

Errancy in *Ulysses* and Jacques Derrida's Deconstruction

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In *Ulysses*, mistakes are everywhere and errors abound. Things have a way of going wrong. The world of *Ulysses* is made up of “errears and erroriboose of combarative embottled history” (*FW*, 140.32). Some critics have observed that Joyce created a book whose appearance of factual accuracy and consistency is belied by numerous errors.

In this chapter, I will examine how Joyce, through errors, “makes uncertainty a governing principle of the work” (Norris, 123). Focusing on errancy which is not the ineffable precondition of being, but the central body of the text, I will explore how Joyce intentionally programs errancy and confusion in many ways. In so doing I will elaborate how *Ulysses* suffers from the absence of meaning and the emptiness of content and how Joyce preinscribes Derrida’s deconstructive theory which regards writing as absence or death: “Cutting breath short, sterilizing or immobilizing spiritual creation in the repetition of the letter, in the commentary or the exegesis, confined in a narrow space, reserved for a minority, it is the principle of death and of difference in the becoming of being” (Derrida 1976, 25). I will also examine how Joyce uses errors as a way to make the reader pay more attention to the textuality and how those errors are sometimes “the portals of discovery” (*U*, 9. 229) for the reader since, by rereading the text, he corrects errors he makes on his first reading.

Both Derrida and Joyce link writing to the absence of fatherhood. In his famous disquisition on paternity, Stephen Dedalus declares "Fatherhood, in the sense of conscious begetting, is unknown to man" (*U*, 9. 837-38). A ghost by absence from the act of birth, the father is always potentially a ghost by death as well (*U*, 9. 174-75). It is only through the legal fiction of the name that he can reclaim his dubious paternity (*U*, 9. 844). In relation to this theme, Stephen Deadalus argues through the Shakespeare/*Hamlet* story that writing kills the Father.

Similarly, Jacques Derrida theorizes that the artist/Father enacts his own murder/replacement through writing. Writing takes the place of the father, "supplementing him and supplanting him in his absence and essential disappearance" (Derrida 1981a, 98). The disappearance of the father is "thus the precondition of discourse" as a moment of "generalized writing" (Derrida 1981a, 168); "writing is parricidal" (Derrida 1981a, 164). Thus both Derrida and Joyce, in their emphasis on writing, regards it as death, absence, closely related to the absence of father. Alan Roughley rightly points this out in *Reading Derrida Reading Joyce*: "The gender theme of overcoming the father (by taking his place, going beyond him, or symbolically killing him) found in *Hamlet* and rearticulated in Joyce's *Ulysses* and Derrida's writing is important throughout *Wake*" (Roughley, 14).

The text is unintentionally flawed by the sorts of errors to which the printing process is prone. There is complexity and confusion caused by the printers' unintentionally mistaking sound and sign. However, Joyce irritated his own work into intended error. He wished his text to inscribe his own errors of intent. In so doing, Joyce camouflaged his inevitable errors which he had not intended. Thus sometimes it is very difficult to distinguish his intentional errors from the errors which Bloom makes in spite of himself. Through errors, Joyce, like Derrida, is criticizing the logocentrism of Western thought and unmasking the expressiveness of the Western alphabet and language. As Bonnie Kime Scott argues, "The principle of 'incertitude' replacing authority moves Joyce toward new territory, narrative patterns and language . . ." (Scott, 76). Language in

Ulysses tends to deviate and has obstacles to its correct transmission. So, language, imperfect instrument, naturally tends toward error.

Joyce's resistance to the stabilization of language and of value, which is also Derrida's deconstructive theory, begins with individual words and letters. So in his text intentional errors start with the smallest units of language, the letters of the alphabet, and they are most fundamentally subject to malleability, slippage, and the questioning of identity. Letters are always the cause of unexpected errors and loss of meaning in shadowy obscurity.

For example, Hynes, the reporter, jotting down the names of the mourners in "Hades," checks up on Bloom's Christian name:

- I am just taking the names, Hynes said below his breath. What is your christian name? I'm not sure.
- L, Mr Bloom said. Leopold. And you might put down M'Coy's name too. He asked me to.
- Charley, Hynes said writing. I know. He was on the *Freemanonce*. (*U*, 6. 880-84)

This scene is filled with missed communication: as a Jew, Bloom obviously has no Christian name, and if he had one, it would be a full name rather than an initial. It is an odd irony because "L" which Bloom stresses in an answer to Hynes's question is lost from the surname when the printed list of mourners does emerge: "Boom" (*U*, 16. 1265). It is the printer's error, or "bitched type," as Bloom calls it (*U*, 16. 1263). Vicki Mahaffey made it clear by saying that it is "accidental catastrophe, a casualty of print" (Mahaffey, 180). There are other numerous typographical errors disseminated here and there throughout the text.

