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Ulysses-Machine: Posthuman Joyce and the Ethics of Production

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I. Introduction

There have been renewed attempts at re-reading James Joyce's works through the lens of digital humanities in our new critical milieu. We can single out three notable patterns from this new scholarship: one is a re-interpretation of Joyce's texts from the perspectives of digital media, techno-poetics, machine, and posthumanism; another is a more practically-oriented one in turning Joyce's texts into hypertexts or machine-readable texts; the other is to apply digital methods (such as distant reading) to the reading (as re-discovery) of Joyce.[1] This essay participates in the first mode of literary scholarship

1) For the first mode of scholarship, examples include Zena Meadowsong's "Joyce's Utopian Machine," Donald F. Theall's *James Joyce's Techno-Poetics*, and John Xiros Cooper's *Modernism and the Culture of Market Society* (especially chapter 9). For the second and third, see "'A Portrait of the Artist as Young Man': Digital

motivated by the desire to harness critical energies from the burgeoning field of digital humanities to breathe new life into Joyce studies. This is also an attempt to reinvigorate discussions of how Joyce's literary imagination leaves tractions in theoretical imaginations for thinkers like Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, and Rosi Braidotti—and how theoretical lenses help us navigate difficult modernist works such as *Ulysses*.

Taking inspiration from Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari's formulation of works of literature as "desiring-machines" (*AO* 31),[2] I would like to offer a reading of James Joyce's *Ulysses* as one such machine that performs Deleuzian notions of becoming and multiplicity. Here, Deleuze and Guattari's conception of a machine is linked to the ideas of productivity and "a dispersed subjectivity" (in Braidotti's words [4]). For its mode of capitalistic production relies on ceaseless coupling/uncoupling and connection/disconnection with other machines for the sake of maximum production. They view artistic production as part of this desiring-production: as Deleuze and Guattari write, "[a]rt often takes advantage of . . . desiring-machines by creating veritable group of fantasies . . . . The artist is the master of objects, he puts before us shattered, burned, broken-down objects, converting them to the regime of desiring-machines" (*AO* 31-32). Deleuze and Guattari note the particular role of art in mobilizing intense production of fantasies—up to the point where it

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Multimedia Edition of James Joyce's 1916 Novel" by James Joyce and University College Dublin, Elyse Graham's "Joyce and the Graveyard of Digital Empires," Jessica Pressman's *Digital Modernism*, Jerome McGann's *A new Republic of Letters*, N. Katherine Hayle and Jessica Pressman's *Comparative Textual Media*, and Shawn Ross and James O'Sullivan's *Reading Modernism with Machines*.

2) According to Deleuze and Guattari, desiring-machines are "the fundamental category of the economy of desire: they produce a body without organs all by themselves, and make no distinction between agents and their own parts, or between the relations of production and their own relations, or between the social order and technology" (32).

becomes uncontrollable and violent ("shattered, burned, broken-down objects"). Those fantasies, in turn, transmit complex affects, intense sensations, and a sense of difference that radically disrupt our everyday perceptions of the world based on order, identity, and common sense.

In *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze and Guattari mention Joyce several times. They point out that "Joyce's words, accurately described as having 'multiple roots,' shatter the linear unity of the word, even of language, only to posit a cyclic unity of the sentence, text, or knowledge" (6). Here, Joyce's language is used as a concrete instance of rhizomatic production governed by both deterritorializing and reterritorializing forces. In other words, Joyce's words enable free flows of signs while containing those in the literary and linguistic structure at the same time. Later in their collaborative work, Deleuze and Guattari borrow from Joyce again and claim that "[a]rt is not chaos but a composition of chaos that yields the vision or sensation, so that it constitutes, as Joyce says, a chaosmos, a composed chaos—neither foreseen nor preconceived" (*WP* 204). Joyce's "chaosmos" is a "condensation of 'chaos' and 'cosmos' that expresses the source of eternal energy" in Rosi Braidotti's words (86-87). As Braidotti succinctly puts it, "[c]haos is not chaotic, but it rather contains the infinite expanse of all virtual forces" (86). In *The Aesthetics of Chaosmos*, Umberto Eco mentions Joyce's chaosmos, too, as key to Joyce's ethics and aesthetics of production through contradiction. Eco similarly compares Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* to a machine: "An infinity of allusions... many of [which], in fact, escape the author himself, who has prepared a machinery of suggestion which, like any complex machine, is capable of operating beyond the original intentions of its builder" (67).

