The artist’s book emerged in the early decades of the twentieth century in consequence of avant-garde experimentation with the visual qualities of writing, typography and layout, different ways of combining text and image, as well as with the form of the book itself. Drawing upon this tradition in the context of the major innovative writings of James Joyce, Katarzyna Bazarnik shows how Joyce’s work constructs a separate literary genre between voice and writing, word and image, ideal and real, abstraction and materiality in the iconic sign of the book, which appears to the reader as a “verbivovovisual polyhedron of scripture.” This new genre is called liberature.

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KATARZYNA BAZARNIK

joyce
&
liberature

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When in 1904 the young Joyce was leaving Ireland on board a ferry, going into voluntary exile in search of artistic freedom, he might not even have dreamed where that journey would finally lead him. At that time he had written several reviews, short articles and a few stories which he later incorporated into *Dubliners*. Setting off from the realistic and scrupulous style of his first book, he ended up with a linguistic *tour de force* that turned realism into “undivided reawlity” of “the reel world” (*FW* 64.28; 292.31).

Likewise, when I began reading *Ulysses* over twenty years ago, I did not even suspect that that would set me off on a voyage round the history of literature: from ancient Greek visual poems to what many consider literature’s extreme – *Finnegans Wake*, then further into lands looming beyond its horizon, and back to the pictographic roots of writing. The present book, a record of this route, is based on my PhD dissertation defended at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków in 2007, and grew out of a reflection on space in the context of the literary work, especially the space of *Finnegans Wake*, as well as my previous enquiry into Polish and Slavic vocabulary in Joyce’s multilingual book. It offers my humble contribution to interpretations of some aspects of Joyce’s works, as well as an account of a discovery made on the way to Joyce’s happy island of “A-way-a-lone.”

Another island that has emerged during this voyage has been called “liberature” (Pol. *liberatura*), and though it sounds Wakean, the name does not come from Joyce. It puns on “literature” and Latin *liber* to point to the fact that literary works are accessible to us as books. Their form has been transformed throughout centuries; the shape still most common today is that of the codex, but writers have taken various liberties with it, as if to validate their artistic freedom.
Some of them get so involved in the process of writing that they go beyond mere words, using typography, images, kind and colour of paper or other material they find more suitable for their purpose, sometimes even modifying the very form of the volume into a *leporello*, a book-in-the-box or a scroll in a bottle.¹ But most innovative writers choose to remain within the boundaries of the traditional codex and explore its signifying potential. Hence, the typography and shape of the book, or its bibliographic code, becomes a peculiar stylistic device deliberately used by the authors. In the most exquisite examples such liberatic works demonstrate a carefully weighed balance (the name also hints at Latin *libra* meaning the scales) between words and spaces they inhabit.

Joyce appears to be one of such writers: he appropriated styles and conventions to his own artistic ends, liberated words from their vernacular constraints, and supervised their placement in carefully designed books. Perhaps several Bloomsday centenary exhibitions have made us see more clearly Joyce’s vintage editions as manifestations of his sensitivity to the bibliographic code. Moreover, genetic studies have given us more insight into habits of his composition, and provided us with evidence on his involvement in the publishing process. So the vision of him and his works offered in the present book is not entirely new, but it has often been relegated to footnotes and passing remarks. Admittedly, to look at a literary text from the vantage point of the footnote is a strange perspective, but what else should one expect from a stranger who was attracted to the obscure book by a few familiar native words? Yet an interest in Polish and Poles as well as Issy’s and ALP’s feminine fiction proved unexpectedly fruitful in my study of *Finnegans Wake*. Consequently, this book presents Joyce not only as the master of words but also as “the Liber Lord” (*FW* 250.25).

¹ Of course, they also move to cyberspace, writing hypertexts, but this subject is beyond the scope of this book also because Joyce was not familiar with the electronic medium. Besides, many interesting studies have been already published on Joyce and hypertextuality, including those by Donald Theall, Eric McLuhan and Louis Armand.
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I wish to express my sincere gratitude to my PhD supervisor, professor Krystyna Stamirowska, for her openness and support, to my reviewers, professors Wojciech Kalaga and Jerzy Kutnik for their constructive comments and suggestions. I would also like to thank all friends and fellow Joyceans who have provided me with advice, suggestions, criticism as well as materials unavailable in Poland and opportunities to conduct research abroad. My warmest thanks go especially to the invaluable Fritz Senn and the Zurich James Joyce Foundation, Finn Fordham and Caroline Warman, Robbert-Jan Henkes and Erik Bindervoet, Jolanta Wawrzycka, Stacey Herbert, as well as Inge Landuyt and Geert Lernout of the Antwerp James Joyce Centre. Special thanks are due to professor Zofia Berdychowska for her support of this project, to the staff of the Jagiellonian University English Department Library, who have patiently assisted me in home and inter-library loans, to Joshua Crone, who proofread the dissertation out of which this book has developed, and, last but not least, to Louis Armand and David Vichnar for their patience, assistance, and tedious editorial work on the manuscript. Finally, and first of all, I would like to thank my family for their unfailing support without which this book would not have been completed.
ABBREVIATIONS

The editions frequently referred to are abbreviated as follows:

FW

JJA

UG

U Oxford
BETWEEN SPEECH & WRITING

The Philosopher’s Voice

Although intuitively all seem to know what literature is, let me begin with a very basic definition. My Webster dictionary defines it as: 1) “writing in prose or verse regarded as having permanent worth through its intrinsic excellence”; 2) “the entire body of writings of a specific language, period, people, etc.”; and 3) “any kind of printed material.” So it identifies literature with writing and derives it from “letter,” which is no less than a visible, material form of language – embodied in marks traced with a pen, pencil or another instrument on a hard surface. However, literature has long been identified with the spoken medium. Its origins are sought in oral tales, songs and incantations, and for many it has been akin to music, while writing has been considered merely an imperfect reflection of oral expression. Once writing lost its immediate connection with pictorial representation, it came to be perceived as a record of speech rather than a channel of communication parallel to it (and partly independent from it). Plato shows it as an inevitably corrupted reflection of an unrealisable ideal, which he dramatised in Symposium: an account of what Apollodorus remembered from what Aristodemus repeated about what Socrates’ and his interlocutors talked about. In this account successive stages of corrupted transmission find their anti-climax in the written form of the dialogue, the form which he openly attacks in Phaedrus. Even if, as Arne Melberg suggests in his Theories of Mimesis,

Plato’s attitude is indeed ironic and ambiguous, such an interpretation of writing as secondary, and auxiliary to speech, has informed later thinkers.

Literature as an oral-aural art has had other influential proponents like Horace, Lessing and some Romantics, to name only a few. In *Laocoon*, a consequential treatise on the nature of arts, the German thinker set out to analyse critically a classical dictum: “poetry is a speaking picture, and painting dumb poetry.” Pondering the intrinsic features of the media of both arts, he concludes that literature (which he identifies with poetry), employing sounds articulated in time, must by its very nature belong to the temporal arts, while painting, expressing itself in figures and colours, is of a spatial nature. To support this distinction Lessing argues that the very consecutiveness of language makes it hardly possible for literature to integrate a verbal image into a coherent whole, thereby making representation of images in words hardly possible:

the coexistence of bodies thereby comes into collision with the consecutiveness of language. And because the former is dissolved in the latter, which, it is true, facilitates the dismemberment of the whole into its parts, but makes the final putting together again, or recomposition of the parts into a whole, an extremely difficult and often an impossible task.⁴

Admittedly, Lessing is speaking about descriptions of material objects and the difficulty entailed in visualising them in accordance with their verbal representation. But his argument seems to imply an inherent difficulty entailed in reintegrating any verbal message into a unified, sensible whole. In other words, it seems that Lessing is addressing the question how to make sense of any system of arbitrary signs, and of any discourse, narrative or poetic, in general. But if poetry’s proper material consists of events, plot and narrative, how easily did he follow Homer’s meandering tale in *The Odyssey*? Was it not an extremely difficult task to recompose it into the *Nacheinander* of a straightforward storyline? Was his


understanding of this “oral poetry” not enhanced by perceiving it in a printed version? Moreover, his argumentation contains another telling rift. While focusing on oral poetry, Lessing constantly quotes extensive passages to illustrate his points, very often in their original Greek script, which makes them quite conspicuous. While it is true that during a recitation, the listener may find it hard to visualise all the details of a complex image recited by a poet, nothing prevents the reader from rereading a description and, in a process of gradual apprehension, recomposing its details into a whole; in fact Lessing expects his readers to do so. Thus, he offers the passages so that his reader can see what he means, illustrating his discourse with vivid examples. Of course, this is a metaphorical way of speaking, and yet it may alert us to the latent visual potential of writing.

Taking speech as the only medium of poetry, Lessing excludes from its realm that aspect of literature which he himself uses to his advantage in a different context. Namely, presenting a series of arguments for an identification of the so-called Borghese gladiator as an ancient statue of Chabrias, he mentions that “[t]he form of the letters of the inscription of the master-artist agrees perfectly with the high antiquity to which this statue would then belong.”\footnote{Lessing, \textit{Laocoon}, 205.} If the visual features of inscriptions on statues may be significant, if, moreover, they can remain in conformity with the style of execution of a sculpture, why should writing be perceived differently when it appears in printed literature? This, however, remains outside the scope of Lessing’s reflections as an unrecognised question. Thus, in his influential essay, writing is asserted again as an inferior auxiliary to the “proper,” temporal medium of poetry.