Martha Clifford's famous mistake—"if you do not wrote" (*U*, 5. 245)—can be regarded as a simple typing error. Patrick A. McCarthy points out that "The transformation of 'write' into 'wrote' can easily be attributed to the fact that 'i' and 'o' are adjacent on Martha's typewriter" (McCarthy, 60). But we can not exclude the possibility that Martha has made a grammatical error in terms of tense.

Stephen's recollection of "a blue French telegram, curiosity of show," reading "Nother dying come home father" (*U*, 3. 197-99), implies the existence of a French telegraph operator whose inadequate English led him to mistranscribe the intended "mother" as "Nother." This sort of error results from the method of language and communication. Scott supports this by saying: "like many deliberate errors with language in *Ulysses*, it (Nother) suggests the fallibility of the word of the father and of society's modes of communication" (Scott, 89).

In addition to Martha's mistake "I called you naughty boy because I do not like that other world," there are other errors such as "ha" for hat (*U*, 4. 70), "Eeleven" for eleven (*U*, 5. 94). Through these errors, we can see that Alan Roughley's argument that *Ulysses* "illustrates the various ways that the communication of desire can go astray, be lost, be delayed, or transferred" is true (Roughley, 22).

As pointed out by James H. Maddox, Bloom is "a great re-reader. He usually scans first and then reads more closely" (Maddox, 130).

Throughout the text, Joyce manipulates language rendering the text more opaque. The legend on the "sweated band" of Bloom's hat has turned "hat" into "ha." Bloom, early on, takes his hat from the peg in the hall and reads its legend: "Plasto's high grade ha" (*U*, 6. 69-70). This is primarily an instant of being faithful in recording what is there; the hatband, belying its "high grade" quality, no longer contains the terminal letter "-t". A sign in a urinal is disfigured from "POST NO BILLS" to "POST 110 PILLS" (*U*, 8. 101). We can also see an odyssey of the letter "l." A letter detached from one word will appear attached somewhere else. By the deletion of the letter "l" Bloom will be reduced to Boom (Leopold Bloom to "L. Boom"). Conversely, by the addition of the same "l," "word" becomes a cosmic "world" in Martha Clifford's letter. Disorderly shapes like "Nother" "ha", "Boom" or "word" in the text discompose the precarious texture. By inscribing errors throughout the text Joyce confirms the absence of center or order in *Ulysses*. As Jeffrey Segall argues, "The arbitrary and excessive aesthetic ordering of the universe of

Ulysses confirmed the absence of any true or abiding order in the world the novel depicted" (Segall, 133).

Errors cause ambiguity but bring out the reader's active involvement. Actually this is what Stephen does when reading misstated facts. The word mistake in the telegram's "Nother" compounds the loss of the mother with that of meaning because the disrupted letter produces immateriality, absence, erasure, and loss. Unlike standard writing in which language gets through to the other (the listener, or the reader), language becomes opaque. Like *Ulysses*, the telegram itself is a site of loss, an obscure text. Its message is disjunctive; the identity of the subject is questionable.

Stephen is curious about the erroneous word "Nother." The word "Mother" is lost in "Nother," which contains "no" as well. The telegram's "Nother" makes the death a "curiosity to show" in that it portrays her death as if one in an endless series. Scott also points this out: "'Nother also suggests 'another' or 'another mother', universalizing Stephen's feeling of loss" (Scott, 89). Joyce's disruption of words raises curiosity for Stephen and for the reader as well.

Similarly, Bloom's defectively lettered hat keeps appearing, and the missing "t" may have strange power over our reconstructive minds. Occurring three times in short succession, is a "Ba" similarly deficient, a similarly truncated "Bat?" One will soon be flying around Bloom. Or is it some kind of stifled exclamation? The missing terminal letter makes the reader aware of potential connections, teasing him into various semantification. "See blank tee what domestic animal?" is a puzzle whose answer rhymes with "hat." In such ways we learn, as reader, to pay attention to blanks, and to "See blank tee" or to supplement "to a tee," and one implication seems to be that a small difference may really matter.

Bloom himself actually gets confused about characters' names. Looking at a flyer for a revivalist meeting, Bloom momentarily thinks he sees his own name, and a glance at a newspaper advertisement at first seems to reveal Boylan's name, but in each case Bloom is mistaken; meeting Josie Breen, he mistakenly refers to their acquaintance Mrs. Purefoy as Mrs. Beaufoy, a name suggested

by Philip Beaufoy, whose Titbits story Bloom read in "Calypso" (*U*, 4. 276-79). Elsewhere, Bloom not only confuses Mercadante and Mayerbeer but Peter Claver (a saint) and James Carey (an informer), merging them temporarily into Peter.