Indeed, Joyce called himself "one of the greatest engineers" while composing earlier drafts of *Finnegans Wake* (Joyce, qtd. in Theall 5). As Donald F. Theall puts it, Joyce's remark demonstrates his "hyper-conscious

awareness of the relevance of machines, media, and modes of communication to contemporary cultural production" (5). Joyce was a "poetic engineer" (Theall's term [10]) who tried to capture the ethos of contemporary cultural obsession with machines and find expressions for it via his linguistic production.[3] *Ulysses*'s machine-like qualities have been less discussed than those of *Finnegans Wake*. As this essay will show, *Ulysses*'s mechanical productions result in the coexistence of multiple visions and versions of history. Colin MacCabe argues that "the political analysis implicit in the "Aeolus" section is far more complex than a simple statement that Parnell is dead and gone" (140). We can take this further and say that Joyce's work as a whole presents a "far more complex" version of history by avoiding a single dominating perspective, representation, and authority. Joyce's indifferent *Ulysses*-machine ironizes and debilitates a coherent master narrative of history. The text does not idealize multiplicity as such. Instead, it shows how a single identity/multiple identities, a single history/multiple histories, and a single representation/multiple representations compete and illuminate each other. *Ulysses*-machine captures the reality where neither unity nor multiplicity is a perfect answer for the complex matters of history, life, and representation.

II. *Ulysses*-Machine and Its Body Parts

The "Aeolus" episode is a perfect example to show how *Ulysses*-machine operates. As Henry Staten points out, "Aeolus" is a chapter that "extravagantly call[s] attention to the textuality of its own text" (382). This episode is full of noises, and everything has its own language. Pathetic Bloom is carried

3) Theall explains that "the concept of a 'poetic engineer' was a dominant part of artistic sensibility from about 1905 until at least 1946" (5-6).

along by the overflowing stream of noises, cries, and rebuffs. Conversations between the characters and Bloom's thoughts are disturbed by the sounds of machines and noises from the street. This episode is overcrowded with the desultory newspaper headlines, baffling the readers' attempts to fully recognize what precisely is being written (or heard). As Monika suggests, the narrative of "Aeolus" is "forced to coordinate all these various styles, and, consequently, has to become more prominent as a separate voice in its own right" (26). "Aeolus" is not only one of many voices on *Ulysses*-machine; it is also a body that produces its own language and history. As Bloom comments, watching a printing machine, "Everything speaks its own way" (Joyce 100).

In "Aeolus," the newspaper structure as a texture of this episode is a significant marker of the mechanical quality of *Ulysses*. "Aeolus" is *Ulysses*'s "typewriter" or "mechanical hands" that produce history in the form of the newspaper. In "Aeolus," the repetitive sound of "thump, thump, thump" and "sllt" represents the mechanical sound of newspapers being produced. This mechanical sound is a figure for the conditions of modern Ireland, at a time when history became available to the public as a sum of mass-produced goods. Particular rhetoric about Irish politics, including the Irish patriotism that Stephen Dedalus abhors, is reproduced and circulated repeatedly without any serious consideration given to it. In this system of capitalist reproduction, history is only a site where the complexity of political events is reduced to some easy rhetoric. The sound that the press machine makes, then, symbolizes the mechanical mode of public rhetoric produced and propagated in the name of history—but, in fact, simply as a source of easy entertainment.

