

A Deconstructive Reading of the “Nausicaa” Chapter in James Joyce’s *Ulysses*

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When we enter the “Nausicaa” chapter, no longer do we have to struggle with the text. Vocabulary loses its obscurity and what was a struggle of concentration, re-reading of passages and continual reconfirmation of what has taken place becomes now clear and easily grasped. We now start to take meanings at face value, not looking any further or deeper than what the author has penned. But under these seemly straightforward descriptions, Joyce continues to lay the foundation of doubt, a lack of detail to lead the reader to multiple conclusions as to the reality of the situation. The chapter’s simple outlines and the even-textured appearance is deceptive. Through a close reading, we can find that, with no definite form, the structure is built upon the theme of ideal-real dichotomy. And if there is any plot, it is a chance meeting between Gerty MacDowell and Leopold Bloom which remains open-ended. The language also wanders far afield. Character and a dominant point of view are not clear in this chapter: there is no clear center.

Jaques Derrida questions the classical hierarchy that gives more value to speech than writing on the basis of presence. The idea that speech can provide

a presence (of the speaker and the listener, of meaning, of intention) that writing can not is misleading. He argues that even the self-presence of interior thought is structured by difference and a deferral of meaning. Thus, in its deconstruction of the either/or logic of non-contradiction that underlies Western Metaphysics, Derrida's writing attempts to elaborate an "other" logic. The pharmakon is neither remedy nor poison, neither good nor evil, neither a plus nor a minus, neither speech nor writing. Thus his writing is opaque, denying the self-presence of meaning.

The same holds true for Joyce's writing. Oppositions are never total and this keeps issues as unclear and as unresolved in Joyce's fictional world as they are in the real world itself. Throughout the "Nausicaa" chapter, Joyce insists on the equality and interdependence of binary oppositions—writer/reader, man/woman, fact/fiction, words/silence, fate/chance, normal sex /masturbation, sacredness/profanity—and celebrates the humor and instruction implicit in their self reversals in "Nausicaa." Vicki Mahaffey sums up this characteristic of Joyce's writing stating that "Joyce parodies Kierkegaard's celebration of choosing between extremes (either/or), suggesting that a more wholesome course is to choose both ('And!') and neither ('Nay, rather!')."¹)

In this paper, I will demonstrate how the fusion of oppositions shapes a lot of things in "Nausicaa" and how, through this, as Christine van Boheemans-Saff rightly puts it, "His (Joyce's) writing dramatizes the presence of a void at the point of origin."²) In so doing, drawing on parallels between Joyce and Derrida, I will also argue how the principle of incertitude replacing authority moves Joyce toward new territory, narrative patterns and language that are different from those in standard or traditional writing.

Joyce creates, and invites us to treat, his chapters almost as individuals, with distinct idiosyncrasies. When there is a transition between chapters, Joyce

1) Vicki Mahaffey, *Reauthorizing Joyce* (New York: Cambridge UP, 1988) 49.

2) Christine van Boheemen-Saaf, *Joyce, Derrida, Lacan, and The Trauma of History*. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1999), 75.

changes not only tone and style but also atmosphere. The setting and mood of the "Nausicaa" chapter are in complete juxtaposition to the "Cyclops" chapter in which Bloom narrowly escapes from the angered crowd at Barney Kiernan's pub. Unlike the preceding chapter, this chapter has very peaceful idyllic mood at the water's edge which keeps some distance from the streets and lanes that harbour such drinking establishments. While expounding Gerty's beauty, describing in great detail her looks, Joyce lulls the reader into a state of complacency.

