*Mingling their boughs*) Listen. Whisper. She[Bloom] is right, our sister. We grew by. We gave shade on languorous summer days" (15.3302-03). Likewise, the moth into which Grandpa Lipoti Virag metamorphoses is a rhetorical hyperbole perhaps in a pathetic revelation of his belittled being—i.e. "I'm a tiny tiny thing" (15.2469)—and in a grievous expression of the male sexuality of the blind pursuit for female bodies like the "night insects follow[ing] the light" (15.2421)—"An illusion for remember their complex unadjustable eye" (15.2421-22), or, Bloom says, "Bee or bluebottle too other day butting shadow on wall dazed self then me wandered dazed down" (15.2429-30). As an aggrandized form of a female mouth, the fan represents Bloom's fear of a shrew, which is no less intense than a hen-pecked husband's phobia about his wife: "THE FAN: (*Half opening, then closing*) And the missus is master. Petticoat government" (15.2759-60). The hoof is also a synecdochic overstatement of a terrifying beast, which may carry the intensity of Bloom's angst about a virago: "THE HOOF: If you bungle, Handy Andy, I'll kick your football for you" (15.2823-24). The nymph, the photo of a voluptuous woman, is certainly a material personification of Bloom's narcissistic indulgence in his undying sexual desire: "Useful hints to the married" (15.3251-52); "I cure fits or money refunded" (15.3257).

The Circean anthropomorphism has its logical validity from Stephen's phenomenological observations of the system of perception. He laconically points out the intentionality of perception:

*(Brings the match near his eye)* Lynx eye. Must get glasses. Broke them yesterday. Sixteen years ago. Distance. The eye sees all flat. *(He draws the match away. It goes out.)* Brain thinks. Near: far. Ineluctable modality of the visible. *(He frowns mysteriously)* Hm. Sphinx. The beast that has twobacks at midnight. Married. (15.3628-632)

Here, Stephen solemnly illuminates the way in which an object has manifold appearances (“The beast that has twobacks at midnight. Married”) by what the seer wants to see or remember (“Brain thinks”): his rumination on the visible coincides with his recollection of the broken glasses at Clongowes school sixteen years ago. Stephen’s theory of perception is no less than about the phenomenology of perception, a study of how objects are transfigured in our mind’s eye, not simply vision:

[W]e store up the perceptions we once lived through. Then, when we actually remember, we do not call up images; rather, we call up those earlier perceptions. When these perceptions are called up and reenacted, they bring along their objects, their objective correlates. (Sokolowski 68)

Indeed, the personified objects above are all the expressive means by which Bloom divulges his affective undercurrent from his memories. The entire nighttown setting of “Circe” is in itself virtually a reactivation of his past and future through remembering: the prospective and retrospective reappearances of his wife, his deceased parents, and the women whom he amorously ogled in which they undergo metaphoric displacements by his anticipatory and imaginative recollections.

The “Circe” episode is tied up with the Expressionist aestheticism in Trieste. Joyce had spent fourteen years in Trieste since he arrived in Zurich on 11 Oct 1904 for his new life on the Continent. During the years in Trieste, he had been from time to time out of the Austro-Hungarian city for the purpose of his employment as a banker in Rome (July 1906-March 1907) and of flight from World War I’s bloody impact on Trieste (June 1915-October 1919). Forming the bond of friendship with his acquaintances there, Joyce was impressed with Croce’s *Aesthetic*

(Ellmann 340, 382) made known to him by Oscar Schwarz, one of his pupils who took his English lessons. It is very likely that Croce's Expressionism underlies the metamorphic subjectivism in "Circe" whose literary Expressionism is the rationale for Joyce's making the fifteenth episode to be a drama. In *Aesthetic*, Croce examines the transcendental aspect of intuition—i.e. the perception of the invisible (the unreal) as well as the visible (the real):

[I]ntuitive knowledge is expressive knowledge, independent and autonomous in respect to intellectual function; indifferent to discriminations, posterior and empirical, to reality and to unreality, to formations and perceptions of space and time, even when posterior: intuition or representation is distinguished as form from what is felt and suffered, from the flux or wave of sensation, or from psychic material; and this form, this taking possession of, is expression. To have an intuition is to express. It is nothing else (nothing more, but nothing less) than *to express*. (18-19)