Here, history becomes materialized for gossip or a mere source for reading/misreading in the system of mass production and commercialism. In "Aeolus," Ned Lambert starts to read from the morning newspaper Dan Dawson's rhetoric of Irish patriotism and mocks it:

> as 'twere, in the peerless panorama of Ireland's portfolio, unmatched, despite their wellpraised prototypes in other vaunted prize regions, for very beauty, of bosky grove and undulating plain and luscious pastureland of vernal green, steeped in the transcendent translucent glow of our mild mysterious Irish twilight. (7.320-24)

All the readers of this laughable passage from the newspaper "jeer at it" and respond as though they were sick of the rhetoric of patriotism "in cold print" (7.338). This scene captures how the rhetoric of ludicrously nostalgic patriotism in Ireland is reproduced and consumed through the medium of newspapers. On the one hand, Lambert and other Irish men in the Evening Telegraph Office are treating this outmoded patriotism as a source for gossiping. On the other hand, this kind of naïve patriotism still sells well among anonymous Irish readers, including even a scornful reader like Lambert. "Aeolus," then, may embody an irony in depicting the moment when history becomes a commodity and, at the same time, being part of it. *Ulysses*-machine imitates the newspaper machines in the press and their indifferent reproduction of history as sellable stories. In doing so, *Ulysses* allows itself to both represent the real and become that "real" with its journalistic form.[4)]

"Aeolus" throws out haphazard newspaper headlines, challenging and questioning the validity of what readers believe to be accurate records in printed newspapers. The hodge-podge of these headlines (e.g., "IN THE HEART OF THE HIBERNIAN METROPOLIS," "THE WEARER OF THE CROWN," "WHAT WETHERUP SAID," etc., [7.1-2, 7.14, 7.337]) in this episode works to mock and parody the familiar styles of newspaper headlines.

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4) As Hugh Kenner points out, "Ulysses is particularly a text that overinvests its energy in experimenting with textuality. The form in Joyce's text actually becomes the 'meaning' of that text" (167), and what the text means is almost synonymous with how the text works in *Ulysses*.

In this episode, the headlines represent the speed of the fast-changing appetite of newspaper readers. The quantity of these headlines that make up the entirety of this chapter is Joyce's response to the contemporary commercialization of mass media that can only attract readers by turning themselves into stimuli. Here, the text's mimicry of Irish journalism becomes more apparent when these headlines become random gibberish or curses (e.g., "???," "K.M.R.I.A [Kiss My Royal Irish Arse]," etc., [7.511, 7.990]). These cacophonous bits increase the noise level in the text, mimicking the reality where what is supposed to be historically meaningful (i.e., media) could be considered mechanical noises. When history is turned into sellable stories, as Joyce shows, it becomes rhetorical, mechanical, fragmented, and uncommunicative at some point as much as the paralyzed life itself in Ireland.

Joyce's peculiar language mirrors how Irish people experience history. In this episode, Bloom is the very individual who experiences and is affected greatly by the historical conditions of Dublin. Bloom's hurried feet and mind keep up with the regular and urgent sound of the machines in the printing house. Throughout this episode, Bloom is hurried to go from place to place for business. Joyce's pages also feature Bloom as a neglected individual swept away and ignored in the ocean of noises in Dublin. In *Ulysses*, Bloom is rejected by his wife, friends, and his co-workers. He is indeed a victim to the mechanical speed and pace of modern Ireland. Henry Staten discusses the mimetic quality of the language in "Aeolus," contending that "'Aeolus' resounds with the movement of typographical machinery, and the section headlines, suggestive of headlines, manifest the direct impress of 'newspaperness' on the face of the literary text" (382). However, he also acknowledges that the language in *Ulysses* does not simply deconstruct the real. The issue of deconstruction in this text is interwoven with the mimetic function of its language. Staten further suggests that *Ulysses* presents clear

instances "where imitative form becomes indiscernible from deconstruction" (382). Here, mimesis goes hand in hand with deconstruction. In a way, deconstructive possibilities in *Ulysses* are already innate in modernity itself. *Ulysses*-machine came up with a perfect form to resemble the topography of modern life.