Also, the "Nausicaa" chapter is a predominantly female world in which women dream of love and marriage. With no single woman present except for glimpses of wretched Mrs Breen, the men in "Cyclops" are concerned with politics, chauvinism, war, rebellion, execution, punishment, and fighting. However, with this chapter, we are immersed in the soft cadences of feminine fiction, with three girls in the foreground dominating a triad of young males, reducing Bloom to the role of a spectator. "Nausicaa" seems to offer an ideal community of young women at its start: "The three girl friends were seated on the rocks, enjoying the evening scene and the air which was fresh but not too chilly. Many a time and oft were they wont to come there to that favourite nook to have a cosy chat beside the sparkling waves and discuss matters feminine" (13.9-12).³ This chapter is certainly paired off against the preceding chapter, "Cyclops," after whose noisy brawling and brute force it appears soothing and quiet. In Joyce's deconstructive writing, as pointed out by Richard Ellmann, "if one chapter is external, the next is internal . . . if one episode centers on land, the second will be watery" (Ellmann, 2), thus emphasizing the loss of center.

The lack of center or origin can also be seen within the chapter. The traditional concept of structure, which implies a center or presence, is missing

3) References to *Ulysses* are to *Ulysses: Corrected Text*, edited by Hans Walter Gabler *et al* (New York: Random House, 1986). References are to episode and line number (e.g. 11.234).

from “Nausicaa.” Built upon the implicit theme of ideal-real dichotomy, the chapter appears bipartite, with distinctly contrasting, complementary halves. It is structured by such contrasts, as when the sweet and homely coziness of connubial life imagined in the first section is set against the harsh life a woman faces as Bloom muses on brevity of a young girl’s flowering and on how quickly women must settle down to the female role of washing children, potting babies: “Sad however because it lasts only a few years till they settle down to potwalloping and papa’s pants will soon fit Willy and fuller’s earth for the baby when they hold him out to do ah ah” (13.952-55). As Black points out, “The ‘Nausicaa’ episode counterpoints romance and reality to achieve its ironic effects.”⁴⁾

Gerty, like today’s readers of romances, finds escape in the romance, and in her case the conditions to be escaped are grim. She looks up words like “halcyon days” (13.343-44) in “Walker’s pronouncing dictionary that belonged to grandpapa Giltrap” (13.342-43). She keeps a “lovely confession album” in her “scrupulously neat” toilet table, and has purchased violet ink. Delineating Gerty’s outlook which is characterized by self-inflated infatuations beyond critical questioning by hyperbole and self-deception, the imagery of the first part of the chapter gives is lofty, and an accumulation of heights such as “queenly *hauteur*, . . . high arched instep, . . . a gentlewoman of high degree, . . . how to be tall increase your height” are to be found in the space of a few lines (13.97-114). There is an upward tendency in this part, with altitudes as diverse as the promontory of Howth, a castle built of sand, amatory and social aspirations and pretensions, glances at the flying fireworks, at the Blessed Sacrament raised in the benediction service, at a view high up offered by Gerty.

Language is correspondingly exalted, as though it too had to be kept from touching base ground. The sweetly romantic passages are the trade mark of the

4) Martha F. Black, “S/He-Male Voices in *Ulysses*,” *Gender in Joyce*, eds. Jolanta W. Wawrzycka and Marlena G. Corcoran (UP of Florida, 1997), 75.

first half of "Nausicaa": "Mayhap it was this, the love that might have been, that lent to her softly featured face at whiles a look, tense with suppressed meaning, that imparted a strange yearning tendency to the beautiful eyes, a charm few could resist" (13.104-07). Their features are precious, elevated diction, pretentious and threadbare metaphors, and ample adornment.