For Croce, "Intuition is the indifferenced unity of the perception of the real and of the simple image of the possible" (6) and in "our intuitions we do not oppose ourselves to external reality as empirical beings, but we simply objectify our impressions, whatever they be." The phenomenology of perception Croce's Expressionism posits is inextricably intertwined with, perhaps Bloom's metamorphosis, Lipoti Virag's scientific observation of the bugs' eyes going after light: "An illusion [of images in the real] for remember their complex unadjustable eye" (15.2421-22).<sup>2)</sup> The anthropomorphized objects in "Circe" are the

---

2) Croce's exegesis on the intuitive nature of perception presupposes that an image in time and space is illusionary:

Certainly perception is intuition: the perception of the room in which I am writing, of the ink-bottle and paper that are before me, of the pen I am using, of the objects that I touch and make use of as instruments of my person, which, if it write[s], therefore exists;—these are all intuitions. But the image that is now passing through my brain of a me writing in another room, in another town, with different paper, pen and ink, is also an intuition. This means that the distinction between reality[the visible] and non-reality[the invisible] is extraneous, secondary, to the true nature of intuition. (5)

Expressionist revelations of subjectivity in which the images in time and space have internal meanings.

In *1910*, subtitled “the emancipation of dissonance,” Thomas Harrison sketches Expressionism’s Triestian purport prior to World War I. His attempt to historicize “the tones of Expressionism in a dissonant, international chorus—in Italy [Trieste per se] as well as Germany” (12) considers a philosopher and poet Carlo Michelstaedter’s suicide on 17 October 1910 to be an event of the moment in the metaphysics of Expressionism. Marking out Michelstaedter’s suicide as a metaphysical sensation by Harrison brings to the fore the three points of concern in his suicide: his suicide took place in Gorizia forty-four kilometers northwest of Trieste; he was a Jewish Italian Austrian; he just took his own life on the same day he completed his university dissertation, *Persuasion and Rhetoric*.

Trieste, the Austro-Hungarian Adriatic city, was a cross-cultural and racial contact zone during Joyce and his family’s abiding there. In 1909, a Triestian essayist, Scipio Slataper brought about a contradictory picture of his hometown: at one time, he said, “And since a unique Triestine type does not exist, so a Triestine creative culture does not exist either” (Cary 137) but, at other times, he observed that “Trieste has a Triestine type; this ought to necessitate a Triestine art” (Cary 142). The Triestine art without a unique cultural tradition was doomed to be “international art, not traceable to a pure and single root” (Harrison 24), “that would present the varied, irrepeatable contingencies of a complex place and time as productive, proper, and necessary.” As Slataper’s Triestine colleague, Giuseppe Prezzolini, pointedly remarked, Slataper himself was “the very incarnation of his complicated birthplace: Slovene height and blondness, German punctilio, Italian sensibility—the perfect symbol, in short, of that Trieste of his where three races mingle” (Cary 139). Slataper himself endorsed the artistic nature of his racial hybridity: “Like all souls in transformation [...] we [Triestines] search for ourselves and turn into the slaves of others” but bring to life “this fitful and anxious life of ours in the joy of clear expression” (Harrison 24). As a Jewish Italian Austrian Triestine, Michelstaedter’s suicide may have reflected the “anxious life” mirroring

his metaphysical anguish that the existential complexity of his racial and ethnic identity entailed.

About five years after Michelstaedter's suicide, Joyce embarked on writing *Ulysses*. The encounter between "two races" (*Letters I* 146) in *Ulysses* must have been clearly conceived in the geocultural atmosphere of Triestine racial mix. A prototype of Bloom is reputed to be a Triestine Jew, Ettore Schmitz, whose father was a Hungarian Jew (Ellmann 374). Schmitz was one of Joyce's Triestine pupils and his racial multiplicity is commensurate with Michelstaedter's:

He [Schmitz] was Italian by language and politics, Austrian by citizenship, Austro-German by ancestry and education, Jewish by religion—in short a not untypical personification of the Triestine hybridity. This is reflected in his pseudonym, Italo Svevo, which combines the ultra-Italian "Italo" (whose initial letter pays homage to the lone vowel in his family name) with the invented surname "Svevo," which is the Italian adjective for the Swabian provinces of Germany. (McCourt 86)

In the literary transposition of the historical Triestine Jew, Joyce took note of the transcendental possibility of Jewish experience going beyond race, culture, and nation, which is exactly Michelstaedter's metaphysical account of the ever-changing nature of the self.