The "Wandering Rocks" chapter showcases an entirely different mode of writing. This chapter is comparable to the eyes or camera lenses of *Ulysses*-machine. It watches characters from a certain distance. The machine-like qualities of this chapter have much to do with its technique of frequent flashbacks to different people and paces. It also captures moments when characters slide by each other by rewinding to places that the characters visit at different times. For instance, Bloom picks up some books from a book cart for Molly Bloom, thinking about life, birth, and death. Shortly afterward, Stephen picks up random books presumably from the same book cart and ponders his literary ambition and religious belief. At the end of the episode, William Humble, earl of Dudley, and Lady Dudley drive through Dublin, and their cavalcade, borrowing from Harry Blamires's words, are "variously seen by, stared at by, saluted by, ignored by, or missed by" many of the chapter's characters (85). Likewise, each scene focuses on individual lives, but the whole chapter captures how those lives intersect. These cinematic techniques in "Wandering Rocks" help us see how individual lives are interspersed but still loosely linked within the collective social body of modern Dublin.

In "Wandering Rocks," the camera does not produce a new picture of the world. It rather defamiliarizes it by reorganizing what was once familiar and captures multiple facets of life in Dublin. Derek Attridge explains Joyce's aesthetics through the term "coincidence": "Joyce values coincidence precisely because of this undecidability between chance and necessity; he is offering us not a Romantic theory of inherent correspondences, but a staging of their

ever-present, thought always uncertain, possibility" (124). As Attridge suggests, the mechanical rewinding and conjunctions of different scenes in the episode are, in fact, a precise reflection of life in Dublin. The linguistic performance in this episode presents the mechanical juxtapositions of different individuals, but it does not outweigh real life itself. The textual performance of *Ulysses* works to mirror the patterns of life in Dublin in which individuals are isolated from or isolating each other. The indifferent encounters and disconnections as featured in Joyce's chapter are indeed characteristic of the machine-assisted, modern life in Dublin. In "Wandering Rocks," Dublin functions as another machine (within the larger text-machine) orchestrating rhythms, flows, and energies of people and machines, as well as linking individual citizens who also turn machine-like. The power of machine language and its mimetic effect in this episode correspond to Joyce's concept of "parallax" (8.112), one of the essential principles of aesthetic production in *Ulysses*. This juxtaposition of different angles allows the readers to explore layered reality and historicity freely, without any guidance by a single perspective or authority.

The "Sirens" is the mouth or stereo of *Ulysses*-machine that plays music; "Circe" is its abdomen or bowel on which every language and every character intermingle and become digested; and "Ithaca" is the brain where logical thinking and memory take center stage. "Ithaca" presents textuality that is perhaps most unfamiliar and mechanical. The chapter's catechistic style that Andrew Gibson calls "catechistic technic" (3) is devoid of human quality. Karen R. Lawrence argues that the language in "Ithaca" imitates the movement of "the machinery for an investigation of a subject," and it never "concludes or proves anything" (570). She also observes that "Ithaca" ends as though "the mind went to sleep or the power of the machine were cut off" (571). Lawrence's account reaffirms that *Ulysses* works like an indifferent machine

aiming at nothing but production for production's sake. Contending that "*Ulysses* is a machine akin to the 'mechanical artifice' Bloom imagines in 'Ithaca'" (67), Zena Meeadowsong similarly claims that "Ithaca" "refus[es] to give in to any form of instrumental domination, including its own" (68). She adds that there is something "utopian" about this deconstructive mode of representation (68). Joyce's mimetic language that imitates the movements of machines could indeed be considered a utopian vision of a future where plurality and diversity are truly valued.