On the contrary, in the second half of the chapter, Bloom's mind is revealed to us after the orgasmic release, when he is again in control of his emotions. The effect is sobering down, a reduction of things to their everyday dimension. He is very aware of the rocks they are sitting on as part of his present reality: "Bad for you, dear, to sit on that stone. brings on white fluxions" (13.1081-82). As Black writes, "Her (Gerty's) saccharine justifications and motives contrast with those of the unchivalric Bloom" (Black, 75). In this section, language also drastically changes as exemplified in the baby's "ah ah" (13.955), so different from the high-pitched "O!"s that go before (13.737-38) or from the evasive terms that are used for similar bodily processes of Baby Boardman. Bloom's monologue is interspersed with the customary objectifying qualifiers, "but" (13.1088), "all the same", "on the other hand", "look at it other way round" (13.1219). As Brown rightly puts it, "the contrast in style is explained as a contrast between 'tumescence' and 'detumescence.'"⁵)

Despite numerous contrasts of that kind, the chapter is not the simple dichotomized structure it appears to be at first blush. Not all the ups are scattered over the first half. Bloom too looks up at rockets, at the stars and the moon, if with a weary mind. In the same manner, Gerty's section also has its downs, the "fallen women" and the "fine tumble" she wishes on Cissy Caffrey. With no definite form or structure, there is a protean quality about "Nausicaa."

Everywhere in "Nausicaa" the reader sees the overturning of norm and hierarchies. Joyce's juxtaposition of oppositions can also be seen not only in discourse but also in character. While reading the chapter, we hear at the same time quotations belonging to the orthodox of religious discourse (quotations

5) Richard Brown, *James Joyce and Sexuality* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1985), 60.

from hymns, fragments of prayers, passages from the Bible) and elements that are profane. Similarly, just as Gerty plays at being Mary: “there was an infinite store of mercy” in her eyes and “a word of pardon even though he had erred and sinned and wandered” (13.748-49), so she plays at sex by encouraging Bloom. As we will see later in the chapter, she finally rouses and fulfills masculine desire in silence. As Mary Lowe-Evans points out, Gerty is “a pastiche of Marian epithets and secular propaganda that itself owes much to Mary’s cult” (Lowe-Evans, 106).

Dreaming of a fashionable marriage to Mr. Reggy Whylie, Gerty sentimentalizes her relationship with him and feels that Reggy cares for her because she is “a womanly woman not like other flighty girls unfeminine he had known, those cyclists showing off what they hadn’t got” (13.435-37). A new dream of an older, more commanding suitor, more worthy of her girl’s self-giving, supersedes. Then Gerty pictures herself as wife, drenching her husband’s days in the hominess of good cooking, a warm fire, a well-furnished drawing-room, and a “photograph of grandpapa Giltrap’s lovely dog Garryowen” on the wall (13.232-33). Delineating Gerty’s beauty and romantic aspirations, the romantic language flows in this part of the chapter. In the background we hear the singing and the organ from the nearby Star of the Sea church, where Reverend John Hughes, SJ, is conducting a men’s temperance retreat: “And then there came upon the air the sound of voices and the pealing anthem of organs” (13.281-82).

Unable to face reality, Gerty continues to embroider her fantasy. Gerty catches sight of Bloom, “the gentleman opposite looking” (13.375), and “Till then they had only exchanged glances of the most casual” (13.367). But, as Cissy notices, “the warm flush, a danger signal always with Gerty MacDowell” surged and flamed into her cheeks (13.375-7). The sugary, mellifluous prose flows on, now describing romance between Gerty and Bloom has just started. Amid this the verbal echoes of Benediction (“spiritual vessel . . . honorable vessel . . . vessel of singular devotion”) come through the open window of the

church (13.373-74).

The phrases of Benediction flow on and and gradually, in this chapter, an important parallel is unmistakably established between Gerty MacDowell and the Virgin Mary. Each of them is "in her pure radiance a beacon ever to the storm-tossed heart of man" (13.7-8). And some of the Virgin's appellation have been assimilated to the description of Gerty's exterior. The Virgin is undefiled, Gerty's soul "unsullied." Physically Gerty remains virginally untouched, while some of Mary's spiritual attributes are also translated into physical terms: she is "full of grace", her figure and face being "graceful" (13.83). Gerty is, for the time being, "most powerful" (13.303) and "most merciful" (13.304). The use of words and phrases like "graceful", "almost spiritual in its ivory-like purity," "veined alabaster" reinforces the implicit correspondence with the Virgin Mary (13.87-89).