The Romantic fascination with folklore probably also reinforced the conviction of the supremacy of oral literature, as well as testified to a longing for an impossible return to poetry’s ideal, spoken form. W.J.T. Mitchell notes, for example, Wordsworth’s suspicious attitude to the “book” as “a poor earthly casket of immortal verse” (\textit{The Prelude} 1850, v. 160-165) and cites his sonnet “Illustrated Books and Newspapers” (1846) as another proof of this: “Avaunt this vile abuse of pictured page!/ Must eyes be all in all, the tongue and
ear/ Nothing?“6. Ideally, the “poor earthly casket” should be as transparent as possible, so as not to interfere with the essence it contains, the essence that comes from an ideal or imaginary world. In *Areopagitica* Milton evoked a similar image when he spoke about books that preserve as in “a violl the purest efficacie and extraction of that living intellect which bred them” and that “a good book is the pretious life-blood of a master-spirit, imbalm’d and treasur’d up on purpose to a life beyond life.”7 Milton’s metaphor emphasises the spiritual and immaterial nature of a text and the transparent, insignificant and, ideally, non-signifying nature of its container.

However, the bibliographer and textual critic, D.F. McKenzie believes that the passage testifies also to Milton’s awareness of the book as a potentially expressive medium:

In such phrases, Milton puts most clearly the idea of the book as a sacred but expressive form, one whose medium gives transparent access to the essential meaning. As I tried to suggest earlier, there is a tradition in which print-inclined authors assume this. They use, or expect their printers to use, the resources of book forms to mediate their meaning with the utmost clarity. Even when writers, scribes, illuminators or illustrators, printers and publishers, merely accept the conventions of their time, with no innovative or specific intent, there are still certain codes at work from which, if we are sensitive to them, we can recover significant meanings we should otherwise miss or misinterpret.8

McKenzie’s argument is that Milton realised that the materiality of print could influence the meaning of a text, but he wanted the book to be as neutral as possible so that its physical form would not interfere with the “pure”9 meaning it contained.10 As

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10 This may have been also connected with the poet’s blindness, which made him disregard the visual and concentrate on the auditory and semantic qualities of his work.
McKenzie explains, Milton lived in the age when print still struggled to establish its conventions, which meant that no form was yet “transparent,” or in other words, so widely accepted that it could be ignored. Readers were still sensitive to the physical form of books and read them along with texts they contained. And writers took advantage of this fact. Still nearly a century later to give an air of authenticity to their tales novelists resorted to imitations of written documents: collections of letters (Richardson’s *Pamela*), diaries, memoirs, and autobiographies (Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe*, and *Moll Flanders*). By doing so they attempted to conceal the fictionality of their stories. However, as soon as print became a familiar and widespread medium for storytelling, the materiality of writing began to be ignored. So Michael Kaufman noticed that “once the conventions of print were assimilated by the reading public, and print could be shaped into a visual voice, no apparent contradiction between the static surface of the page and the lively moment of the voice would remain. The author could pretend to speak through the page.” 11 This moment coincided with the publication of Lessing’s *Laocon*, which sustained the oral nature of literature by offering a neat division of temporal and spatial arts, ascribing literature to the former and providing arguments for its temporal nature. As we have said, Lessing did this on the grounds that the medium of literature was “articulated sounds in time,” the visuality of writing having already become transparent to the reader’s eye.

But by an ironic coincidence Lessing’s essay appeared in 1766, the very same year in which Laurence Sterne’s *Tristram Shandy* questioned his assumptions, immediately subverting the conventions that had only been established. If literature is executed in “articulated sounds,” several features of Sterne’s novel defy such articulation. How should the reader possibly utter the black or the marble page? How should he express in sounds the looped and straight lines included in the book as

representations of the narration? Should the double column chapter be read by two readers simultaneously, and would such a reading not add some spatial feature to it anyway? Yet the inescapable materiality of Sterne’s novel did not prevent the outstanding Polish philosopher Roman Ingarden (whose ideas greatly influenced the reader response critics) from claiming as late as the third decade of the twentieth century that only the work read aloud achieves its full actualisation and only in reading aloud can it be fully appreciated.12 “The principle remain[ed]: succession of time is the domain of the poet, as space is the domain of the painter,”13 as Lessing had decreed nearly two centuries before. For Ingarden “reading,” i.e. perceiving and cognizing the work of literature was essentially tantamount to “hearing” it. In this respect literature resembles music. For him the book is rather like a musical notation of a piece which becomes a work of musical art only when it is being played.

Discussing the concept of concretisation of the literary work in Szkice z filozofii literatury, the book intended as a brief, popularising introduction to his ontology of the literary work (first published in 1947, reprinted in 2000), Ingarden points out that written signs are merely an aspect of the material foundation of the work, which allows the sound-stratum to be actualised in loud reading, but they do not belong to it. In reading a printed text individual letters and verbal signs do not have individual qualities for us, they simply do not matter.14 “True realizations” of the literary work are only those uttered (read aloud) since only in such a form do they truly embody an ideal that the creative will of the author can suggest intentionally. In his more extended discussions of the ontology of the literary work, contained in Wykłady i dyskusje z estetyki [Lectures and Discussion about Aesthetics] and O poznawaniu dzieła literackiego15 (The Cognition of the

13 Lessing, Laocoon, 145.
Literary Work of Art) Ingarden nuances his position by recognizing that literary works usually appear in the printed form.\textsuperscript{16} He explains:

The literary work as such is a purely intentional formation which has the source of its being in the creative acts of consciousness of its author and its physical foundation in the text set down in writing or through other physical means of possible reproduction (for instance, the tape recorder). By virtue of the dual stratum of its language, the work is both intersubjectively accessible and reproducible, so that it becomes an intersubjective intentional object, related to a community of readers.\textsuperscript{17}

He states further that the material foundation of print ensures the identity of the literary work much more faithfully than the oral transmission, but he insists that visual and material qualities of writing do not constitute a stratum of the literary work.\textsuperscript{18} Admitting that the printed format “does play a


\textsuperscript{17} Ingarden, \textit{Cognition}, 14

\textsuperscript{18} Ingarden, who was a philosopher and not a literary theoretician, focused his reflections on the literary work especially on its structure and mode of existence. He distinguished four essential strata of the literary work, rejecting Nicolai Hartmann’s suggestion that print could be seen as yet another one (\textit{Cognition}, 14): “1. [...] (a) the stratum of verbal sounds and phonetic formations and phenomena of higher order (articulate sounds and sound structures of higher rank built on them, e.g. tone, pitch, and modulation of particular words and sentences); (b) the stratum of semantic units (the stratum of meaning units as a whole); (c) the stratum of schematized aspects, in which objects of various kinds portrayed in the work come to appearance (the stratum of objects represented within the fictional world and their various fortunes); (d) the stratum of the objectivities portrayed in the intentional states of affairs projected by the sentences (the stratum of manifold schematised aspects and series or groups of them; schemata of aspects in which objects appear). 2. From the material and form of the individual strata results an essential inner connection of all the strata with one another and thus the formal unity of the whole work” (\textit{Cognition}, 12; cf. also \textit{Szkice}, 23). English terminology is based on R. Ingarden, \textit{The Cognition of the Literary Work of Art}, 12-14; alternative translations offered in the brackets for the sake of comparison are given after: \textit{The Study of the Literary Work of Art. Introduction} (ed. T. Bela, A. Branny, W. Kalaga, K. Stamirowska, J. Strzetelski, Skrypty Uczelniane nr 314, Kraków: Uniwersytet Jagielloński Instytut Filologii Angielskiej, 1979) 83-84.
modifying role in reading,” he calls into doubt a potential of the printed signs to form a signifying unity with its phonetic actualisation. “The printed signs are not grasped in their individual physical form but rather – as is also the case with verbal sounds – as ideal types, and in this form they are connected with the verbal sound. This introduces a certain contamination into the whole of the literary work of art.” For him, if the printed text matters, if its verbal body becomes noticeable, this is considered as unnecessary interference, detrimental to the reading process, “the viol” no longer being ideally transparent. Thereby, he ignores writers of Sternean persuasion who contaminate pure literature by using non-verbal elements and exploiting qualities of the printed medium for aesthetic and expressive ends.

Ingarden’s theory inspired vigorous discussions and reconsiderations. For example, in “Jeszcze o budowie dzieła literackiego” [Once More about the Structure of the Literary Work], a literary scholar, Henryk Markiewicz, points out that the visual features of the literary work may have a signifying function. Markiewicz cites the idiosyncratic spelling of avant-garde poets, Polish playwright Stanisław Wyspiański’s use of capital letters in his dramas, and graphic elements of Tristram Shandy as examples of works untranslatable into the audible, whose non-linguistic elements are intrinsically connected with their meaning. Without going into details, he mentions several literary works that should not have been dismissed by Ingarden as easily as Tuwim’s jocular rhymes Mirohłady and Stopiewnie, poems reminiscent of Carroll’s “Jabberwocky.” And although in a discussion with an aesthetician Jerzy Pelc recorded as an

19 Ingarden, Cognition, 14-5.
20 Ingarden, Szkice z filozofii literatury, 22; Wykłady, 278. Etymologically English ‘read’ comes from Old English raddan “to counsel” and is related to German reden (to speak, to talk) but it came to denote a paradoxical process of “silent speaking,” as reading is usually silent. This quality of reading as silent perception of the text is evident in, for example, foreign language teaching, in which reading aloud is considered as a harmful technique as it interferes with the process of comprehending a (graphic) message. However, in common understanding the skill of “reading a text” is often seen as the ability to perform a loud reading.

appendix in *Wykłady i dyskusje o estetyce*, Ingarden admits that the visual features of print may attempt intentionally to convey some meaning and possess aesthetic qualities (he mentions Stefan George’s idiosyncratic typeface), however, he finds it disturbing, irritating, and detrimental to the perception of poetry.  