It is worth noting that Deleuze and Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus* has a similarly utopian ring to it in linking desiring productions of machines with revolutionary movements:

> we hold in the first place that art and science have a revolutionary potential...[they] cause increasingly decoded and deterritorialized flows to circulate in the socius, flows that are perceptible to everyone, which force the social axiomatic to grow ever more complicated, to become more saturated, to the point where the scientist and the artist may be determined to rejoin an objective revolutionary situation in reaction against authoritarian designs of a State that is incompetent and above all castrating by nature. (*AO* 379)

Here, Deleuze and Guattari put the artist and the scientist side by side as revolutionaries. The two enable "deterritorialized flows" in society via their artistic and scientific creativities. For Deleuze and Guattari, both art and science serve to liberate the flows by which "authoritarian designs of a State" loosen their grips on us. Braidotti takes these ideas further and formulates posthumanism as a new vision and ethical position based on "technological mediation" (90). Echoing Deleuze and Guattari, Braidotti explains that such is "a vitalist view of the technologically bio-mediated other" (91).

Post-humanism, according to Braidotti, is "not about determinism, inbuilt purpose or finality" but "about becoming and transformation" (91). Braidotti also characterizes art as posthuman: "Art is...cosmic in its resonance and hence posthuman by structure, as it carries us to the limits of what our embodied selves can do or endure" (107). Deleuze and Guattari, Braidotti, and Joyce all aspire to a new future where our existing societal limits and norms give way to new connections between species (e.g., humans and machines, humans and animals) and new forms of being (e.g., non-subjectivity).

III. The Ethics of Production[5)]

This section will analyze how Joyce's individual characters embody the work's ethos of posthumanism and the ethics and aesthetics of machine-like production. The analysis here will be largely based on Bloom's life as a human model of Joycean machine that mirrors the text's mechanics of production. First, let us briefly turn to Stephen Dedalus, as a point of comparison, who believes that history "is a nightmare from which [he is] trying to awake" (1.377). Stephen's language in "Nestor" and "Proteus" is full of bitter sentiments, reflecting Stephen's negative responses toward history. Stephen attempts to escape into the ideal world of language, exploring "the ineluctable modality of the visible" (3.425-26). Still, he cannot be free from the reality of what he calls "houses of decay, mine, his and all" (3.105). In these moments, *Ulysses*-machine depicts how the collective consciousness of

5) I presented part of this section on Bloom's productivity at XXV International James Joyce Symposium at the English Institute, University of London, in June 2016. This section has been modified since and is therefore different from the presentation version.

Ireland penetrates deeply into each individual's unconsciousness. Stephen, however, resists being overthrown or paralyzed by the history of colonized Ireland. Stephen's artistic language and vision for a less rigid future preserve the potential to see beyond the ever-present paralysis of Ireland's history. However, Stephen's utopian vision does not yield any productive results, nor does he get to write anything in the present. His pessimistic resistance is ultimately vacant and unproductive due to his inability to act on his dissatisfaction and alternative vision.

On the other hand, Bloom's aesthetic and historical vision is different from Stephen's. If Stephen is the brain, Bloom seems to be the digestive organ on the body of *Ulysses*. Bloom's narrative is based on bodily circulations and productivity. "Calypso," for instance, is Bloom's episode in which the texture represents how Bloom's body and mind work. Here, Bloom eats, passes gas, defecates, and thinks at the same time. In one memorable scene, Bloom brings a copy of *Tibits* into the outdoor privy, for "[h]e liked to read at stool" (2.465). He reads while defecating Philip Beaufoy's short story *Matcham's Masterstroke*:

> Quietly he read, restraining himself, the first column and, yielding but resisting, began the second. Midway, his last resistance yielding, he allowed his bowels to ease themselves quietly as he read, reading still patiently that slight constipation of yesterday quite gone. Hope it's not too big bring on piles again. No, just right. So. Ah! Costive. One tabloid of cascara sagrada. Life might be so. It did not move or touch him but it was something quick and neat. Print anything now. Silly season. He read on, seated calm above his own rising smell. Neat certainly. Matcham often thinks of the masterstroke by which he won the laughing witch who now. Begins and ends morally. Hand in hand. Smart. He glanced back through what he had read and, while feeling his water flow quietly, he envied kindly Mr Beaufoy who had written it and received payment of three

pounds, thirteen and six. (2.509-17)

In the scene, Bloom's reading act is described through Joyce's scatological humor. In the passage, a column of print (the actual text) is indistinguishable from a column of excrement. In such a comparison, the act of writing and that of defecating are juxtaposed as similar acts of *creation*—one, the creation of a story (by Beaufoy) and the other, that of excrement (by Bloom). Vincent Cheng points out that there indeed appears an "equation between the activities of artistic creation, physical procreation, and excremental production" in Joyce (85-86). As the passage suggests, both writing and defecating need a good beginning and an ending ("Begins and ends morally" in Beaufoy's "column"; and the proper movements of "yielding [and] resisting," and "flow[ing]" well in the end in Bloom's "column")—as well as unique "fragrances" of their own ("smart" and unique characteristics of Beaufoy's story, and Bloom's "own rising smell" of healthy excretion). What the two acts produce are both *artistic* creations that require the necessary skills to create proper rhythms—as in Joyce's description of "Lestrygonians" as "Peristaltic prose" (R. Ellmann 192).

On the level of production, it is equally important, both in writing and in defecating, to avoid any obstruction or blockage. Indeed, Beaufoy's creative brain and Bloom's active bowels both prove themselves to be healthy organs. In the above passage, more time is spent describing Bloom's process of producing excrement—artfully and at just the right moment—in ways that stress the superiority of Bloom's art over Beaufoy's (whose writing, one might say, is real "crap"). In Bloom's mind, Beaufoy's story is a trivial piece of work published during the "silly season." After all, Joyce's juxtaposition of Mr. Bloom with Mr. Beaufoy—as successful "creators" and "artists"—provides not only humor in Joyce's text but also a meaningful valorization of Bloom's productive and artistic capacity. Joyce scholars have indeed been interested in

the parallel between artistic creation and defecation represented in this scene.[6] Cheng, for instance, suggests that the parallel is made between "the language issuing from the creatures' lips and the excrement emitted from their bodies, both becoming literal *expressions*" as "ex-pression" (as things pressed out of the body) (86-87, original emphasis)—or, I would add, *artistic* expressions. What is emitted from Bloom's body has particular aesthetic effects (at least to an unoffended reader), as we saw in this comparison between Beaufoy's "masterstroke" as a writer and Bloom's "masterstroke" as a creator of excrement.

Even Bloom's fart is treated as an aesthetic expression in the "Sirens" chapter. In the "Sirens" episode, Bloom's fart is humorously juxtaposed with Simon Dedalus's singing voice. Bloom's anal passage also functions as a "wind" instrument in Joyce's prose and serves to create a hilarious coda to Joyce's chapter that functions as a musical instrument: "Prrprr. Must be the bur. Fff! Oo. Rrpr... Pprrpffrrppffff. *Done*" (11.1293-94). In Maud Ellmann's analysis, Bloom's fart is seen as "a middle voice, a middle way" that "elude[s] binarism" (66). Bloom's aesthetics embodies the mechanics of production in *Ulysses*. Along with the bodily circulations that he represents, Bloom is a mechanical body where all of the crossings of boundaries are made possible. In the "Circe" episode, Bloom's body becomes a site wherein numerous gender, sexual, and erotic possibilities are tested, inscribed, and performed. Not only does Bloom assume the role of a powerful patriarch of "Bloomusalem" in his hallucinations (15.1544); but he also transforms himself into a woman and, revealing his desire "to be a mother" (15.1817), gives birth to "eight male yellow and white children" (15.1821-22). Likewise, Bloom-machine is connected to various forms of life and subjectivity – until

6) See also, Kelly Anspaugh, "Powers of Ordure: James Joyce and the Excremental Vision(s)" and Joshua D. Esty, "Excremental Postcolonialism."

it is switched off in the "Ithaca" episode.