However, while it is true that Gerty has "the nature of woman instituted by God" (13.457), she is at the same time a hot little devil all the same. Like the Madonna of patriarchal religion, she is "queen of patriarchs" (13.489) as well as Eve, for Bloom even eyes her "as a snake eyes its prey" (13.517). As Gerty's romance with Bloom progresses, the *Tantum ergo* and the censuring of the Blessed Sacrament proceed in the church behind them, and one of the candles threatens to set fire to the flowers. Gerty just "swung her leg more in and out in time" (13.557), as the censer swings in the church because she well knows that Bloom is watching her own shapely legs. The priests in the church are "looking up at the Blessed Sacrament" (13.497). Bloom on the shore is looking up at Gerty's legs. Incongruously identifying with Mary, Gerty fancies that Bloom is "literally worshipping at her shrine" (13.564). With this, the meaning of the correspondence between Gerty and Our Lady becomes clearer. Joyce's passively seductive Gerty blasphemously patterns herself on "Our Blessed Lady herself (who) said to the archangel Gabriel be it done unto me according to Thy Word" (13.458-59).

In the church the Blessed Sacrament is restored to the tabernacle and the

choir sang *Laudate Dominum omnes gentes*. Throughout the first part of the chapter, romance between Gerty and Bloom becomes more profane as it develops, and we hear at the same time the verbal echoes of the benediction recited: “spiritual vessel,” “honorable vessel,” “vessel of singular devotion” and then, “Refuges of sinners,” “Comfortress of the afflicted,” “*Ora pro nobis*” (13.442) and finally, “Queen of angels,” “Queen of patriarchs,” and “queen of prophets” (13.489-90). The sacred word thus becomes a background noise, over which their romantic endeavor takes place.

The benediction is over now and over the trees beside the church colored fireworks from the Mirus bazaar shoot into the sky. Cissy and Edy and their charges run off to watch them. Gerty stays, held by a sense of Bloom’s stirred passion, glad to be left alone to answer it. And answer it she does, leaning so far backward, in order to watch the fireworks, that her legs and thighs and knickers are on display. Aroused by her tantalizing display of exhibitionism, he gives the young woman the impression that his strange “dark eyes” are “drinking in her every contour . . .” (13.563-64). At this point it can be said that just as the temperance men in the church are given up to adoration of Our Lady (whose names are “spiritual vessel,” “honourable vessel,” “vessel of singular devotion”) and the Blessed Sacrament, so Bloom (an abstainer from actual marital coition as the temperance retreatants are abstainers from actual wine) is given up to adoration of a virgin’s womb, a “vessel” now holding the blood soon to be split.

Gerty finally raises “the devil in him” (13.517) and, as Suzette A. Henke argues, “as Mary of Sandymount, she invites the tribute of Bloom’s profane ejaculations, reinscribed in adolescent consciousness by that ‘dream of love, the dictates of her heart that told her he was her all in all, the only man in the world for her for love was the master guide’ (13.671-72).⁶” At the crisis she yearns to have a “little strangled cry” wrung from her in his arms, and a

6) Suzette A. Henke, *James Joyce and the Politics of Desire* (New York and London: Routledge, 1990), 108.

Roman candle, like the candle on the altar in the church, bursts in gushes of green and gold (13.735-36): "she saw a long Roman candle going up over the trees up, up, and, in the tense hush, they were all breathless with excitement as it went higher and higher" (13.719-21). The fusion of the profane and sacred discourse culminates in this extreme form of individual organic gratification in which Bloom and Gerty are engaged. As in the case of "vessel," the "candle" here has sexual connotation. It is a phallic symbol. The distinction between the sacred discourse and the profane language thus becomes blurry in Joyce's deconstructive writing.