**The Author’s Vision**

Ironic, dismissive, or contemptuous reactions to experimentation with the physical shape of the literary work stem from the conviction of the immaterial substance of literature. But such an attitude does not characterise only such traditional readers as Ingarden. When in *Of Grammatology* Jacques Derrida takes up the question of writing, he recognises a fundamental cleavage in the Western culture that identifies speech with the primary system of signification, a true (ideal) form of language, while denigrating writing as doubly distanced from the signified, as “the body and matter external to the spirit, to breath, to speech, and to the logos.” However, his response to this split is surprisingly comprehensive. Rejecting such a reductive view of writing, he defines it as something larger than both speech and writing, as a universal semiotic system that embraces all kinds of signs and their relations. This system (or language) permeates cognitive activities (all spheres of life in which they are realised), since it reflects the way the human mind operates and makes sense of the world. For Derrida writing reflects a presupposed, preverbal cognitive concept of a phenomenon (whose relation to the phenomenon remains “unmotivated,” yet compliant with a law, which is why he speaks of “the trace”). “Even before it is linked to incision, engraving, drawing, or the letter, to a signifier referring in general to a signifier signified by it, the concept of the *graphe* [unit of a possible graphic system] implies the framework of the *instituted trace*, as the possibility common to all systems of signification.”

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22. The records of the meetings of the Section of Aesthetics, Polish Philosophical Society, Kraków, included in Ingarden, *Wykłady*, 428.
alternative and justified – representation of an idea or concept, equal to, but not necessarily congruent with, its phonetic representation (a spoken word).

While we can agree that speech and writing are two alternative forms of language, the Derridean paradoxical concept seems to perpetuate an unfortunate view of writing as a shady phenomenon. Derrida does not deny its corporeality when it is taken as an alternative mode of thought, but he shares the suspicions of the phonetically oriented linguists whose views he deconstructs. If writing is an embodiment of "writing" (or arche-writing), it is "a dead letter," the medium of absence (of the signified), more poignant due to the physicality of the signifier.

What writing itself, in its nonphonetic moment, betrays, is life. It menaces at once the breath, the spirit, and history as the spirit’s relationship with itself. It is their end, their finitude, their paralysis. 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.²⁵

According to him, if a dynamic semiotic system ("writing") becomes constrained in the "narrow space" of the book, this is an act of violence, a totalitarian gesture of control, and a falsifying gesture, too, as it presupposes the totality of the signified which it wants to embrace and reflect. "The idea of the book," explains Derrida, "which always refers to a natural totality, is profoundly alien to the sense of writing. [...] If I distinguish the text from the book, I shall say that the destruction of the book as it is now under way in all domains, denudes the surface of the text."²⁶ Elsewhere he recalls the metaphor of writing as "clothing." He implies that the book, as a seemingly complete object, veils a "true text," obscures it by presenting a fraction (of a dynamic semantic system) as a whole. But if it is so that anything from a poem to a building, city or landscape can be a text, if the world is indeed essentially textual, why does Derrida seem to deny this to the

book? If “writing” really is so comprehensive, why should the book as an object not partake in this textuality? In other words, why cannot the book be “writing”? It seems that Derrida (at least in *Grammatology*) cannot free himself from the logocentrism he so passionately deconstructs. Besides, he admits later that he could just as well substitute “writing” with speech, as both are in fact two orders of representation, equally deferred from the reality they strive to represent. So by metaphorising “writing,” “book” and “text,” he only further defers understanding and only further detaches the signifier from the signified.

I do not advocate a return to an innocent past in which “text” meant “a written text” and “book” meant “a book,” but for the sake of the present discussion I want to use them in their very basic meanings. As W. J. T. Mitchell remarks, although we live in a culture which is “obsessed with ‘textuality,’ ‘writing’ is a buzzword that is not likely to be confused with the sort of writing promoted by textbooks in composition.” He observes that for the French thinker “[w]riting is caught between two othernesses, voice and vision, the speaking and the seeing subject. Derrida mainly speaks of the struggle of writing with voice, but the addition of vision and image reveals the writer’s dilemma on another flank. How do we say what we see, and how can we make the reader see?” With a Derridean twist, Mitchell proposes to look at writing from yet another angle, wondering “[w]hat is it that writing and grammatology exclude or displace?”:

Nothing more or less than the image—the picture, likeness, simulacrum—and the iconology that aspires to be its science. If “*différance*” is the key term of grammatology, “similitude” is the central notion of iconology. If writing is the medium of absence and artifice, the image is the medium of presence and nature, sometimes cozening us with illusion, sometimes with powerful recollection and sensory immediacy.

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27 Yet he has chosen it because of its actual dominance in the scholarly discourse; as his translator clarifies, the dominating medium of transmitting knowledge (and literature) is the book and written text, which pose themselves as speech.
Writing, as we understand it here, is literally “visible language,” a medium that fuses the visual and aural modes of expression, as well as art and technology. Mitchell reminds us that its origins go back to the pictogram, in which communication was based on an immediate iconic resemblance between the signifier and the signified. But it should not be seen as a subsidiary to aural expression, as an inferior and auxiliary form of linguistic communication. For him it is “the medium in which the interaction of image and text, pictorial and verbal expression, adumbrated in the tropes of *ut pictura poesis* and the sisterhood of the arts, seems to be a literal possibility. Writing makes the language (in the literal sense) visible (in the literal sense); it is [...] not just a supplement to speech, but a “sister art” to the spoken word, an art of both language and vision.”

If we accept that literature derives from such roots, it becomes clear that it partakes in two modes of existence: as the oral performance and a written record. In the latter case it possesses a “spatial form” in the most literal sense: in the form of a physically existing text. This form can be subjected to creative, aesthetic modifications just as its oral counterpart is. Mitchell classifies this as the first and basically non-metaphorical level of spatiality in the literary work, the other three being: the sphere of the represented world taken as “an order of coexistent data” (something larger than merely the setting); “‘a map’ or outline of our temporal movement through the text,” which is the ordering principle governing the unfolding of a story, or the presentation of an image, or feelings; and the reader’s vision of the work rooted in the spatial apprehension of the work as “a system for generating meaning.” Consequently, if (written and printed) literature is acknowledged as a visual art, too, there is no reason why its pictorial and spatial features could not be included in an analysis of the expressive and communicative functions. Admitting that this is not an entirely new question in literary studies, Mitchell proposes that such an inquiry should become

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an indispensable part of an overall theory of the spatiality of the literary work.

The physical features of even the most traditional literary work affect its meaning as McLuhan has made us aware of, and they partake of more abstract levels of the work’s spatiality, even in the case of visually non-conspicuous texts. If they are a product of the conventions of a given time and place, their communicative and expressive functions can be of lesser importance, being mainly of interest to bibliographers and book historians. But if they are purposefully employed by writers, they can contribute to the integrity of the artistic design. And, inevitably, they are associated with the notorious question of “the author’s intention.” A fascinating comment on this matter can be found in D.F. McKenzie’s *Bibliography and Sociology of Texts*. McKenzie approaches the problem from the angle opposite to Mitchell’s: that of bibliography, a discipline which traditionally takes no or little interest in the contents of the documents it studies. However, in his book McKenzie sets out to prove that not only should the bibliographer be concerned with text contained in the material artefact he studies, but also that the physical shape of a book, even some of its minute details, is relevant to the linguistic content, and this should be accounted for by literary critics. To prove his point he demonstrates how the modified typography of the epigraph W. K. Wimsatt and M.C. Beardsley chose for their famous essay “The Intentional Fallacy” made them misread the author’s intentions. Their motto looked as follows:

He owns with toil he wrote the following scenes;
But, if they’re naught, ne’er spare him for his pains:
Damn him the more; have no commiseration
For dullness on mature deliberation.