It is not only Bloom but also the "Cyclops" narrator who makes errors involving names. He is often equally muddled in his references to Crofton, an Orangeman who also appears in "Ivy Day in the Committee Room": "Sure enough the castle care drove up with Martin [Cunningham] on it and Jack Power with him and a fellow named Crofter or Crofton, pensioner out of the collector general's, an Orangeman Blackburn does have on the registration and he drawing his pay or Crawford gallivanting around the country at the king's expense" (*U*, 12. 1588-92). The narrator's initial alternatives of "Crofter or Crofton . . . or Crawford" gives way to "Crofter the Orangeman or presbyterian." The inability to settle on the correct form of Crofton's name indicates the instability of the identity of the character.

The narrator's apparent storehouse of knowledge about a man whose name he can not get straight resembles Bloom's name which goes through constant metamorphosis. The "m" from Bloom goes missing when Bloom misreads the handout from the Y.M.C.A. man: "Bloo . . . Me? No. Blood of the Lamb" (*U*, 8. 8-9). One way to speculate on what Joyce means by dropping from Bloom's name the letters l and m has to do with a recognition of the fragility of their existence by the modalities and instabilities of all letters.

However, it is very important to note that these errors about characters' names lead to their erroneous identification. A character is never more stable than the letters of his name. Bloom the protagonist has his identity put into question by various letters in disruption. If Joyce's principle directs our attention to absence, hence uncertainty in language, particularly through errors made about names, it also suggests problems of characterization that we may safely call indeterminant or ambiguous, depending upon the case.

Errors made with Bloom's name insinuate his unstable identity as we can see from the various impressions of Bloom and the roles Bloom plays in

different kinds of consciousness. The strong romantic gentleman seen by Gerty MacDowell and the absurd pliant husband known to Molly belong to the mental worlds which have invented them and in which they move. Gerty, Molly, Stephen, and the other Dubliners who believe they know Bloom have each a different vision of life and inhabit mental worlds differing in kind from each other: the figures called Bloom in these worlds are fictions rather than approximate reflections of some absolute and essential individual. The way Bloom is presented in the novel suggests that no such absolute essence can be said to exist. Even to his mind, Bloom presents no consistent self-image; his sense of his own nature and identity varies according to his mood and inner situation. The figure of Leopold Bloom is a composite of all the ways in which he is apprehended by himself and by others.

All characters' identities are formed by letters and subject to disruption and loss in their instability, being seen and not seen. The figure of M'Intosh becomes more and more indistinct by erasure. When so much critical concern is given to his identity, what is obscured is the fact that simple letters play an important role in his devolution and increasing indeterminacy: first by the name M'Intosh, derived by abscission of letters from the textured-coat "Macintosh" (*U*, 6. 894-95) and then even from the fact that the name that appears in the text has further cut off the letter from the actual name in the lexicon, "mackintosh."

If the letter was questionable in identity, then all other items are questionable, too, not only the words of the novel but also the characters and the text. So in Joyce's deconstructive writing, there is a lack of identity of words, characters and the text. It is in this manner that in *Ulysses* to arrive at the definite meaning of the text is impossible. The reader never fully empathizes with the characters or fully identifies what the text is. Any empathy or association is withheld from the reader, who is puzzled and distanced from the world depicted. Thus, the reader's role and thus identity as reader is further called into question, not only disoriented but destabilized, limited and separated from the text.

Joyce's word-building is antagonistic to the idea of language as a reflector

of the objective, material world. Instead, Joyce's errant and echoing language points to absence of meaning. In *Ulysses* the backward-yet-forward name recreated on the page in "Aeolus" stands in for an absent, now dead Dignam, so that the name itself on the page is a ghost of what it should be, a sight of something impalpable, a glimpse of what cannot be there. As such, it is a paradigm of all errant language and such empty language produces a process of literary transmission that is chaotic.

Just like names, sounds are also subject to error and emptiness. All the irritation of letter in the text leads to confusion and blurring, so those letters used to create sound imperfectly add a further disruptive dimension to Joyce's text, proliferation of errors. In that exchange about the identity of Murphy, Stephen rightly points out that "Sounds are impostures, . . . like names. Cicero, Podmore. Napoleon, Mr Goodbody. Jesus, Mr Doyle . . . What's in a name?" (*U*, 16.362-66).

In *Ulysses*, we are asked to look at words and to hear them, as well as to use them as windows in the always voyeuristic attempt to gain knowledge. Joyce seeks to speak from beyond the grave through his text. To give a name and a sound to a letter is to translate the immaterial of sound into one particularly recognizable and delimited form of a sign. Yet it is more than a translation; because of the fact that a character in a novel "says" the sound, that sound must be transcribed back into various other letters that comprise the sound that is made by vocalized letter: t "spoken" on the page requires three letters, "tee." So where immaterial sound is heard to be made material on the page, the tension between these two dimensions of sound and sign produces a gap or blank in both form and meaning, as do the puzzles and conundrums. Thus, Joyce's adding the dimension of sound to his text further empties his text, leading to loss of meaning. Sound is used to disrupt further the act of reading and through this we can see Joyce's deliberate distortion of language, blocking our vision and obscuring our understanding.