Similarly, after the mutually autoerotic orgasms, the woman's instinct told Gerty that "she had raised the devil in him" and she turned scarlet like the color of sexual sin and then "her face became a glorious rose" like the color of Christian beauty (13.517-20). Gerty is, as Lesley Higgins observes, "a true Lady of Rocks: part virgin, part temptress, with the boundaries ambiguously blurred . . ." (Higgins, 56). Appropriately, her chance meeting with Bloom is punctuated by voices singing "in supplication to the Virgin most powerful, Virgin most merciful" (13.303-04), for she has "the most pious Virgin's intercessory power" (13.378-79), because, as "Refuge of sinners" (13.442) she gave Bloom sexual solace.

According to Derrida, writing is disjointed from the author or outside the law of the father; it both transgresses and is external to it. He then theorizes that the artist/father enacts his own murder/replacement through writing. Thus Derrida, in his emphasis on writing, refuses any notion of center or origin. We can see this kind of writing most clearly in Gerty's discourse that has been treated in the context of sentimental fiction. As Lawrence has pointed out, "The overused and misused language of feeling parodied in the "Cyclops" passage, "Love loves to love love" (12.1493) is given due in the sentimental language" in "Nausicaa" (Lawrence, 120).

When we look at the style chosen for Gerty's parts (and within the framework of her own ambitions), we find that this is not a realistic female

speech. A narrator intervenes in Gerty's thought processes and assumes the manner of magazines and novels written for women living in a patriarchal society. Unable to characterize anything outside itself, it reflects only its own vacuity, it hardly illuminates or communicates, its glitter is narcissistic, its essence self-gratification. Composed of the clichés and the shopsoiled charms of stereotyped fiction or commercial slickness, the sentimental language here "points to an absence" (French, 46). In relation to this, Derrida argues that "no signifier (word) has a unique and singular reality. Nor can any signified (the object which the word means) be such a unique and singular reality. Pure words and pure things are theoretical fictions."⁷⁾

On the contrary, like Derrida, Joyce "is suspicious of the illusion of full and present speech It is toward the praise of silence that the myth of a full presence wrenched from differance and from the violence of the word is then deviated" (Derrida 1976, 140). As opposed to verbose language which reflects its own vacuity, silence is a more effective way of communication between Gerty and Bloom. The lack of communication in "Nausicaa" is perhaps less surprising than the occasional occurrence of some imperfect communication.

However, there has been an unspoken dialogue between Gerty and Bloom: "She (Gerty) could see the swift answering flash of admiration in his eyes that set her tingling in every nerve" (13.13-14). Through her coquettish silent seduction, Gerty, injured and slighted, presents herself to her best advantage for one short span, at the proper distance, with just the right degree of illumination to increase her glamour, and eventually, without speech, Gerty can give Bloom sexual solace—a solace that she promises with body language: she "smiled assent and bit her lip," blushed and "just lifted her skirt a little" (13.360-62). At last, a rocket bursts. The children and the girls reappear in the distance and there is a moment of telepathic acknowledgement between Gerty and Bloom: "Their souls met in a last lingering glance and the eyes that reached her heart,

7) Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins UP, 1976), 89.

full of a strange shining hung enraptured on her sweet flowerlike face" (13.762-64). And as Suzette A. Henke writes, "his post-orgasmic thoughts about Gerty are also imbued with feelings and tinged with paternal solicitude" (Henke, 109). Even after the release of tension and after the effects of the stage setting have worn off, Bloom is capable of sympathizing with her. Shocked by his recognition of her lameness, "Poor girl" is one of his first thoughts (13.772). Through this, Joyce also demonstrates Derrida's deconstruction of speech/writing hierarchy which is the major aspect of logocentric and phallogocentric thought. Joyce displaces the privileged place of the "speaking subject" and speech or dialogue.