Deleuze and Guattari argue that "[desiring-production] is at work everywhere, functioning smoothly at times, at other times in fits and starts. It breathes, it heats, it eats. It shits and fucks" (*AO* 1). They say that every machine works under the same principle of endless output, based on its connections and disconnections with other machines. *Ulysses* is not too different from the desiring machine that Deleuze and Guattari describe. Through its constant coupling with other machines or other subjectivities, *Ulysses*-machine challenges the notion of identity and the ego. Bloom, for instance, might seem to represent a traditional, male Irish citizenship at first, but he is, in fact, a Jewish outsider and an exile within Irish history. His weak positions as a father and husband at home fail to legitimize an authoritative position and identity at home and in society. However, Bloom is not inert. Bloom is the only person in *Ulysses* capable of maintaining a healthy digestive system and coming up with creative ideas and visions for art and history. Bloom's nonconforming productivity is the nexus of a unique voice and perspective as a marginalized individual. In short, unlike Stephen, whose bitter pessimism leads to inaction, Bloom-machine never stops desiring and producing.

The remaining question here is whether Joyce's *Ulysses* poses a strategic resistance to the idea of a unified subjectivity and history. To answer this question, one must determine whether *Ulysses* presents itself and its chapters as a set of unified and singular bodies. For example, the scholarship around "Penelope" has notably focused on the multiple subjectivities that Molly embodies and the mechanical language of the chapter. Brian W. Shaffer argues that Molly's discourse is "internally dialogic" in the sense that it "combine[s] and sort[s] through the many voices within her" (144). For Shaffer, Molly's narcissism enables a new hybrid subjectivity. Ewa Ziarek views the

"Penelope" chapter as a whole as an embodiment of technologized female body. Ziarek resists the idea that the female body in "Penelope" becomes "a site of resistance to the mechanization of public space" (265). She argues that Molly's desire is neither female nor male. In Ziarek's view, "Molly's *androgynous machine* disarticulates the binary gender opposition and demonstrates that the nature of sexual difference is in fact constructed by discursive operations" (280; emphasis added). These readings open up a range of possibilities about Molly's subjectivity. Molly is, at times, seen to embody a single, female subjectivity. At other times, she accommodates multiple and androgynous subjectivities that resemble those of machines. The same goes with Bloom, as I have discussed, who is anxious about his paternal and male subjectivity. At the same time, he willingly turns himself into different persons (e.g., a mother and a king) in his fantasies that are often as real as the reality itself. From the Deleuzean perspective of production, territorializing and deterritorializing forces coexist without constructing hierarchies or binary structures. In the same vein, Joyce' work does not seem to demonize either singleness or multiplicity *per se*. The truly undesired state of being or living in *Ulysses* is when a person or a non-person ceases to interact with others, (imagine to) become someone/something else, and live his/her/its life to the fullest.

IV. Conclusion

In *How We Became Posthuman*, N. Katherine Hayles asks a crucial question *vis a vis* our critical turn to posthumanism: "What to make of this shift from the human to the posthuman, which both evokes terror and excites pleasure?" (4). Hayles first explains that posthumanism has been a move away

from "the liberal humanist subject [that] has, of course, been cogently criticized from a number of perspectives" including those of feminists and postcolonial theorists (4). The polemics against human identity have revolved around the idea of problematic universality in terms of gender, race, and sexuality that a unified identity connotes. Hayles makes it clear that a human being from the posthuman perspective is understood "as a set of informational processes" (4), processes that downplay human embodiment. What matters more than subjectivity or identity and even than the human body here is, according to Hayles, "cognition rather than embodiment" (5). We can find literary expressions for this posthumanist emphasis on cognition from the chapters of *Ulysses*-machine. As were the cases with Bloom and Molly, characters' human bodies in *Ulysses* are often interchangeable (at least at the level of fantasies) with other bodies (e.g., Bloom's body often imitates the rhythm of machines).