To hear in *Ulysses* is to read the text as it writes its sounds; all voice or sound is text and visible. Sounds stand as the farthest modality of the visible,

as impalpable, elusive sound rendered into sight. There are two complementary effects here; sights are given sound, but sounds are reproduced as sights. This doubling effect further disrupts the conventional reading dynamic; here Joyce has added the additional impediment of engaging the ear by the text. The resulting dysfunction in the act of reading is caused by letters changed and manipulated to cause the reader to stop reading, to think, and, moreover, to try to hear. Thus all the disruptions to which the reading act is subject are here transferred to another dimension, making for misunderstanding.

Error and mistake in "hearing language" become nearly as prevalent as disrupted reading. And through this, Joyce deconstructs the speech/writing hierarchy in which speech is regarded as more precise than writing. When Stephen asks his students the meaning of a name they have encountered in reading their history lesson, the answer he gets becomes a riddle and a joke because of just this confusion of sounds and signs. Students are poor readers. Stephen is irritated less by pedagogy than by that text he is holding in his hand:

- Wait. You Amstrong. Do you know anything about Pyrrhus? . . .
- Pyrrhus, sir? Pyrrhus, a pier. . . .
- Tell me now, poking the boy's shoulder with the book, what is a pier?
- A pier, sir, Amstrong said. A thing out in the water. A kind of bridge. Kingstown pier, sir. (*U*, 2. 21-33)

He asks the boy to "tell" as he asks his mother's ghost, and in both cases the answer is empty confusion. What is clear from this exchange, aside from the fact that Stephen is not a good teacher, is that his student Armstrong has not read the assignment nor even cursorily glanced at the book for the faintest recognition; there could be not confusion of the name and the object if the text were seen. It is possible that Armstrong hears the question "Do you know anything about Pyrrhus?" (*U*, 2. 21) as "Do you know what a pier is?" and that his answer was thus a self-evident definition: "Pier is a pier."

Not being able to answer a question about the identity of the Roman general Phyrrius, Armstrong decenters the historical subject. The identity of the character is ridiculed. Through this what Joyce demonstrates is his deconstructive writing. In this episode, when language is heard it becomes as much unclear as when it is read or written. Thus the exchange a teacher and a student has absence and error at its inception. Their conversation has no further substance, being only misheard, its confusion here coming from the sounds words make. What is to be seen is an absence of pedagogy, a ghost of history, a gap in meaning, and a vacancy of sound. This is a clear case through which Joyce demonstrates speech (sound) can be as ambiguous as writing (sign). This is also Derrida's deconstruction of the logocentric and phallogocentric thought.

The inclusion of sound in the text makes it emptier. As Christine van Boheemen-Saaf rightly puts it, in *Ulysses*, "Narrative no longer constructs or mediates knowledge, but merely flexes its own operative principles. It employs language as empty gesture rather than as communication" (van Boheemen-Saaf 1999, 101). Sound, within the confines of the page, is an immaterial presence, somewhat like a ghost. Sound itself like the ghost, is elusive, insubstantial, and easily faded. Sound is a fleeting entity and it is particularly insubstantial in a text. In a novel sound is even further immaterial because it is fleeting in the actual existence the novel seeks to depict. So when elusive sounds are represented, they enact the sense of absence and emptiness essential to the reading of *Ulysses*. No sound is more vacant than that of Bloom's digestion, yet it too is magnified and enlarged: "Prrrpfrrppffrr" (*U*, 11. 1292). This is a material presentation of immaterial sound as broken air, an internal wheeze, made up of the repetition of letter to stress that pneumatic if empty materiality of noise.

Therefore, reading *Ulysses* is much like looking for the lost down in the crypt; lost letters and sounds are peered at down to the lowest level of the encrypted. In this manner we can say that all *Ulysses* is a ghost story because the disruptive letters in *Ulysses* have no meaning or particular sound behind them other than their function as deceptive shapes that challenge reading; no

symbols adhere to them. Meaning is not fully possible, not only as a philosophical postmodernist condition but also as a physical one. By inscribing sound in the text, Joyce further obscures our understanding. The voice from the grave is emblematic of the text which is inherent in void and emptiness as I have discussed. So Joyce's text is so close to ghosts and shadows.

Actually, ghosts appear in spectral thematization frequently in the text. And their appearance plays to the dematerializing quality of the text, irritating it and causing loss and ephemeral obscurity, unclear sights and sounds, challenging reading. Throughout the novel Stephen is haunted by the ghost of his lost mother, the object of his memory and mourning. When she appears, she is described with the elements that have made up his elusive memories, elements that have become the fabric of the text, as "breathing wetted ashes"—breath and ashes are ephemeral too, so that she is herself a sort of unclear text.

Furthermore, ghosts often appear obscurely to talk unclearly, to speak in mystery. There are ghosts (like Stephen's mother) or those lost (like Emmet) and those absent (like Molly), speaking unclear, impalpable sounds in words often subject to error in hearing and reading or by reading alone. Unclear people speak in "Oxen of the Sun," impalpable ghosts "tell" words of unclear texts in "Circe," and all speech is itself unsubstantial sound spectrally presented in a text of letters. That the impalpable ghost is asked to tell the word is another index of confusion and loss, thus making the text emptier.