Language which "points to an absence" (French, 46) goes hand in hand with a lack of identity of characters. As argued by Booker, "Individual Identity can be problematic."⁸) Gerty's is the first feminine mind that is unfolded before us at any length. However, the lack of inclusion or mention of her in the opening pages makes her appear not to be with the group. And there is a slight hesitance when Gerty's name is mentioned, and "who was Gerty" is just what the reader is thinking (13.78). As these cases insinuate, obliquely characterizing Gerty MacDowell, the first half of the chapter is a novelette conveying the de-formation of Gerty: what she is and what made her what she is. As Booker comments, "One might also point to the way the fictions of popular women's magazines have constituted Gerty MacDowell as a consumer of romantic fantasy" (Booker, 183). Delineating Gerty who "has ingested a complete diet of romantic clichés."⁹) (Lawrence, 121), her portrait is made up of strokes found elsewhere in life and fiction. Montage helps Joyce to convey both the interior landscape of Gerty's mind and her environment. As Lawrence notes, "The description of Gerty incorporates clichés of romantic fiction such as

8) Keith Booker, *Joyce, Bakhtin, and the Literary Tradition: Toward a Comparative Cultural Poetics* (Ann Arbor: The U of Michigan P, 1995), 108.

9) Karen Lawrence, *The Odyssey of Style in "Ulysses"* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1981), 121.

'finely veined alabaster,' but it implicitly contrasts them with phrases like 'lemon juice' and 'queen of ointments' which come from the advertisements in ladies' magazines" ([13.89-90] Lawrence, 121). The question is whether the various items fit together. Make-up is her medium. Gerty's plumes are borrowed ones, so much so that some readers deny her any individual character.

Just as Gerty's identity is mosaic, so Bloom's is fluid. Bloom is a throwaway from the society and his wife as well. However, to Gerty, Bloom becomes the focus of pent-up longings and unrealized girlhood dreams. He is the man "she had so often dreamed. It was he who mattered and there was joy on her face because she wanted him because she felt instinctively that he was like no one else" (13.427-39). And then he becomes the suffering dream-husband in need of a woman's comfort: "There were wounds that wanted healing with heartbalm" (13.434-35). Finally, he becomes the powerful male seeking "a womanly woman" to crush himself in his arms: "Then mayhap he would embrace her gently, like a real man, crushing her soft body to him, and love her" (13.435-40). The reader moves in Gerty's mind, richly aware of its absurdities, its naivetes, and its pathos, piquantly stirred simultaneously to laughter at her and sympathy for her. It remains one of the mysteries of literary creation how the internal set-up that could produce such dewy epistolary prose could be transmuted, by processes of displacements and transference, into the comic portraits of Gerty MacDowell and Mr. Leopold Bloom. We can see *Ulysses'* deconstructive effect in this episode—the laughter and playfulness Derrida admires in Joyce's writing. Joyce teaches us to rejoice in his deconstructive writing.

In *Ulysses* a lot of things are controlled by pure chance. As Bloom reminisces at the end of the day in "Ithaca," "truth" is "stranger than fiction" and "life was full of a host of things and coincidences of a terrible nature and it was quite within the bounds of possibility that it was not an entire fabrication though at first blush there was not much inherent probability in all the spoof he got off his chest being strictly accurate gospel" (17.323). Through

this, Joyce emphasizes the theme of the void of incertitude, which is prevalent in Joyce's writing.

In the same manner, chance plays an important role in "Nausicaa." As Bloom says to himself, it was a good experience: "Chance. We'll never meet again. Goodbye. But it was lovely" (13.312). Bloom is indulged in the passive cerebral relationship with Martha under the name of Henry Flower, which is identified with images of inertia and drugged impotence. "Cyclops" pokes fun at Bloom's sexual ineptitude and his secret correspondence under the pseudonym Henry Flower: "Senhor Enrique Flor presided at the organ with his wellknown ability" (12.1288-90). For ten years he has not had coition with Molly. However, through this chance encounter, Bloom at least meets a being who, by virtue of whatever distorting projections, seems to accept him and to desire him and happens to have an orgasm on the strand, aroused by gazing at the seductive Gerty who exposes herself to him, an exposure that reminds Bloom of "open flowers" (13.1089).