In "Circe," the transformation of Bloom into a womanly man resonates with the Michelstaedterian perception of the self as ever becoming whose crux is the self's constant incorporation of the other into his alteration. Joyce never met Michelstaedter as they once briefly coexisted in the Triestine soil of racial and cultural hybridity. Yet the Triestine cultural impact on both Joyce and Michelstaedter put their multiracial spirit in metempsychic accord about any-thingness of being between "Circe" and *Persuasion and Rhetoric*, transcending their socio-spatial boundary never in contact. Michelstaedter's doctrine of the self's becoming anything, or no self, is heralded by Otto Weininger's *Sex and Character*, which Schmitz no doubt read (McCourt 229) and Joyce was exposed to (Ellmann

463). Weininger assumes a correlation between the Jew and the woman as highly adaptive to any circumstances. For Weininger, Jews are taken as feminine, displaying versatility in transforming themselves to meet the needs of the other: “The congruity between the Jews and women further reveals itself in the extreme adaptability of the Jews, [...] the ‘mobility’ of their minds, [...] in fact the mode in which, like women, because they are nothing in themselves, they can become everything” (320).

Weininger’s psychological approach to Judaic experience is intuitive rather than empirical (Harrison 29). His discernment of “the psychological contents of the Jewish mind [which] are always double or multiple” (Weininger 323) evidently led both Joyce and Michelstaedter to signify for their own purpose the “ambiguity, duplicity, indeed multiplicity” (Harrison 29) in the psychology of the diasporic Jews of no nation-state. The fluidity of the Jewish identity Weininger depicted as womanly made an wide appeal for Michelstaedter and Joyce, the Triestines who were voluntarily or involuntarily forced to live as a multicultural and multiracial being—the one as a Jewish Italian Austrian and the other as an Irish expatriate living in the Austro-Hungarian empire. Weininger’s equation of the feminine adroitness in adapting to the environment with the Jews’ ease in compromising their self is obviously Joyce’s inspiration for Bloom’s feminization, his transvestism, and his double or multiple identity as a womanly man in “Circe.” And Weininger’s picture of the multiplicity and duplicity of being encapsulating the state of ambiguous Jewishness devoid of a nation-state is perhaps Michelstaedter’s insight for a transnational view of the self, which is the becoming of being.

It is conspicuous that both Michelstaedter’s *Persuasion and Rhetoric* and Joyce’s “Circe” resort to anthropomorphism, an Expressionist way of making internal experiences external symbols by which subjective visions are distilled into abstract ideas. For both Michelstaedter and Joyce, therefore, anthropomorphized inanimate or animate objects are manifestations of the artistic axiom of “Thou thoughtest as how thou wastest invisible [through the visible]” (15.3827). In *Persuasion and Rhetoric*, the desire for becoming (being persuaded, or being

satisfied with him/herself) is paralleled by the weight's hunger for falling as suspended from the hook. The weight turns into a person by its aspiration for descending ever lower, whose will to go down is everlasting:

Its [The weight's] life is this want of life. If it no longer wanted but were finished, perfect, if it possessed its own self, it would have ended its existence. At that point, as its own impediment to possessing life, the weight would not depend on what is external as much as on its own self, in that it is not given the means to be satisfied. The weight can never be persuaded. Nor is nay life ever satisfied to live in any present, for insofar as it is life it continues, and it continues into the future to the degree that it lacks life. (9)

Michelstaedter's personified "weight" is equivalent to Joyce's metempsychic moth, the "tiny tiny thing ever flying," which "Long ago [...] was a king" (15.2469-72), in that both of them are symbolic signs of the self's multiplicity.