Thus the words Stephen would have the ghost of his mother speak have themselves been subjected to absence, loss, and error. As she appears, he interrogates her; the immaterial ghost much expresses itself in the equal ephemerality of spoken language: "Tell me the word, mother. . . . The word known to all men" (*U*, 15. 474). He asks for a word, the logos of a message that she should know. He believes she does because of a simple syllogism for him: in the beginning the word was with God; May Dedalus is with God; she should know the word. What he wants is to be told something in language by the immaterial voice of the missing, and the absence of his mother resembles what he seeks to know: the word is something he has already seen and should

remember but does not. It appeared in an unclear sight of a text seen in allusive crossed reading, some word he has presumably seen imperfectly. The word is from a text from Aquinas he remembered in the library: "Amor vero aliquid alicui bonum vult unde et ea quae concupiscimus . . ." (*U*, 9. 161). That true love is to be connected to what he has thought as both noun and adjective in "Nestor," "*amor matris*" (*U*, 2. 165)

As Stephen notes in the same conversation in "Scylla and Charybdis" in which he thinks of Aquinas, a ghost is "one who has faded into impalpability . . . through absence" (*U*, 9. 148). So too has the passage he wishes to have told by a ghost, it has been subject to fading and impalpability. Like lost letters, by slipping into the immateriality of unclarity, it adds opacity to the text. Thus a ghost gives voice to what is an error in the text and the word Stephen asks the ghost of his mother to speak is empty and lost in error.

As already discussed, to Joyce language tends to err and deviate. We can see this deviation similarly in the lists in the text. They have an errant deviation of "incertitude" going from the known to the unknown, which is the characteristic of language, and of *Ulysses* in general. For example, the list of Molly's lovers in "Ithaca" is a case in point about some item that appears at first to be clear and to refer to something within the text, yet that becomes on scrutiny clouded and uncertain. What purports to be a meaningful series is made difficult by the disposition of its smallest parts. While Irish names have a tendency to end with an, Boylan and Mulligan are missing from this list.

Also, the newspaper report of Dignam's funeral has a similar deviation which begins in sober realism but eventually deviates into a more extravagant variation on reality. The report includes a line of nonsensical misprint, one of which is the loss of an "l" from Bloom's own name, which is printed "Boom" in the list of mourners as I have discussed earlier in this essay. The seriousness with which this begins breaks down. The inclusion of Stephen, M'Coy, and M'Intosh among the mourners amuses Bloom. None of them was present. M'Coy is listed because Bloom passed along his request that he be included among the mourners. "C P M'Coy" gives us the form of the name that M'Coy

stipulated when he spoke with Bloom in "Lotus Eaters" ("Just C. P. M'Coy will do" [*U*, 5. 175-76]), although the initials do not enter the conversation in which Bloom asks Hynes to put down M'Coy's name: "And you might put down M'Coy's name too. He asked me to" (*U*, 6. 882-83). And Stephen's presence in the funeral story seems appropriate since Bloom reads that story while in the presence of Stephen.

Joyce's writing through errors is represented most strikingly by shattering the reliability of the Ithacan catechist whose concern is about the precise factual information. In "Ithaca" the catechistic form and recitation of "facts" serve as part of the narrative pose of objective reliability and Joyce uses the language of science and mathematics. But what he is doing at the same time is that using the transparent discourse of science, he shows us the impossibility of truth or closure in the multiple possibilities of objective analysis. Joyce introduces errors and inconsistencies into the text, thus making facts and errors be juxtaposed. Ironically, in this chapter in which everything is supposed to be precise, error is especially prevalent.

A large percentage of the factual material that we are given in *Ulysses*—dates, ages, family history, Bloom's weight, the contents of Bloom's drawer and the books on his shelves—comes from "Ithaca." For example, the difference in age between Bloom and Stephen is highlighted: "16 years in 1888 when Bloom was of Stephen's present age Stephen was 6. 16 years after in 1920 when Stephen would be of Bloom's present age Bloom would be 54. In 1936, Bloom would be 70 and Stephen 54 . . ." (*U*, 17. 447-49). Their respective parentages are also recorded in precise detail: "Mrs. Riordan, a widow of independent means, had resided in the house of Stephen's parents from 1 September 1888 to 29 December 1891 and had also resided during the years 1892, 1893 and 1894 in the City of Arms Hotel owned by Elizabeth O'Dowd of 54 Prussian Street . . ." (*U*, 17. 479-82). However, it is also true that the chapter probably contains more erroneous or skewed information than any other one in the book. Even in declaring what seems at first a simple fact—that "there remained a period of 10 years, 5 months and 18 days" (*U*, 17.2282) since the Blooms last

had intercourse—the narrator errs by counting from the birth of their son, Rudy, rather than from “5 weeks previous, viz. 27 November 1893” (*U*, 17. 2280) when complete intercourse between Bloom and Molly ceased. As Phillip F. Herring notes, “an error in Joyce is not merely a misstated fact requiring correction; as a subject of inquiry it leads us to matters of thematic importance” (Herring, 94).