WILLIAM CONGREVE, Prologue to *The Way of the World*

Congreve’s authorised version of 1710, however, read slightly differently:

He owns, with Toil, he wrought the following Scenes;
But if they’re naught ne’er spare him for his Pains:
Damn him the more; have no Commiseration
For Dullness on mature Deliberation.33

McKenzie is convinced that these seemingly ignorable alteration modified the original meaning so that a reading of the passage could be ultimately twisted by 180 degrees.34 The conspicuous misreading of “wrought” as “wrote” immediately undermines Wimsatt and Beardsley’s point that literary critics should not care about the author’s intentions, as Congreve obviously intended to use “wrought” to rhyme, also visually, with “naught” as if to stress his great pains in composing the play. This is also why “the Toil” is foregrounded by commas – to ensure that the author’s Toil should not pass unnoticed by a dull spectator or reader in the original phrase. The change of punctuation results in de-emphasising “the Toil” Congreve may have wanted to stress, while emphasising a disrespectful reader he wanted to speed over. Dropping uppercase letters, supposed to iron out the too emphatic 18th c. typography, transforms personified figures of “Dullness” (Stupidity) and “Deliberation” (Sense) into bodiless abstractions. By using an (also graphically) misquoted text, Wimsatt and Beardsley removed Congreve’s ironies and imposed their own, inferring from his lines what they wanted to prove, McKenzie observes.35 His reading of the playwright’s intended meaning – encoded by Congrave by means of typography and recovered from it by a scholar aware of its signifying conventions – is directly opposite to Wimsatt and Beardsley’s interpretation of the epigram. McKenzie remarks that:

There is certainly a cruel irony in the fact that Congreve’s own text is reshaped and misread to support an argument against himself. Far from offering a licence for his audience and

33 Both versions are reproduced in the original typography in McKenzie’s Bibliography and Sociology of Texts, 19.
34 McKenzie explains the misquoting as follows: “[t]he anthology of plays edited by Nettleton and Case, from which Wimsatt would almost certainly have taught, includes The Way of the World, the prologue to which in that edition inexplicably reads ‘wrote’ for ‘wrought’. We must therefore, I think, relieve Wimsatt and Beardsley of immediate responsibility, and we should certainly free them from any suggestion of deliberate contamination. But I wonder if they would have ventured to choose the lines had they been more carefully edited” (Bibliography, 27).
35 McKenzie, Bibliography, 18-25.
readers to discount the author’s meaning, Congreve is putting, with an exasperated irony, the case for the right of authors, as he says in another line of the prologue, “to assert their Sense” against the taste of the town. When Jeremy Collier wrenched to his own purposes the meaning of Congreve’s words, Congreve replied with his Amendments of Mr. Collier’s False and Imperfect Citations. He too had a way with epigraphs and chose for that occasion one from Martial which, translated, reads: “That book you recite, O Fidentinus, is mine. But your vile re-citation begins to make it your own.”

This case shows how each generation inevitably appropriates older texts, and how this is done through physical reshaping of the original. But editorial decisions are no trivial matters; they may be grave, even if they concern accidentals, and may sometimes bury the intended meaning. McKenzie’s example proves that not only do the physical form of a book and its various graphic elements signify, but also that an author may choose to inscribe his or her intentions into the physical and (typo)graphic shape of his or her work. Even if the authors rely on editors, typesetters and printers to choose a form for their text, this does not abolish the fact that readers do read the message of the medium. When Sławomir Shuty’s Belkot (2001) was published in a pink cover reminiscent of a Harlequin, it ended up in newsagent’s kiosks where it was bought as a tacky romance and returned with complaints that it was not one. In this case the readers misinterpreted the bibliographic code as a marketing convention and were unable to see its irony.

But these conventions usually work smoothly. Easy travel readings are always printed on low quality paper, which materially corresponds to their disposable content. This is why Jerome McGann sees books as social products of a specific time and place, and literary texts as inherently unstable phenomena, since the bibliographic code is a subject to constant change. This is also why a French-American postmodernist writer Raymond Federman grants a part of the

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36 McKenzie, Bibliography, 23.
37 The information obtained in a conversation with the publishers of Shuty’s book, Korporacja Ha!art in Kraków.
authorship also to those involved in the publishing process. However, though disillusioned as to a possibility of authorial control, the American novelist expressed a wish to fully author his fiction in a note closing his first novel *Double or Nothing*:

**WARNING:** The AUTHOR (that is to say the fourth person) is solely responsible -

and not the editor
the printer
the designer
the publisher

nor the protagonist (third person)
the inventor (second person)
the recorder (first person)

nor anyone else (known or unknown)

for any typing and typographic mistakes
factual errors
misrepresentations
miscalculations
misconceptions
corneries
saloperies
obscenities
immoralities
stupidities
or anything else (visible or invisible)

that the potential READER (commentator or critic) of this discourse may find objectionable!  

His novel, first published in 1971 by the Swallow Press in the form reproducing the arrangement and the font of the typescript, is a stunning combination of the visual and textual. Apart from the name and logo of the publisher on the title page (which due to its typography stands out as an alien intrusion), the copyright note, the address of the publisher and the ISBN number (all in the same typeface as the one used in the book) and two blurbs praising the book’s visual innovativeness, the novel does not contain any non-authorial elements (cf. Fig. 1a-b). The absence of an editor, a (cover) designer, a typesetter and a printer seems to assert the writer’s absolute authority over the book’s material shape. Aware of the influence of the

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production crew on the final product of the publishing process, Federman does not allow them to interfere with his book. Their absence indicates that he authored not only the text but also the book itself. In Marcus Klein’s phrase, with the “lovely geometry of personal assertion Federman turned typography into typology.” Double or Nothing (1971) constitutes a type of its own. It stands out from other literary works as an embodiment of the AUTHOR’s vision.

However, the second printing of its third edition, a copy of which is lying in front of me, seems to corroborate McGann’s view of inherent textual instability and the illusoriness of authorial control over authorial intentions once the book has made it into print. The author’s warning is still printed at the end of the book but includes new insertions: “the pagemaker” and “n’doodlings” in different fonts. In fact, the whole book has been visually “translated” into different typefaces and offered in a slightly different layout. The changes include insertion of new graphic elements (e.g. on blank unnumbered pages between p. 197 and 197.1, or 10 and 11.1), and a different arrangement of the text on two facing pages (e.g. pages 100-101 in 1971 edition and 142-143 in the 1998 edition). Obviously, the cover is designed anew as well. Instead of a zigzagged column of text from the novel (a monologue of the recorder), it features a straight, wide column formed with the title words. The first edition was entitled “Double or Nothing by Raymond Federman”; in the new design the author’s name is framed as some key words of the novel, such as “noodles,” “toothpaste,” “toilet paper” and “tomato sauce” also appearing on the cover. The deletion of “by” from both the cover and the title pages inside the book detaches Federman-author from his book, turning him into yet another textual figure in the story (cf. Figs. 2a-b).

The bibliographic code of this new edition seems to consort with Federman’s view on the shared authorship expressed in “Surficition.” What is more, a note in the colophon informs us that “[t]ypesetting and book design [was] adapted from the original for the third edition by Jonathan Budil.” The blatant

41 Marcus Klein, blurb on the back cover of the first edition.
42 Raymond Federman, Double or Nothing, 2nd ed (Boulder, Normal, Ill.: Fiction Collective Two, 1998).
contradiction of this note and the warning closing the novel may be resolved when our interpretation incorporates the author into the fictional world as one more character (as the cover suggests). But if we are invited to read the book in all its aspects (as we are), the copyright note may lead us to yet another interpretation. It quotes the author as having “all rights reserved” for himself. If redesigning was done with his consent, as we may justifiably assume, the new shape of his book has his approval, which is to say, is in accord with his intentions. The copyright note asserts him as the crucial agent controlling the textual and material unity of his work. But Federman’s case makes us realize that there are other writers who seek comparable control over the matter and material of their books. Vain as their efforts might be, perhaps it is worth considering them separately from those who yield willingly to circumstances and conventions.

43 When I discussed the Polish edition of Federman’s novel (published as Podwójna wygrana jak nic in the autumn of 2010 in “Liberatura” series of Halart Publishing House), he was delighted to hear that it could reproduce the typewriter typesetting of the fist edition and admitted that the new typography was a compromise, which he approved of but given a choice, he would rather return to the original layout.
Fig. 1a. The cover of Federman’s *Double or Nothing*, the first edition (1971).
Fig. 1b. The title page of Federman’s *Double or Nothing*, the first edition (1971). The only typographically alien element is the publisher’s logo.
Fig. 2a. The colophon of Federman’s *Double or Nothing*, first edition.
Fig. 2b. The opening page of Federman's *Double or Nothing*, first edition; note the consistent use of the typewriter font in all authorial parts.

"Just think, for instance, if the room cost 8 dollars a week, then still there to be noodles than it is."

"Just think, a little piece of meat and there cost 8 dollars a week, if there's much food for thought."

"If the room costs 8 dollars a week, then still there to be noodles than it is."

"Just think, a little piece of meat and there cost 8 dollars a week, if there's much food for thought.

"Just think, a little piece of meat and there cost 8 dollars a week, if there's much food for thought."

"Just think, a little piece of meat and there cost 8 dollars a week, if there's much food for thought."

"Just think, a little piece of meat and there cost 8 dollars a week, if there's much food for thought.

"Just think, a little piece of meat and there cost 8 dollars a week, if there's much food for thought."
Figs. 3a & b. The third edition of Federman’s *Double or Nothing*; note the new design referred to as “an adaptation of the original.”
The Poet’s Touch

Among such dreamers was definitely Stéphane Mallarmé with his grand vision of *le Livre*, of which the only larger extant splinter is his *Un coup de dés jamais n’abolira le hasard*. Leaving aside (at least for the time being) the question whether it is a realization of his project or a record of the failure, let us consider to what extent its visual and spatial features determine its reading, knowing that “everything in the world” (and definitely in this poem) “exists in order to end up as a book.” Even if as Ingarden felt in George’s case a particular shape of the typeface may be perceived as merely an irritating accidental, it is impossible to deny it a signifying function in Mallarmé’s poem. If such qualities as pitch, tone, and intonation in the spoken performance of a poem can carry meaning (in Ingardenian framework), it is evident that in *Un coup de dés* their visual counterparts, that is different typefaces, should do so as well. In the foreword to the magazine publication in *Cosmopolis* (1897) Mallarmé indicated that different sizes and positions of words and sentences on the page are supposed to guide the reader’s performance: words in capital letters are to be uttered more loudly and forcefully, those lying at the top of the page represent a high pitch and those at the bottom low pitch and “the range or disposition of characters, in the middle, at the top, or at the bottom of the page, marks the rising and falling of the intonation.” The voco-visual features also convey some other senses. Blanks may indicate the length of silence before and after each verse, whereas roman type and italics may be visual equivalents of two different tones or voices. The force of the voice, i.e. the size of the typefaces, may indicate the hierarchy of ideas in the poem, while different tones (i.e. typefaces) might convey uncertainty: “AS IF/ An insinuation / simple / in the silence / enrolled with irony / or / the mystery / hurled / howled,” or hesitation and anxiety: “THE MASTER /.../

hesitates /.../ formerly he would grasp the helm / at his feet / from the unanimous horizon.”