The anthropomorphized moth, Joyce's Expressionist metempsychosis, is the theosophical refashioning of the Buddhist reincarnation by which Joyce got once enchanted even prior to his Triestine years. In 1903, Joyce reviewed H. Fielding-Hall's *The Soul of a People*, entitling it "A Suave Philosophy." The essay title shows that "he had a profound understanding of the Indian religion, not theosophy that is merely drawn to the soul's endless rebirths and its spiritual growth—a European acceptance of Buddhist reincarnation" (Kim 79). The metempsychosis is his own redirection of theosophy from a religious idea to a "Suave Philosophy," which was not fully gestated till into his Triestine years. The Buddhist doctrine of no self (the self's becoming everything) is indicated by Bloom's racial hybridity whose metempsychic magnitude was fully realized when Joyce delivered a lecture in Italian about the multiplicity of Irish racial origin to the audiences in Poplare University in 1907. Speculating that "Nations have their ego, just like individuals" (*CW* 154), in the lecture entitled "Ireland, Island of Saints and Sates," "Joyce made a case against self-delusively anachronistic illusion in which an Irish national self is believed to remain unchanged by arguing for Irishness' ethnic and racial hybrid"

(Kim 81): “a new Celtic race was arising, compounded of the old Celtic stock and the Scandinavian, Anglo-Saxon, and Norman races” (*CW* 161).

Joyce certainly brought into the “Scylla and Charybdis” episode his Triestine disquisition on the metaphysics of metempsychosis. Stephen’s theory of Shakespeare is an apology for the self’s becoming, which betokens the constant deferment of absolute persuasion that Michelstaedter’s ever falling weight states: “Molecules all change. I am other I now” (9.205). Life is an everlasting movement for becoming one’s potential being:

In the intense instant of imagination, when the mind, Shelley says, is a fading coal, that which I was is that which I am and that which in possibility I may come to be. So in the future, the sister of the past, I may see myself as I sit here now but by reflection from that which then I shall be. (9.381-85)

Stephen’s solution for the paradox of the being’s otherness, which is how one can claim oneself as one’s own being if the self ever becomes the other, is “I, entelechy, form of forms, am I by memory because under everchanging forms” (9.208-09). The ever-changing self is identified as itself in the memory of self-transformations, which is made a personal history (Fordham 508). Shakespeare becomes every father and his son becomes every son in the transforming self: “He is in my father. I am in his son” (9.390).

Virag Lipoti’s (or Bloom’s) ‘light’ symbolism epitomizing the Crocean phenomenology of Expressionism—the “night insects follow[ing] the light” (15.2421)—strikingly evokes Michelstaedter’s ‘light’ trope he employs in expounding the self’s eagerness for transformation in *Persuasion and Rhetoric*:

In the indifferent haze of things the god *makes* the one thing the organism needs *shine*; and the organism struggles toward it as if to satiate all its hunger, as if that thing could provide all its life: *absolute persuasion*. But the knowing god extinguishes the light when its abuse would remove its usefulness, and the animal, satiated only with regard to that thing, turns toward another light, which the benevolent god has shown it. (20)

For Michelstaedter, the 'light' is a trope for the will to live whose life force entails the self's ceaseless endeavor to satiate his desire for *being fully persuaded*, or "the state of consciousness and being in which an entity, any entity, is entirely at one with itself and the world, entirely present and true to itself and others" (Valentino et al. xiii). The state of one's oneness with his internally or externally expected self, or *absolute persuasion*, is ever deferred "[b]ecause] at no point is the will satisfied, each thing destroys itself in coming into being and in passing away [in consciousness]" (Michelstaedter 15). Life is, in consequence, the mobile movement of the "perpetual mutation" between the self and the other, or between what he is and what he should be. Michelstaedter remarks, henceforth, that "man wants from other things in a future time what he lacks in himself [...]" (11) and "*with the future he escapes himself in every present.*" In "Circe," Bloom's gender inversion and his accompanying transvestism are an attestation of Michelstaedter's Triestine appreciation of the process of the self's becoming.