By introducing inconsistencies, errors, ambiguity, and other signs of narrative unreliability in “Ithaca,” Joyce lifts the repression of standard writing and produces an unparalleled field in which the ruling principles of scientific knowledge can be tested against themselves, can be made to reveal their dependence on the aleatory, the excluded, the counterrational, and the contingent as well as liability to errors. Through this, Joyce brings out a comic effect. Joyce’s laughter irrupts all enclosures, penetrates all boundaries, and travesties all laws by poking fun at all the efforts of the scientific or analytic tradition to erect laws that project the territory of the serious.

There are also more numerous errors made by characters. The general effect of this is usually comic. Mr. Deasy, an authority figure, for example, makes a lot of mistakes in his discussion of Irish history. Contrary to what Mr. Deasy says, the Orange Lodges did not oppose the union of Great Britain and Ireland “twenty years before O’Connell did” (*U*, 2. 270-71). Also, Devorgilla, “the faithless wife” whom he credits with having brought the English into Ireland (*U*, 2. 392-94) was married to O’Rourke but ran off with MacMurrough; and there is no evidence that the aphorism that the sun never sets on the British Empire may be traced to a “French Celt” (*U*, 2. 248-49). The authority of his views on the above subjects is ridiculed by the errors he makes in his account of history. By attributing these errors to Mr. Deasy, Joyce lifts the repression of authority and releases laughter in the reader. More importantly, through Mr. Deasy’s errors, the reader can recognize the errors of fact from the gap between his version of history and the facts. The reading of *Ulysses* is an activity requiring continual correction of the text. The reader sometimes shapes or forges the matter at hand.

The lifting of repression marked by Joyce's laughter is an important deconstructive effect of Joyce's writing and deconstruction in general. Bloom totally misunderstands Stephen's words, as if he could not tell poetry from a cabbage: "The deep white breast. Ferguson, I think I thought. A girl. Some girl. Best thing could happen him" (*U*, 15. 4950-51). Bloom mistakes Ferguson for Fergus from Yeat's poem which Stepehn was reciting:

"Who . . . drive . . . Fergus now
And pierce . . . wood's woven shade . . . ?" (*U*, 15. 4932-33)

Deconstruction has the effect of liberating forbidden "*jouissance*." Like *Ulysses*, Bloom's world is "generally composite of facts and errors" (McCarthy, 37). And the misunderstanding at the level of language brings out "*jouissance*."

While Joyce accuses Mr. Deasy of his authority through the errors he makes about historical facts, Bloom is at length praised by Joyce. Bloom looks ludicrous sometimes because of the errors he makes, but through them, the reader can see the range and depth of his mind. This is also noted by McCarthy: "Bloom's mistakes are the result of a lively mind, and that his willingness to admit error is a more admirable trait than the parochialism, obstinacy, and lack of self-awareness" (McCarthy, 39). Bloom recognizes his own mistakes and errors later and corrects them. Those emendations are always improvements. One step further, it is Bloom who corrects other characters' errors such as Molly, Milly, and Gerty, who, according to Scott, "are all subject to Joyce's arrangement of language, but in this arrangement correctedness of language loses its authority" (Scott, 128). Martha makes a grammatical mistake when she writes "patience are" which should be "patience is" to be grammatically right. Bloom has performed a similar correction in the early scene with Molly, changing her "It must have fell" to "must have slid," though only the narrator comes up with the ultimate "fallen" (*U*, 4. 326-9).

We can see also Molly's verbal error in her confusion of "omission" for emission in the language of a male gynecologist: "asking me had I frequent

omissions where do those old fellows get all the words they have omissions with his shortsighted eyes on me cocked sideways . . ." (*U*, 18, 1169-71). As Herring argues, it is probably true that "The effect is to make her a comical character and, perhaps, to reinforce the stereotype of attractive women who are illogical" (Herring, 101) because there is no logic about her observations. Molly depends on intuition instead of reasoning.

More importantly, through Molly's monologue full of errors or mistakes, Joyce progressively frustrates the reader's desire to interpret, to render meaning. Molly Bloom's use of "he" in her monologue is an example. The ambiguity of the use of the masculine pronoun is so misleading that the reader can easily fall into a trap. Matthew Hodgart also supports this by saying that "The use of the masculine pronoun in Molly Bloom's monologue is so often misleading. Throughout the monologue she seems to be incapable even of distinguishing one man from another: the word 'he' which she uses so frequently covers a wide range of past lovers and admirers, and in memory she shifts vaguely from one to another" (Hodgart, 128).