Despite Mallarmé’s claim that *Un coup de dés* aspires to the condition of music, the French poet was well aware that due to an unorthodox use of typography the oral/aural became visual and material. He sees the poem as a diagrammatic representation of the Idea, a kind of mental map with constellations of opalescent meaning. “The paper intervenes each time an image [...] ceases or withdraws, accepting the succession of others; and, as it is not a question, as it usually is, of regular sound patterns and verses but rather of prismatic subdivisions of Idea, [...] the text imposes itself, variably, near or far from the latent guiding thread, for the sake of verisimilitude.” The reading process is not timed by blanks-silences but “spaced out”: Mallarmé stresses that this is in fact the only novelty of his poetry: “le tout sans nouveauté *qu’un espacement de la lecture*.” The Page becomes the basic unit of the poem, while the forward movement is dictated not by the narrative (which is avoided) but by “the variable motion of the writing.”

“The variable motion of the writing” is translated into a variable motion of reading; and just as performances of a musical score, readings differ from one another. In such poetry meaning depends as much on the readers’ oral performance as on their choices concerning the order of elements governed by a spatial disposition. They may choose to read first the verso and then the recto page, or to treat both as one unified space, or to read the sentences in bigger types first and then follow the smaller texts. These readings are guided not by ordinary syntax but by the layout and the succession of pages. It is a particular shape and arrangement of the work’s material foundations that allow the readers to share in the authority that is traditionally ascribed to the author who usually

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47 Mallarmé, “Préface,” 122.

48 Mallarmé, “Préface,” 121.

49 Mallarmé, “Préface,” 122.
determines the direction and order of reading. But here the author yields some of his power, and perhaps also invites the reader to participate in his experience of the challenge posed by the blank page. Through participating in decisions as to how to traverse the textual space, the readers must find their own ways in the expanse of whiteness interspersed with constellations of text, using for navigation the book as an instrument spirituel.

As Sam Slote notes, in the absence of any formal punctuation marks, the syntax of Mallarmé’s poem “is orchestrated by the page and its blanks,” the poem is “biblioficated,” and “versification is remade into specification.”50 His reading remains in tune with an understanding of punctuation as physical separation of linguistic units, that is, as a way of

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50 Sam Slote, The Silence in Progress of Dante, Mallarmé, and Joyce (New York et al.: Peter Lang, 1999) 140.
spatialising discourse, offered in J.A. Cuddon’s *The Dictionary of Literary Terms*:

Punctuation is co-extensive with writing, as with reading, but 8 spatial levels may be distinguished: (1) letter-forms, punctuating the blank pages; *scripto continua* (q.v.), words without spaces or marks between them; (2) interword spaces, including paragraph-, verse line- and stanza-breaks; (3) the marks of punctuation with their associated spaces; (4) words or other units distinguished by fount, face, case, colour, siglum, or position; the detail of *mise-en-page* (q.v.); (5) the organization of the page and opening; the principles of *mise-en-page*; (6) pagination or foliation (q.v.), punctuating reading; (7) the appendices, and apparatus; and (8) the book itself as a complete object punctuating space or constituent volume. At all levels punctuation may be deictic, and at levels 2-7 elocutionary or syntactic, depending largely on whether one reads silently or aloud; but, in general, the higher the level, the more absolute the prescription of punctuation (by author, printer or whomever): punctuation is a tool of authority, limiting as well as generating and inflecting meaning, and has long been of interest to church and state. […]. And the art of punctuation is influenced by religion, utility, philosophy and aesthetics at least as much as by logic or theoretical coherence.⁵¹

The definition recognises those new “punctuating devices”: pagination or foliation that paces reading; and “the book itself as a complete object punctuating space or constituent volume,” as legitimate means of the writer’s repertoire. In Mallarmé’s case the materiality and spatiality of the book become constituent features of the work, an indispensable vehicle for the author’s intention: it cannot be written otherwise. Let me quote Slote again: “The book is the interval mired in materiality and betrayed towards silence. Annullation is material, the work of a disastrous tenuous and tenebrous alphabet. For *Un coup de dés* this silencing takes place through hypothetical denegating proliferations of the page.”⁵² The actual place where *Un coup de dés* is typographically played out becomes absorbed into the vacuum of the represented


⁵² Slote, *Silence in Progress*, 150.
space; and the material shape of the book with its folding and fluttering sheets also participates in reading.

Besides, as the dictionary entry points out, punctuation serves also as an expression of authority: in this case of Mallarmé’s idiosyncratic vision of the text, as well as of his aesthetics and philosophy of language. As has been noticed, these entail the reader as an accomplice in the author’s subversion of prevailing conventions. Of course, the readers may not comply. They may consider such a poem “madness / of the memorable crisis”; they may reject it as an extreme case of experiment, resulting in failure: “some splashing below of water as if to disperse the empty act / abruptly which otherwise / by its falsehood / would have founded / perdition.” On the other hand, such poetic language can be seen as the source of “power” for the author who draws his creative energy from the material medium he is working with. Maybe the poet (and the reader) should not despair but accept that ultimately “NOTHING / WILL HAVE TAKEN PLACE / BUT THE PLACE / EXCEPT / PERHAPS / A CONSTELLATION,” or as another of Mallarmé’s figures, the Faun put it: “Exhaled from twin pipes […] / The melody in arid drifts of rain / Is the visible, serene and fictive air / Of inspiration rising as if in prayer.” The split into the oral and written modes of poetry can be healed by an intertwining of these sister forms in one literary work. Mallarmé is aware that in *Un coup de dés* he offers a new body of the book, or a map of a new poetic territory, and hopes that there will be others ready to explore it:

Aujourd’hui ou sans présumer de l’avenir qui sortira d’ici, rien ou presque un art, reconnaissons aisément que la tentative participe, avec imprévu, de poursuites particulières et chères à notre temps, le vers libre et le poème en prose. Leur réunion s’accomplit sous une influence, je sais, étrangère, celle de la Musique entendue au concert; on en retrouve plusieurs moyens m’ayant semblé appartenir aux Lettres, je les reprends. Le genre, que c’en devienne un comme la symphonie, peu a peu, à côté du chant personnel, laisse intact l’antique vers, auquel je
So in *Un coup de dés*, an anticipation of the poet’s totalising project of the Book in which everything *matters* and everything is *in place*, the readers and critics are offered an object going beyond the fictive space represented in the work and reaching out to a section of the real space actualised in front of the reader’s eyes in his or her hands. This poem, which transcends the realm of Ingarden’s analysis, foreshadows not only some new genre of poetry or prose fiction, but new critical theories that could account for this fusion. Though threatened with dissolution in the void, it is nevertheless “the bound interval into which disparition is folded and extrapolated,” or the “biblioficated nought.”\(^{56}\) The blanks, the folding, the ply, the turning of the white sail of the page can only be read from the material book; in order to show nothingness we need *something* to surround it (just as B.S. Johnson in *Albert Angelo* needed a material page to cut out a hole in it). Therefore, in such cases the artefactuality of the book should also become a subject of critical and theoretical reflection.

**Iconic Spaces of Literature**

Carl D. Malmgren is one of those few theoreticians who have acknowledged the material aspect of the literary work and offered us some tools to critically explore it. In *Fictional Spaces in the Modernist and Postmodernist American Novel* he proposes the most elaborate classification of fictional space that covers also the material structure of the book as a legitimate expressive device.\(^{57}\) He also implies a possibility of a literary genre which would be immanent in the book rather than merely in a text transmitted through any medium, a genre in which the author deliberately exploits the material space, incorporating it into his or her work. Since his observations are

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\(^{55}\) Mallarmé, “Preface” and “Préface,” 122-123.

\(^{56}\) Slote, *The Silence in Progress*, 168.

highly relevant to the present discussion, I will present them in more detail below.

For Malmgren reading and writing are essentially spatial processes grounded in the verbal space, that is, an “area” or “expanse” determined by the literary discourse created by the writer and accessible to the reader in the process of “concretisation” (or “actualisation”) and interpretation. On the one hand, Malmgren takes this area to be a metaphor for configurations of narrative discourse shaped by the writer and reconstructed by the reader; on the other, he notes that inscribing a narrative text may be a less figurative act than we tend to think. Every text occupies a particular section of the physical space, consists of a number of pages filled with a number of words placed in a certain order, whose positions in a discourse are determined by grammatical rules. Inscribed in the sentences and paragraphs of a text is the fictional world dependent upon “the representative function of fictional signs” that the reader must actualise in the course of reading. Then, the fictional world generates an interpretive space “as its signifieds become the second-level signifiers of a totalised reading of (extratextual) reality” which the reader fills with his interpretation.58 Thus, Malmgren’s concept of fictional space functions as an umbrella term that takes into consideration the author, the reader and the work, also in its material existence.