If judged by the Catholic view, of course, masturbation is sin itself. However, what is noteworthy is that Joyce seems to be celebrating Bloom's masturbation. Described in the extreme form of individual organic gratification, there is a strong blissful image on an emotional level with the release of what could be sexual tension at the moment of orgasm: "And then a rocket sprang and bang shot blind and O! then the Roman candle burst and it was like a sigh of O! and everyone cried O! O! in raptures and it gushed out of it a stream of rain gold hair threads and they shed and ah! they were all greeny dewy stars falling with golden" (13.300). Richard Brown also argues that "Nausicaa" might be read not as a poignant moment of loneliness and alienation for Bloom but as a perversely triumphant extension of his marital sexuality: a shared gratificatory act performed on a huge geographical scale" (Brown, 62). Furthermore, it is not through normal sex with Molly but through masturbation led to by chance encounter with Gerty that "Made me (him) so young" (13.312) and for which Bloom himself feels grateful: "Anyhow I got

the best of that. . . . Thankful for small mercies” (13.785-90). More importantly, after masturbation, Bloom finds relief and forgiveness and pardon, like the faithful at the retreat. Nor does he appear to be any more depressed or guilt-ridden than we know him to have been previously. Later in the day, when Bloom in a retrospective arrangement looks back upon his day’s activities so far, Bloom sees the row at Barney Kiernan’s in a detached, balanced light. The beer-swillers “ought to go home and laugh at themselves.” Thus Bloom recommends the two-eyed self critical attitude which Cyclopean mentalities can never achieve. He even manages to consider the argument from their angle. “Not so bad then. Perhaps not to hurt he meant.” It is in this manner that in Joyce’s deconstructive writing masturbation is delineated as important as normal sex. Brown supports this by saying that “we might see Bloom as a proper hero of sexual modernity” because “masturbation has become familiar index of sexual normality” (Brown, 61).

Derrida’s argument about masturbation is relevant here. In elaborating the relationship between speech and writing, Rousseau took an example of masturbation and argued that, compared with normal sex, it is a dangerous supplement. According to Rousseau, the relationship between normal sex and masturbation parallels with the relationship between speech and writing, thus placing normal sex over masturbation, speech above writing. However, Derrida inverts Rousseau’s idea and argues that this supplement or substitution (masturbation) is as important as normal sex because it is as pleasurable as normal sex and in the relationship between writing and speech, writing is as important as speech because writing plays an important role in illuminating the meaning of speech.

Derrida points out that this supplement (masturbation) which involves strong imagination of the sexual partner and at the same time the impossibility of possessing him or her is exactly the same characteristic or attribute of writing. Derrida inverts western thought privileging speech over writing and values writing whose nature is to sustain desire in a series of displacements and

transferences perpetuated by the exchange of writing in correspondence. According to him, "The supplement is neither a plus nor a minus, neither an outside nor the complement of an inside, neither identity nor difference, neither accident nor essence" (Derrida 1981, 43).

Life and language are analogous and they share common movements and structures. As Gottfried argues, "The random connections of life within the novel are reinforced and emphasized by Joyce in the patterns of language."¹⁰ After the transitory chance encounter with Gerty which leads Bloom to masturbate, Bloom happens to find a piece of paper on the strand. He turns over it: "He brought it near his eyes and peered. Letter? No. Can't read" (13.312). This faded letter page which has been thrown away is an example of message lost. Both Joyce and Derrida reject that language can be attributed to a fathering source. Language may not be an appropriate vehicle of communication. Assumptions and truths are multiple and truth is relative to the context of the characters' set of experiences. The whole truth about even a circumscribed situation is probably uncommunicable. Through this thrown away message, Joyce illustrates a specific case of writing which is susceptible to being lost, unable to get through to the other or the reader. Language wanders far off.