Joyce's theme of errancy is represented in his characterization of Molly Bloom. Not only does she make her fact, contradict herself, and live in error as an unfaithful wife who secretly prefers her husband but as a woman of Gibraltar she is an absurdity. As Herring mentions, "Molly is simply unconvincing as a woman from Gibraltar" (Herring, 136). Joyce stretched the social and historical fabric of her parentage and early life well beyond credibility, something he could hardly have done to a Dubliner. Herring also argues that Molly is a sociological error whose memories of Gibraltar are made almost entirely of guide book material, but whose memories do not include the Laredo family, who continued to reside in Gibraltar throughout her girlhood, or more than the barest Spanish vocabulary.¹⁾ But for these dubious memories, one could scarcely guess by accent, appearance, and attitude that she has ever been out of Dublin. Probably Joyce delineates her as a sociological error presumable

1) See Phillip F. Herring, *Joyce's Uncertainty Principle* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), pp. 132-138

deriving from Joyce's increasing tendency to create absurdities in the latter part of *Ulysses*; but in part she may derive from Joyce's knowledge that he knew too little about Gibraltar ever to paint an accurate portrait.

Mulligan's errors result from his ignorance but some of his errors shed some light on Joyce's insinuation that a misinterpretation can lead to the truth. For example, one of Mulligan's errors results from the verbal ambiguity. At the end of "Telemachus," an unidentified swimmer tells Mulligan that he has heard from Bannon, adding that Bannon "Says he found a sweet young thing down there [Westmeath]. Photo girl he calls her," to which Mulligan replies, "—Snapshot, eh? Brief exposure" (*U*, 1. 674-86). Mulligan's sugges-

tive response indicates that he misunderstands "photo girl," taking it to mean a girl who poses (perhaps scantily clad) for photographs.

On a first reading, we have no reason to suspect that Mulligan has misunderstood the phrase. But later on, from the Mill's letter to Bloom (*U*, 4. 397-414), we realize that she is Bannon's "photo girl," and that the designation simply refers to the fact that she works as a clerk in a photographer's shop. Even so, Mulligan's mistake is not totally wrong because, for one thing, Milly tells Bloom that she had her picture taken. More importantly, Mulligan's "brief exposure" is the first instance of the association of Milly with adolescent sexuality—an association that will recur in Bloom's mind throughout the day.

Through all kinds of errors Joyce inscribes in his writing in a calculated way, it is easy to misinterpret *Ulysses*, easy to fall into confusion and error. Just as characters make numerous errors, so the reader can easily make errors in reading the erroneous text. For example, the reader mistakenly assumes that the barmaids in "Sirens" chortle over the possibility of being married to a chemist from Boyd's pharmacy, but the narrator's interpolated "Married to Bloom, to greasbloom" (*U*, 11. 180) indicates that the women were speaking of Bloom. Also, there is another similar example. The reader can easily make errors thinking Bloom's "I have such a bad headache today" (*U*, 13. 778-79) means that Bloom has a headache, whereas he is merely recalling a phrase from Martha's letter. However, what Joyce asks for by inscribing errors is the

reader's attention to textuality. Joyce makes him pay more attention to the text and re-examine all the assumptions that he comes to have on his first reading of *Ulysses*. Strikingly aware of the textuality of what he is reading, this is what Bloom does throughout the text. As James H. Maddox mentions, "Bloom reads and re-reads, not simply in order to be certain that he has absorbed information but just as often to adjust himself to the reading and to appraise it as a text" (Maddox, 139). Bloom corrects his own mistakes, as when he first remembers a line from Mozart's *Don Giovanni* as "Voglio e non verrei" and later remembers it, correctly, as "Vorrei non vorrei" (*U*, 4. 327, 6. 238). Also, he thinks that the Ballast Office timeball falls at one o'clock Dunsink time but he soon corrects to one o'clock Greenwich time (*U*, 8. 109, 8. 571).

Through Bloom's reading pattern Joyce seems to suggest to the reader how to read *Ulysses*. McCarthy also argues that "The pattern in which Bloom's mind recircles back to a subject and corrects an earlier error suggests the experience of the reader whose own errors and misjudgments are subject to correction on a subsequent encounter with the text" (McCarthy, 39). As can be seen from Bloom's pattern of correcting errors, through Joyce's arrangement of error, the reader can arrive at the truth. Appropriately, in "Scylla and Charybdis," Stephen declares that "A man of genius makes no mistakes. His errors are volitional and are the portals of discovery" (*U*, 9. 228-29).

As I have discussed so far, Joyce renders his text opaque and uncertain by using errors. Numerous errors inscribed throughout the text make the reading experience of *Ulysses* one of absence or emptiness. At the same time, however, as Fritz Senn mentions, "they leave the reader with the intriguing, fascinating, and ever frustrated task of completing, straightening, modifying, clarifying, improving, systematizing it, which we inevitably perform in our own idiosyncratic like-ness, propelled by our own brand of curiosity and ignorance" (Senn, 55). It is in this manner that through error, Joyce's writing asks for a new reader. Segall makes it clear by saying that "The ontological and epistemological challenges at the center of Joyce's work required not only a new artistic form but a new reader as well" (Segall, 186).