Malmgren provides us with a neat schema of all aspects of fictional space.59 According to him fictional space is split into two areas: the **textual space** with semantic and aesthetic dimensions, existing concretely as the product of the author, and the **paraspace**, i.e. a dynamic field in which the text and the reader come into an interaction. He differentiates two aspects of the textual space: the **narratival** space and the **narrational** space. The former embraces the presented world with all its constitutive elements such as characters (actants), particular places (setting, locale, or *topoi*) and objects described in the work. These usually carry the major part of the message, as in, for example, realistic fiction. The narrational space, in turn, is associated with the way the author and the speaker (narrator) make their presence known.

59 Malmgren, *Fictional Spaces*, 60; reproduced in fig. 4 below.
This space is, in turn, divided into two sub-categories: the *discursive* space and the *iconic* space. Malmgren specifies that discourse in his book “should be understood as speech acts that deliberately draw attention to the enunciation and therefore tend to foreground the presence of the speaker in the story. ... [T]hese devices create a substantial DISCURSIVE SPACE attendant upon the fact that any narrative requires the presence of the speaker if it is to be communicated.” ⁶⁰ Thus, discursive space refers to all aspects of the narrative that draw the reader’s attention to the act of narrating or attempt to make it as transparent as possible; they involve different types of narrators, point of view, mood and tone. This discursive space can be further split into two levels: the syntagmic, constituted by metalingual, ideological and perceptual statements, and the lexemic, pertaining to dictional patterns, words of estrangement and the use of deictics.⁶¹ But prose narrative (and as a matter of fact, also poetry) involves another aspect of communication associated with the material medium in which a text is recorded. After Holquist and Reed, Malmgren observes that especially “novels constitute a literature of the printed book and the peculiarities that this medium entails” should not be ignored since they may also carry a part of the message. He calls the space of signification realised through the material medium of the book the *iconic space* and distinguishes its four levels: the *alphabetic*, *lexical*, *paginal* and *compositional*. This space is less figurative than the other spaces he describes, and pertains to all these elements of the literary work in which there is a physical correspondence between the signifying and the signified “which therefore draw the reader’s attention to the materiality of the fictional discourse.”⁶²

⁶² Malmgren, *Fictional Spaces*, 45.
Figure 5. Malmgren’s Map of Fictional Space with an inclusion of liberature.
The alphabetic space pertains to the exploration and manipulation of letters, those smallest, “subatomic particles” of writing. Any writer making systematic use of devices such as palindromes, acrostics or anagrams creates this kind of space. Sometimes these devices may even constitute the ordering principle of a whole work, as in Walter Abish’s *Alphabetical Africa* or lipograms, i.e. texts in which one of the letters is deliberately avoided. The best known example of a lipogrammatic novel is Georges Perec’s *La disparition*, in which there is no single word with “e,” a noticeable and disturbing omission since it is the most frequently occurring French letter. In French “e” is pronounced like *eux* (they), so the absent character signifies absent “them.” Thereby the titular disappearance acquires a double meaning: it refers to the missing letter, to the missing character who unexpectedly disappears one day, and, symbolically, to the missing parents of the writer, too. In further chapters we shall look at ways in which Joyce actualises the alphabetic space by employing acrostics and acronyms to multiply his heroes’ identities in *Finnegans Wake*, as well as to expand the paraspace of interpretation.

Perec’s work also utilises the lexical space, which pertains to such narrative strategies that foreground the fact that a literary work is composed of (written) words. The reader of *La disparition* will be probably struck by the fact that the novel does not include any words with the most common French letter (though there were reviewers who did not notice that). Another option of expanding the lexical space is to use words (over)burdened with meaning such as puns, portmanteaux, homophones and homographs, specially abstract, opaque words, and foreign items. The visuality of the literary medium becomes especially evident in puns (paragrams, spoonerism) and portmanteaux which rely on a manipulation of letters which produces visual ambiguity (a word can be read in two ways, or visually combines two words). Again *Finnegans Wake*, which Joyce claimed to have been founded on the pun, with its “celtelleneteutoslavzendlatinsoundscript” (*FW* 219.17)

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63 Malmgren, *Fictional Spaces*, 46.

64 Perec lost his parents in the Holocaust, and the sense of that loss permeates all his writing.

65 Malmgren, *Fictional Spaces*, 47.
provides us with a wealth of material for discussion of this level of iconic space.

A deliberate use of the page layout as a signifying unit is an example of the exploitation of the paginal space, the third kind of iconic space in Malmgren’s model. Authors who extensively exploit it do not usually think in terms of a linearly developing discourse, but arrange the page as if they were composing a picture; thus, it is the level most often utilised by visual and concrete poetry; apart from Un coup de dés, carmina figurata and Blake’s visionary illuminated poems being other most obvious examples. In narratives, as in poetry, the layout of the page provides a commentary, paces and directs the reading or carries additional message. Beside Mallarmé’s poems, for example, Federman’s Double or Nothing and Butor’s Intervalles are characterised by this type of space. In fiction non-verbal paginal space was also creatively (and humorously) used by Sterne, who marked Yorick’s death with a black page, a device repeated with some modifications two hundred years later by B.S. Johnson to mark periods of blackouts and, finally, death of one of the characters in Travelling People. In House Mother Normal Johnson makes a different use of paginal space. The book is set in a nursing home where eight patients are looked after by the house mother. It includes nine streams of consciousness occupying the same amount of space (twenty-one pages), each being an iconic image reflecting the working of their minds during one hour. Each of them is allotted the same number of pages, and each line in each part corresponds to the same moment of time. The physical correspondence of particular places on particular pages reflects the synchronicity of the characters’ thoughts (see Fig. 6). The density and syntax of the texts render a more or less smooth working of the geriatrics’ minds. The gaps and white spaces function as iconic semems (minimal units of meaning) denoting black-out as they stand for moments when the patients’ consciousness switches off or fades away. The effect achieved is sculptural, as the reader watches the same events several times from different angles and only gets a full vision when he has read all the accounts. The house mother is allowed one additional page on which she

66 Malmgren, Fictional Spaces, 48.
“steps outside the convention, the framework of twenty-one
pages per person” and discloses herself as a fictional
construction and the author as the master builder of this house
of fiction.67

But here the paginal space is also an element of a larger
design and contributes to the building up of the compositional
space. The effect of synchronicity is achieved through a
careful composition of the whole book based on the repeated
pagination, and the layout of the paginal space. The house
mother speaking on behalf of the author confirms that the
book has been deliberately designed by the author in this
particular shape. And the reading process is reminiscent of
“pass the parcel” – the game the old people are playing in the
book. The reader, like them, gradually unfolds the paper (turns
the pages) to get to the inside of the book-box (the story), as if
circulating round the same moment and place, and what he
finds inside the parcel (the book) metaphorically stands for the
content of the house mother’s mind. The surprise gift hidden in
the box is crap, which symbolises not only her scatological
game, but also a tumour that is destroying her brain, as the
narrator informs us. Finally, it may appear a self-ironic
comment as the book closes with the house mother saying:
“So you see this is from his skull. It is a diagram of certain
aspects of the inside of his skull! What a laugh!”68

67 B.S. Johnson, Omnibus. Albert Angelo. Trawl. House Mother Normal (London:
Picador, 2004) 204.
68 Johnson, Omnibus: House Mother, 204.
... not like this, they give us snack here. I made him a proper dinner, gave him a treat. After all that Cassi, but he could hardly eat. The poor boy, what I just before him was faggots in a lovely gravy, it was something special I made for him, just for him. Then, not like this slimy brown stuff they slop on everything here, can't think why they do it, what the point is, not on my life, no. And I could see his eyes light up as he saw it, it was really good, it was really good, being at home for him, that's when he realized it, for the first time that first day. I think.

But then he couldn't eat, the first mouthful and he was sick, he had to rush out the yard to the car park and I was left - Now what's she done wrong? Mrs Ridge in trouble again, she asks for it, she must like the twitcher, really.

I could hear him in there, standing at the door as I was, looking at them faggots and the new peas.

... again. The same again. It's not as though they tempted me to eat and risk the agony down below.

Cutting down has helped, I was right. The only way not to inflame the piles is not to eat. Found that out first time I had them. Don't feel any weaker, I was weak to start with. Must eat something, though, to show them, told him I was not a big eater, don't want to be thrown out. Not the sauce again, couldn't take it, the smell, those dirty. Soup is what I should have, a main in my -

She's taking my dinner! She can have it...

No, the House Mother shouldn't hit...
In another novel, *The Unfortunates* (1969, see Fig. 7 below), Johnson offers the reader an actual book-in-the-box, containing twenty seven unbound “chapters” that can be read in any order; except for the first and last sections, which are labelled as such. The physical shape of the book functions as an icon of the fragmentariness and discontinuous workings of the memory: each leaflet corresponds to a scrap of reminiscences contained within the skull of the author-narrator. The random order of reading reproduces a random series of recollections invading the narrator’s mind during his trip to a Midland city where his friend Tony lived and died of cancer. Besides, *The Unfortunates* literally falls apart just as Tony fell apart, defeated by the disease. Johnson’s book cannot be reintegrated into a uniform shape just as the unfortunate Tony cannot be brought back to life, nor can his friend-narrator reintegrate his memories into a uniform story. The incoherence of its two chronological orders, and a tension between the present and the past is inscribed into the physical structure of the book, as Krystyna Stamirowska stresses. As Saporta’s *Composition 1* and Herta Müller’s *Der Wächter nimmt seinen Kamm* (also books-in-the-box), Johnson’s novel is a record of a trauma re-enacted in the material form of his work. As has been already mentioned, the British novelist inflicted yet another brutality on his material when he cut a hole in a page of *Albert Angelo*. The shock of discovering a hole (readers usually do not expect to see it in an ordinarily looking book) acts as a simulacrum of the shock of finding the body of a victim; the cut in the page symbolises the injuries inflicted on the hero by his pupils. On one hand, the writer wants to give the reader quite a literal *in-sight* into his hero’s tragic future. On the other, by making the reader see the body of his books in their materiality he aspires to transcend fictionality of his fiction and offer his readers a true experience.