The mirror on which Stephen projects Shakespeare onto Bloom is an object for an Expressionist rendering of the dialectical interpenetration between the self and the other, i.e. the father-son metempsychosis on the ontological level: "*Stephen and Bloom gaze in the mirror. The face of William Shakespeare, beardless, appears there, rigid in facial paralysis, crowned by the reflection of the reindeer antlered hatrack in the hall*" (15.3821-24). The father-son unity corroborates its symbolic significance in Michelstaedter's biological restatement of the mutual mirroring between the self and the other in replenishing what he lacks in himself with what the other has: "The flower sees the propagation of its pollen in the bee, while the bee sees sweet food for its larvae in the flower. In the embrace of the two organisms each sees 'itself as if in a mirror' [...] in the disposition of the other" (Michelstaedter 32). The Shakespeare-Bloom-Stephen metempsychosis also takes on Michelstaedter's vision of the spontaneous transformation of one's own self, which is, so to speak, the generation of myself different than myself within me, in adjusting what I am (ontological son) to what I want to be (ontological father): the

Michelstaedtereian persuasion is ‘I am my own son and father’ “from [my] own self, who is son and father, slave and master of what lies around [me], of what came before, of what must come after” (Michelstaedter 11).

### III

In “Circe,” Siegfried’s invincible sword “Nothung” to kill Fafner the dragon in Richard Wagner’s *Der Ring des Nibelungen* is conjured up by Stephen’s ashplant demolishing the chandelier of Bella’s. Stephen’s Nothung “*shatter[ing] glass and toppling masonry*” (15.4245) insinuates the epiphanic moment of penetrating into the essential enfolded in the shell of appearance. The abstract vision of the essential is the thing beyond time and space in which the visible ineluctably establishes its reality: “*Time’s livid final flame leaps and, in the following darkness, ruin of all space*” (15.4244-45). “Circe” indeed recapitulates literary Expressionism by way of instancing “shattering of reality” (Vajda 48) and “a ruthless getting-to-the root-of-things.” The anthropomorphized objects in “Circe” demonstrate that “There is no reality, there is only the human consciousness, which incessantly forms new worlds from its own creative resources transforms them, assimilates them by hard work, and spiritually stamps them” (Vajda 48). The Expressionism in “Circe” obviously validates Joyce’s Trieste thesis in Italian on William Blake in which Joyce discloses Blake as a visionary poet “prostrating himself before unutterable immensity which [...] encompasses the supreme knowledge in the eternal order” (*CW* 222) “in love with the products of time.” Joyce’s artistic favor for Blake’s idealism bears witness to Croce’s Expressionist aestheticism examining the mental process in which raw impressions from our senses in time and space are processed by intuitions memory directs—the intuitions mobilizing various expressive means.

In Trieste from 1905 to 1920, Joyce was a transnational being in which his Irishness had been acculturated into the geocultural dynamics of Trieste through his interracial contact with the Jewish intelligentsia of the place. The multinational

culture of the Austro-Hungarian city brought the Triestine Jews to a vision of the transformative self whose paragon was Michelstaedter's Expressionist gloss on the self-generated transformation of the self. Joyce's Circean Expressionism is an artistic instrument to present the fluid nature of the self elicited from his theosophic metempsychosis. Joyce's 1919 "Circe" is a transcultural regeneration of Michelstaedter's 1910 *Persuasion and Rhetoric* from their foresight on the flowing self. In "Circe," Trieste's cultural diversity indigenous to the locale is intertextually acted out by Joyce's vision of the multilayered self echoing Michelstaedter's interminable self-persuasive process toward transforming the self into the changing environment. Joyce's musing on multiple identities of the self impelled him to "make *Circe* a costume episode" (*Letters I* 148) in which "Bloom [...] appears in five or six different suits." Displaying of the changing nature of the self through changing of costumes is the rationale behind Joyce's making "Circe" a drama.

(Kyung Hee University)