We find Derrida's "*différance*" operating here in the ways in which correspondence between the text and the reader is delayed, misplaced, or misdirected. And desire to interpret the text is sustained, drawing the reader more and more into the text.

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Abstract

『율리시즈』에 사용된 Errancy와 데리다의 해체주의

김 은 숙

『율리시즈』는 정확하고 일관성이 있는 것처럼 보이나 사실 많은 실수가 내재해 있다. 실수는 어디에나 있으며 사물들은 엉뚱하게 잘못되어 가는 경향이 있다. 자크 데리다의 말대로 해체주의는 사상도 아니고 개념도 아니고 다만 읽기의 전략이라고 하였다. 이러한 데리다식 자세한 글읽기를 통하여본 논문에서는 그 동안 이분법적 서구 형이상학에서 열등한 것으로 가리어져 왔던 실수의 문제를 조이스가 어떻게 전략적으로 사용하여 데리다가 주장하는 해체주의 이론인 중심의 해체 및 유희를 유발하며 이로 인하여 텍스트의 의미파악을 어렵게 만드는지를 조사하며, 또한 이 실수의 문제가 어떻게 데리다의 “차연”의 개념에 일치하는지 밝힌다.

조이스가 전략적으로 사용하는 각종 실수 —활자상의 실수, 언어의 전달의 문제에서 생기는 실수, 인물들의 실수— 중 언어의 실수가 매우 중요한데 『율리시즈』에서 언어는 잘못되어 빗나가는 경향이 있으며 정확한 의사전달을 방해한다. 언어상의 실수는 언어의 안정성과 가치에 대한 의문을 제기하는 데리다의 해체주의 사상이 이미 조이스의 텍스트에 나타나는 것이 된다.

언어의 실수는 인물들의 불분명한 identity와 밀접한 관계를 가지고 있다. Bloom의 이름에서 m이나 l의 탈락은 그의 identity의 모호성을 나타내는 것이다. 모든 인물들의 이름은 문자로 형성되어 있으므로 문자의 손실은 인물들의 identity를 모호하게 한다. 문자가 불안정하여 손실되면 자동적으로 문자로 이루어진 단어와 인물 그리고 더 나아가 텍스트의 identity가 모호해진다. 여기에 sound의 첨가는 실수를 더욱 더 만연하게 만들어 이로 인해 더욱 텍스트의 의미를 텅 비게 만든다. sound를 불완전하게 창조하기 위해 쓰인 문자들은 더욱 실수와 혼란을 독자에게 가증시키기 때문이다.

그러나 조이스에서 실수의 문제는 Stephen이 선언하듯 발견의 창구가 되기도 하는 것이다. 어떤 실수들은 사실로 이끌 수 있다는 조이스의 암시에 빛을

밝힌다. Mulligan의 실수 또한 언어의 모호성으로부터 기인하는데 그러나 그의 실수는 완전히 잘 못 된 것이 아니다. 왜냐면 Milly는 어떤 의미에서는 그가 실수한대로 “photo girl”이다.

표준 글쓰기가 주는 진지성 및 압박을 흐트러뜨리고 독자에게 웃음을 자아내는 것은 조이스의 해체적 글쓰기의 중요한 효과이다. 실수로 혼동하는데서 우스꽝스러운 일이 벌어지는데 이는 *jouissance*의 해체적 효과를 나타낸다.

조이스가 의도적으로 새겨 넣는 모든 종류의 실수로 인하여 인물들이 실수를 하듯 독자 또한 울리시즈를 잘못 해석하며 혼돈과 실수로 오류를 범하기 쉽다. 중요한 것은 실수를 새겨 넣음으로써 조이스는 독자로 하며금 텍스트에 더욱 집중하여 주의 깊게 읽게 하는 것이다. 독자는 실수와 오자 투성이의 텍스트를 읽으며 자신도 저지르는 해석상의 실수와 오판을 그 선행문구들을 다시 읽게되면서 교정하기도하고 한다. 확정적인 의미를 거부하는 조이스의 텍스트는 이런 면에서 독자의 적극적인 참여를 유도하며 그의 글쓰기는 새로운 독자를 요구한다.

실수의 문제를 사용한 조이스의 텍스트는 데리다의 “차연”과 일치하는데 이는 독자의 텍스트를 이해하려는 욕망이 계속 연기되기 때문이다. 이로 인해 독자는 더욱 더 텍스트에 매이게 된다. 『울리시즈』는 데리다의 말대로 시체를 해부하듯이 텍스트를 자세하게 분석하며 읽고 또 읽기를 반복하는 세밀한 글 읽기가 요구될 뿐이다.