Instead of the question of identity, *Ulysses*-machine raises the question of *how* we can continue the deterritorializing flows instead of who performs them. These two questions have entirely different ends: while the who-question focuses on static concepts of identity and origin, the how-question is concerned with the process of making changes and demands endless actions. Here, Jacques Derrida's analysis of the mechanical yeses in "Penelope" offers further insight into the importance of the how-question:

> In its radically non-constantive or non-descriptive dimension, even if it is saying "yes" to a description or a narration, yes is through and through and *par excellence* a performative. ⋯ yes is the transcendental condition of all performative dimensions. A promise, an oath, an order, a commitment always implies a *yes*, I sign ⋯ [yes] poses itself or pre-poses itself: not as ego, as the conscious or unconscious self, as masculine or feminine subject, spirit or flesh, but as a pre-performative force. (298; original emphasis)

Derrida reads Molly's yes as "a performative" that transcends the categories of ego, consciousness, and gender. From Derrida's point of view, *Ulysses*-machine is indifferent to any sorts of categories and categorization as such. As Derrida and Joyce teach us, the only way to revolutionize existing hierarchical structures is to let "all performative dimensions" fully active. *Ulysses* resists being an integrated body or a unified subject "through its refusal of any definite set of objects – and fixed identities" (MacCabe 96). The text seems to recognize that a solution to the stasis of history is to open up a "room of the infinite possibilities" (2.50-51). It, of course, depends on readers whether to discover revolutionary elements in *Ulysses*. MacCabe is accurate in saying that *Ulysses* "remove[s] the reader from his or her condition of subjection by allowing him or her to take up many contradictory positions" (96). *Ulysses* invites a range of readings: from multiple subjectivities to traditional categories such as ego, identity, gender, race, class, and so on. *Ulysses*-machine is simply a body where numerous old and new categories are examined and ready for our use.

Ulysses-machine produces numerous versions of history using literary language – history as a set of processes rather than cessations or dead ends. The Joycean productivity emphasizes how text, history, and characters are constantly becoming other bodies. If the reader connects each deterritorializing flow differently every time he or she reads *Ulysses*, the textual productions can multiply even further. The becoming of the text and the characters means that no single perspective can transform into an authoritative sign. Its mechanical body opens up space through which all ranges of realities are redistributed, negotiated, and replaced by other possibilities. Ultimately, the flow and process of production instead of cessation and finality can serve as a breakthrough in the stasis of history, life, and, finally, representation itself.

(Yonsei U)

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Abstract

Ulysses-Machine: Posthuman Joyce and the Ethics of Production

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There have been increasing interests in techno-poetics and posthuman aesthetics in recent literary studies. This work harnesses this critical energy and re-reads *Ulysses* as a work that embodies this posthuman ethos and explores its affiliation with technology and mechanical movements of language. This essay attempts to articulate *Ulysses*'s machine-like qualities using Deleuze and Guattari's *Anti-Oedipus* as a theoretical framework. Just like Deleuze and Guattari's desiring-machine, *Ulysses* is a mechanical body with a peculiar awareness of the possibilities of language in duplicating, reproducing, and even transforming and redistributing the real. *Ulysses*-machine keeps deferring the moment when one voice, one language, or one perspective becomes a dominant agency. *Ulysses*-machine also enables new connections between bodies (biological, mechanical, and textual) through its mechanical production and indifferent productions and juxtapositions of multiple perspectives. In so doing, Joyce's language and characters embody the posthuman ethics of becoming machine-like.

■ Key words : *Ulysses*, Machine, Deleuze and Guattari, Posthuman, Joyce, Becoming, Art
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