## Works Cited

- Bassie, Ashley. *Expressionism*. New York: Parkstone, 2008.
- Boyd, Ernest. "Ireland's Literary Renaissance." *James Joyce: The Critical Heritage*. Ed. Robert H. Deming. Vol. 1. London: Routledge, 1970. 301-05. 2 vols.
- Budgen, Frank. *James Joyce and the Making of 'Ulysses.'* Oxford: Oxford UP, 1972.
- Butler, Christopher. "Joyce the Modernist." *The Cambridge Companion to James Joyce*. Ed. Derek Arrtridge. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004. 67-86.
- Cary, Joseph. *A Ghost in Trieste*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1993.
- Croce, Benedetto. *Aesthetic as Science of Expression and General Linguistic*. Trans. Douglas Ainslie. London: MacMillan, 1909.
- Ellmann, Richard. *James Joyce*. rev. ed. New York: Oxford UP, 1982.
- Fordham, Finn. "Circe" and the Genesis of Multiple Personalities." *James Joyce Quarterly* 45 (2008): 507-20.
- Gilbert, Stuart. *James Joyce's Ulysses*. New York: Vintage, 1958.
- Harrison, Thomas. *1910: The Emancipation of Dissonance*. Los Angeles: U of California P, 1996.
- Joyce, James. *Critical Writings*. Eds. Ellsworth Mason and Richard Ellmann. New York: Viking, 1968.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Letters of James Joyce*. Vol.1. Ed. Stuart Gilbert. New York: Viking, 1958; Vols. 2 and 3. Ed. Richard Ellmann. New York: Viking, 1966. 3 vols.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Ulysses: The Corrected Text*. Ed. Hans Walter Gabler. New York: Random House, 1986.
- Lawrence, Karen. *The Odyssey of Style in Ulysses*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1981.
- Kim, Sang-wook. "Joyce and Buddhism: Bloom's Conflated Nationality as a Reification of Joycean Pacifism." *James Joyce Journal* 14 (2008): 71-97.
- McCourt, John. *The Years of Bloom: James Joyce in Trieste 1904-1920*. Dublin: Lilliput, 2000.
- Michelstaedter, Carlo. *Persuasion and Rhetoric*. Trans. Russell Scott Valentino, et

- al. New Haven: Yale UP, 2004.
- Nadel, Ira B. "Joyce and Expressionism." *Journal of Modern Literature* 16 (1989): 139-158.
- Sokoloswki, Robert. *Introduction to Phenomenology*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2000.
- Valentino, Russell Scott, Cinzia Sartini Blum, and David J. Depew. Introduction. *Persuasion and Rhetoric*. By Carlo Michelstaedter. Trans. Russell Scott Valentino, et al. New Haven: Yale UP, 2004. ix-xxvii.
- Vajda, György M. "Outline of the Philosophic Backgrounds of Expressionism." *Expressionism as an International Literary Phenomenon*. Trans. Linda Brust. Ed. Ulrich Weisstein. Paris: Didier, 1973. 45-58.
- Weininger, Otto. *Sex and Character*. Authorized translation from sixth German edition. London: Heinemann, 1906.
- Weisstein, Ulrich. Introduction. *Expressionism as an International Literary Phenomenon*. Ed. Ulrich Weisstein. Paris: Didier, 1973. 15-28.

**Abstract**

## Joyce's Triestine Expressionism: The "Circe" Episode

Sangwook Kim

Taking the form of a drama, "Circe" is the pinnacle of Joyce's stylistic variations done in each chapter of *Ulysses*. The primary purpose of this essay is to discriminate Joyce's literary Expressionism associated with the transformative self in dramatization of "Circe." For Joyce, Expressionism is an artistic medium to show the spiritual essence of empirical things in time and space. Joycean critics have yet dug out not much of the Expressionism's philosophical overtones in "Circe." The anthropomorphized objects like yews, fan, moth, and hoof in "Circe" are good examples of Expressionism highlighting artistic intuitions whose doctrines are well expressed by Benedetto Croce to whom Joyce was deeply drawn. In "Circe," Expressionism is not an end per se but a means to push to the extreme Joyce's vision of the transformative self, i.e. the self's becoming the other, by employment of Expressionist intuitions. In "Circe," Joyce's heightened sense of the becoming of the self is a reflection of the Triestine Jews' multiracial hybridity into which he was acculturated. A Triestine philosopher, Carlo Michelstaedter's 1910 *Persuasion and Rhetoric*'s Expressionist explication of the "perpetual mutation" between the self and the other is markedly illuminating Joyce's theosophic metempsychosis, a vision of the multiple identities of the self.

■ Key words : "Circe," *Ulysses*, Joyce, Expressionism, Trieste

Received November 24, 2012

Revised December 15, 2012

Accepted December 15, 2012