Furthermore, romance remains open-ended, even in Bloom's writing of it.

Mr Bloom with his stick gently vexed the thick sand
at his foot. Write a message for her. Might remain.

What?

I. . . .

AM. A. (13.1256-64)

The center is missing in this incomplete sentence. Much commentary has been expended upon Bloom's incomplete message by critics, but it is generally

10) Roy K. Gottfried, *The Art of Joyce's Syntax in "Ulysses"* (Macmillan Press, 1980), 50.

agreed that there is no way to know for certain how the sentence would have ended. Gottfried's statement is appropriate here: "One asks in wonder what the completion of this could be. Unlike the sentences of inherently determined possibilities, this has no preordained pattern. The completion could be either an adjective (alone), an article and noun (a man), or some other predicate adjective or predicate" (Gottfried, 127).

We can even say that this sentence has a symbolic significance of Joyce's deconstructive writing. Joyce's fusion of opposites shapes a lot of things in "Nausicaa"—narrative, theme, characterization, language and moral, and local methods of presentation and, through this, Joyce emphasizes the lack of center or origin in his writing. On all levels this loss of center invalidates the principle of discrete, subversive identity of connotation, which underlies the possibility of signature and meaning. In relation to this, Topia's comment in his essay "Intertextuality in *Ulysses*" is noteworthy: "in juxtaposing two types of treatment of facts . . . he (Joyce) dissolves all possibility of a unified real underlying *Ulysses*."¹¹ Because of the juxtaposition of the opposites, to arrive at any meaning is already subverted in the text. So Joyce's writing will forever lie beyond the abilities of our analytic and interpretative strategies to master and there is no conclusion to be reached in a reading of Joyce's text. Refusing to give any definite meaning, Joyce's writing requires for the reader's active involvement with it. As Booker rightly puts it, ". . . if Joyce's texts make unprecedented demands on the reader, they also allow the reader to participate in the generation of meaning to an unprecedented extent" (Booker, 213). It is in this manner that the reader becomes the writer and the distinction between the two becomes blurry.

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11) Andre Topia, "The matrix and the Echo: Intertextuality in '*Ulysses*,'" *Post-Structuralist Joyce: Essays from the French*, eds. Derek Attridge and Daniel Ferrer (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1984), 124.

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Abstract

『율리시즈』의 「노시카」 장의 해체적 읽기

김 은 숙

본 논문의 목적은 『율리시즈』의 「노시카」 장의 해체주의적 글읽기이다. 이 장은 표면적으로 나타난 바로는 전통적인 글쓰기인 것 같다. 그러나 자세한 글읽기를 통하여 보면 확실한 형태 없이 구조가 이분화 되어 있고, 플롯이라면 플롯이라 할 수 있는 거티와 블룸의 우연한 만남은 결말 없이 열린 상태로 끝나며 또한 언어는 중심을 잃고 상대에게 전달되지 못하고 비껴나가며 오히려 침묵이 더 효과적인 언어 수단이기도 하다. 인물의 아디텐티티 또한 명료히 묘사되지 않고 정확한 메시지를 제공하기를 거부하며 궁극적 해석을 독자에게 맡긴다.

본 논문에서는 제임스 조이스가 그의 해체적 글쓰기에서 사용한 서술기법 중 반대요소들의 병치를 집중적으로 다루며 그는 이 기법을 이 장 전반에 걸쳐 어떻게 전략적으로 사용하여 데리다의 해체주의의 중심사상이기도 한 절대, 근원, 진실 혹은 중심의 부재를 강조하며 이는 조이스로 하여금 전통적인 글쓰기에서 사용되는 내러티브와 스타일, 인물과 구조 등 통상적 소설요소들과는 다른 새 방향으로의 중심부재의 해체적 글쓰기를 모색케 하는지 밝힌다.