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Johnson is definitely a writer who heavily exploits the compositional space. Each of his novels is a unique project in which the length of chapters, the play between blanks and
print, or the format and shape of the book are interconnected with the narratives. In devising and writing his unconventional\textsuperscript{70} novels Johnson was greatly inspired by Joyce’s achievement. He was convinced that after \textit{Ulysses} and \textit{Finnegans Wake}, the modern writer cannot continue writing in the way conventionalised in the nineteenth century realistic novel, as it no longer corresponds to the modern perception of the world. “Literary forms do become exhausted, clapped out as well”\textsuperscript{71}. Today no one writes rhymed epic poems or five-act blank verse dramas anymore because poets and playwrights have discovered new means of expression more adequate to the contemporary sensitivity. Besides, Johnson argues, thanks to Joyce and Sterne writers should have realised that “novel” as a genre is nothing more than a certain form of literary discourse – a form that can and should be modified in accordance to its theme. In other words, Johnson seems to postulate that the novel (as a literary form or genre) should remain in an iconic relation with its subject (or content). Commenting on his own books he draws an analogy with architecture: “Subject matter is everywhere, general, is brick, concrete, plastic: the ways of putting it together are particular, are crucial” and further explained: “With each of my novels there has always been a certain point when what has been until then just a mass of subject-matter, the material of living, of my life, comes to have a shape, a form that I recognise as a novel. This crucial interaction between the material and myself has always been reduced to a single point in time”\textsuperscript{72} and, let us add, to a certain, very particular physical shape. In further chapters we shall consider what Joyce’s inspiration may consist in and how the idea of liberating the novel and shaping its material form in accordance with its subject matter function in the Irishman’s work.

The metaphor of the building was also employed by an American writer and philosopher, William H. Gass to comment

\textsuperscript{70} Johnson criticises the use of “experimental” to refer to such books. He believes that his experiments end up in the waste paper bin, while what he offers his publishers and readers is a “finished product”. See B.S. Johnson, “Introduction,” \textit{Aren’t You Rather Young to be Writing Your Memoirs?} (London: Hutchinson, 1973) 19.


\textsuperscript{72} Johnson, “Introduction,” 23-4.
on a complex mode of existence of the novel, which for him unites both “the body” and “the soul”:

If the novel is a mind aware of a world, then its ontological status [...] is complex and troubled. As mind it is meaning and belongs to a Platonic nowhere; as the world the mind is aware of, it is object, matter, extension, creatures, things – metaphorically observed, of course, and dreamed as only possible; then as writing read and sounded, it is both spatially simultaneous and yet present only in its sounded moment like music. The printed text exists as a whole, all at once, as the rooms stairways, and floors of a building do; and our first reading is like our first visit to the Palace of the Popes at Avignon; perhaps where an informed and garrulous guide leads us here and there as seems best: one step, one hall and doorway, one religious relic at a time; but it remains a building whose relation to the clock – like the Escorial – is only phenomenological. Novels are books, and books are buildings; and therefore they exist like other objects – they are a space in space.73

In many of his essays on fiction Gass speaks of his awareness of the book as a palpable embodiment of ideas. He even makes this a subject of his novelette Willie Masters’ Lonesome Wife (1968), in which the narrator-protagonist is simultaneously the eponymous woman and the book itself. Joyce seems to demonstrate a similar sense of materiality of his texts, especially in his remarks about Ulysses as a bulky book, his insistence on a particular shade of the blue for its cover, and several other apparent caprices connected with the typography and the bibliographic code of his books. Beside his stylistic inventiveness, this sensitivity makes him one of the spiritual forefathers of such novelists as B.S. Johnson, briefly discussed above, as well as other writers who testify that, like the author of Ulysses, they do not write merely texts, but books. They will be the focus of the following chapter.

The Space of the Book: Liberature
Presenting his theory, Malmgren points out to some theoretical possibilities arising from his mapping of fictional spaces. They

pertain to the following fields of investigation and critical reflection: typology of actants, topography of the represented world, grammar of stories, typology of speakers and idiolects, as well as typology of iconic texts and definition of genres. His own discussion of several post-modernist American novels proves persuasively that iconic elements in them are, on the one hand, rooted in writing/print (Mitchell’s visible language), and, on the other, that the paginal and compositional spaces can be a stylistic feature so prominent that one might feel inclined to speak of a distinct literary form or genre if they are conspicuously present in a literary work.

As we have seen, while shaping these two types of iconic space, the writer must to some considerable extent also design the book, thinking out its typography and its material form. In other words, he or she may decide to employ its bibliographic code to the work of signification, to “biblioficate” it, using Slote’s term. The page and book layout may be treated by the author as punctuating devices, just as he or she punctuates sentences, and sequences discourse with blanks into paragraphs and chapters. We have seen how Mallarmé strives to achieve this in Un coup de dés, and how Federman puts it into practice in different editions of Double or Nothing. We have also looked at some devices used by B.S. Johnson, the writer exceptionally consistent in this respect, who had the ambition to always adjust the physical shape of his books to their content, driven by an obsession of ideal mimesis (that is, to make evident iconic relations between the form and content, to use Malmgren’s diction). In further chapters we shall investigate the ways in which Joyce fashioned subtly the bibliographic code of his works: Giacomo Joyce, Ulysses, and Finnegans Wake, to enhance their verbal message. In the case of these writers, the colloquial phrase that they “wrote books” takes on an additional meaning. And we could think of others whose works may be listed here: Sterne’s Tristram Shandy, Saint-Exupéry’s Le Petit Prince, William H. Gass’s Willie Masters’ Lonesome Wife, and Mark Z. Danielewski’s The House of Leaves, to name only a few.

In 1999 Polish writer, poet and artist Zenon Fajfer suggested that such works could be called “liberatura” (or, in the English coinage “liberature,” after Latin liber, i.e. “book”) to emphasise the form of the book as their meaningful
aspect. The category would include literary works whose authors consciously use the material space for expressive and communicative means in such a way that the text and its material medium form an organic whole. Their generic distinctness should be associated with stylistic features that exploit the visual qualities of writing and the features of its material foundation, as well as with the iconic relation between the presented world and the discursive space, in particular, the paginal and compositional space (as they pertain to the structure of the whole book). Thus, the physical shape of the volume and everything it entails: the shape and structure, format and size, layout and typeface, kind and colour of paper, illustrations, drawings and other graphic elements are treated as valid means of artistic expression. Fajfer suggests that the author is free to choose whatever devices and materials he finds appropriate for his purpose (which alludes to Latin *liber* meaning “free”), as long as a balance between text and its material form is preserved. As he puts it, “[t]he physical and spiritual aspects of the literary work, that is, the book and the text printed in it should

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complement each other to create a harmonious effect.”76 And “[t]he writer should construct the space of his work anew, and each of his works should have its own distinct structure. Let it even be a traditional volume, so long as it constitutes an integral whole together with the content of the book.”77 Sometimes the freedom may result in radically unconventional forms such as his poem-in-the-bottle Spoglądając Przez Ozonową Dziurę (But Eyeing Like Ozone Whole).78 But writers may also deliberately choose to employ traditional conventions if they find them appropriate for their aesthetic or expressive aims. However, in such a framework the book is neither “a transparent violl,” nor an ignorable material foundation, nor a limiting logocentric whole, but becomes a constituent of the literary work of art, comparable to Ingarden’s sound-stratum.

The idea of liberature was also inspired by Fajfer’s own creative writing, which resulted in several books, referred to as liberatic. Beside the above mentioned bottle-book, these include the triple-codex Oka-leczenie (Mute-I-Late), (O)patrzenie (Ga(u)ze), whose every copy has a deliberately torn-off corner of the front cover and dwadzieścia jeden liter/ten letters, a poetry volume exploring the tension between the materiality of the paper book and the virtuality of the electronic text.79 The concept was put forward in 1999 during the third Krakow Bloomsday Conference,80 and later presented

76 Fajfer, “Liberature. An appendix to a dictionary of literary terms,” Liberature or Total Literature, 25.
80 His abovementioned article accompanied the exhibition of unconventional books “Booksday,” held in the Jagiellonian Library as part of Krakow Bloomsday celebrations, and was partly inspired by the recognition of “the artist’s book” as a term inadequate to refer to Johnson, or Joyce, whose works were also presented at the exhibition. The recognition stimulated other activities, too, including the launching of Liberature Reading Room in Malopolski Instute of Culture in Krakow in 2002, and of the publishing series
more widely to the academic audience at the 5th International Symposium on Iconicity in Language and Literature held in Krakow in 2005. Fajfer and the present author brought out a brochure entitled Liberature to accompany the symposium. Beside the English version of the manifesto-like essay “Liberature. An appendix to a dictionary of literary terms” (1999; 2005), it contained our jointly sketched “A Brief History of Liberature,” which names the above mentioned writers and poets as protoliberatic authors since we are convinced that gathering their works into this common category (controversial as it may seem, since it would place novels beside poetry, and children’s books beside adult literature) could bring some benefits for critical enquiry. Collecting them in a separate class – liberature – could allow us to identify and describe these features that have either been neglected, or inadequately tackled in critical analyses so far.

under the auspices of Foundation Korporacja Ha!art in 2003. Until 2010 the “Liberatura” series amounted to 16 titles, including the above mentioned books by K. Bazarnik and Z. Fajfer, Raymond Federman, B.S. Johnson, Stéphane Mallarmé, Raymond Queneau, Georges Perec, and Herta Müller (for the complete list of books see www.ha.art.pl/liberatura.html).

Katarzyna Bazarnik and Zenon Fajfer, Liberature (Kraków: Artpartner, 2005).
Malmgren’s framework indicates a slot for such a genre. Since all of the works under discussion contain the iconic paginal and/or compositional space as their distinguishing feature,
which, moreover, contributes to an important aspect of their meaning, we could see them as a distinct, *iconic genre of texts* (indicated in the diagram in Fig. 5 above as “liberature”). According to *A Handbook to Literature*, genre criticism is “particularly useful in understanding how a work came to be at a given time and why some problematic works have been ignored or misunderstood on account of some confusion of their category.” Significantly, the above mentioned works have posed problems as far as their generic identification goes. For example, *Tristram Shandy* is often referred to as an “anti-novel.” *Finnegans Wake* is only reluctantly called “a novel,” always with numerous qualifications. Jonathan Coe spoke of Johnson’s *The Unfortunates* as an “unclassifiable book – novel, memoir, call it what you like”, practically inviting the readers to invent their own category for this work. Thus, such a classification could be useful, since it would recognize the author’s instrumental function in shaping the book’s visual and structural aspects, and could also have a bearing on both criticism and editorial policies. If this were recognized, no one would publish *The Unfortunates* as a bound codex (as it happened in Hungary), *Tristram Shandy* without the ten-page gap in pagination or the black page (as it has happened in all Polish editions of this book), pin Joyce’s “Penelope” with the restored apostrophes, or distil pure text from Blake’s illuminated books.

However, because of its emphasis on the visual and the material liberature might be seen as another attempt at a synthesis of arts, or perhaps even as an altogether new genre of *visual* arts (in the case of some more visually or structurally conspicuous works). In its integrative aspect it reminds one of Dick Higgins’ “intermedia,” the term the American picked up from Coleridge to describe such works of art which combine

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different types of arts or “fall conceptually between media that are already known”. As Higgins explains, it serves him as a tool for “opening up” works that escape easy classifications, such as various avant-garde productions, including installations, happenings, and all other works usually described as “experimental.” Thus, his notion of “intermedial work” is very broad, embracing all kinds of artistic artefacts. Intermedial books, in Higgins’ sense, are definitely artists’ books. Would, then, literature be a fancy term for this well-known phenomenon? What is the difference, if any, between these two? In order to find this out, we need to examine briefly definitions and generic affiliations of “the artist’s book” and confront them with the type of literature suggested here, as well as declarations and practices of writers who consider themselves “liberatic” (or “liberary”) and of those whom they name as their forerunners.

The artist’s book emerged in the early decades of the twentieth century in consequence of avant-garde experimentation with the visual qualities of writing, typography and layout, different ways of combining text and image, as well as the form of the book itself. The name was first used to refer to carefully edited publications (often in limited editions) which were designed by a visual artist or co-designed by him/her and a writer. Max Jacob’s Saint Maürel, a prose poem illustrated by Picasso and published by Kahnweiler in 1911 in Paris, and Blaise Cendrars’ 2-meter-long leporello La Prose du Transsibérien et de la petite Jehanne de France (1913) with Sonia Delaunay’s graphic design, can serve as examples. In Poland the poet Julian Przyboś and painter Władysław Strzemiński collaborated on a few collections of poems, the best known example of their innovative typography being Z


86 Finn Fordham suggested “liberatic” as a derivative adjective preferable to “liberary,” as it reflects better the term’s defying of the classical genre division.
ponad (1930). Later the term was extended to embrace other artistic projects in the form of or inspired by the book. The variety of forms covered by it was so great that it became necessary to invent more precise labels. Clive Phillpot, an American art critic and a curator at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, distinguished three types of artist’s books: “just books,” “book objects” and “bookworks.” The first category covers the “beautiful book,” a carefully edited and designed volume, usually made, illustrated, or even written by artists (or about artists), which, however, usually does not bring about any new formal solutions. It is still a traditional book, though it is an aesthetic object with visual appeal, a paragon of designer’s, printer’s and bookbinder’s craft. “Book objects” are in fact works of visual art, inspired by the form of the book. They may assume different “unbookish” shapes; this category includes installations which refer to the book as a symbol or a metaphor. The third of Phillpot’s categories, the “bookworks,” stretches over the borders of visual arts and literature. It is an art-form in which the visual arts intermingle with book form. Bookworks are thus artistic works (that is, works of visual art) in the form of the book, which experiment with the book’s structure, shape and meaning. The rhythm dictated by the pages is often used, though the order of arrangement usually breaks with traditional conventions (that is, the linear, top-to-bottom, left-to-right layout of the text, and the consecutive ordering of pages). This third category overlaps with the notion of liberature insofar as it emphasizes the unity of the graphic-sculptural image and its literary, that is verbal, component.

But what is the status of the text in a “bookwork” and in the artist’s book in general? Phillpot settles this by answering an objection raised to his term by littérateurs. The objection consists in the fact that “the artist’s book”:

defines [these] books exclusively in relation to the profession of the visual artist. While this may annoy writers who experiment with the form of the book, alternatives like “writers’ books”(?), or “musicians’ books” can still be swept

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88 Qtd in Rypson, *Książki i strony*, 7.
up into the all-embracing category of book art: *art dependent upon the book form*. In any case, it is clear that visual artists have contributed most to the revitalization of the books as art over the last twenty-five years, and to the development of visual and verbi-visual languages articulated within the book form.89

While it is true that some works named as “liberary” or “liberatic” have visual appeal, unlike in Phillpot’s definition, in them *it is the form of the book that is dependent on the text*, and not vice versa. Herein lies the fundamental difference between an artifact of the visual arts in book form and “the liberary work.” In liberature the material book is subservient to the word – the text dominates and determines the shape and structure of the work. B.S. Johnson, who can be defined as a “liberary” writer, stresses this point when he explains that whenever he departs from conventional forms, it is because the conventional form failed him: “because it is inadequate for conveying what I have to say. [...] So for every device I have used there is a literary rationale and a technical justification.”90 “Liberature” is thus something that Phillpot implied in the abortive coinage “writer’s book.” It is created by the man of letters, not the graphic designer, nor painter, nor sculptor. While foregrounding the book as its constitutive component, it also points to the generic belonging of “liberary works” to literature. When Andrzej Bednarczyk brought out his *Temple of Stone*, a collection of poetry bound in concrete covers with a tiny piece of genuine rock placed in the centrally cut hole in the pages, he did it as a poet, not as a painter and sculptor, though by profession he is both. Perhaps liberature will turn out to be a better alternative to the “writer’s book” suggested and rejected by Phillpot.

Indeed, because of their strong visual appeal some works that are now referred to as “liberatic” have been long classified as “artist’s books” for want of a better term. So artists such as Radosław Nowakowski, Marek Gajewski and Andrzej Bednarczyk presented their works not during traditional book fairs, but during exhibitions in art galleries. That is why their

books, though clearly intended for reading (considering only
the amount of text included in them), hardly ever reached any
reader. The reluctantly adopted label “artists’ book” located
their works in the sphere of fine and graphic arts where,
unread, they fell into oblivion, perceived as alien to the world
of literature, thus ignored by readers and literary critics. For,
although we live in the age of ubiquitous Text, we do not
actually read works of visual arts. “The artist’s” book
displayed in the space of a gallery must be perceived as an
artefact of fine arts, a kind of installation to be interpreted in
terms of visual arts. That is why literary critics generally
ignored their books. It is telling that since Nowakowski
adopted the label “liberary,” he has become “readable”: his
books have been noticed, read and reviewed by literary critics.

Blake’s case is different, of definitely greater calibre, and
equally symptomatic. His works could not have functioned as
“artist’s books”; the term did not exist in his time, though
seemingly it would have fitted him very well. Therefore, the
visual component of his works has been treated as a mere
illustration that accompanied the texts, thus – additional and
redundant – could be removed from the “proper essence” of
his literary work. Blake’s illuminated poems are typically
reprinted in collections and anthologies as texts expurgated of
their pictorial excess, accompanied by an odd, black-and-white
reproduction of some chosen plates. But since his
“illustrations” have value in their own right, they are displayed
in art galleries as if they were separate engravings or paintings.
And yet it is clear that Blake conceived of his works as
wholes; if he had wanted to divorce the text from the image,
he would have done so. Why does the rift continue when
modern printing technologies have finally made it possible to
publish his works in the form he intended them to have?
Admittedly, the William Blake Trust has been active in making
up for this, cooperating with the Tate Gallery in bringing out
The Blake’s Illuminated Books in the years 1991-98, and
Thames and Hudson, which published The Complete

Blake’s visual literature (or rather liberature?) calls for an
integrated critical approach that would employ the tools of
literary and art criticism. In his biography of the great
visionary, Peter Ackroyd points out a fundamental mistake
often committed by those who overlook the fact that Blake’s poems are not like, say, lyrical ballads, but constitute a distinct kind of work in which words are but one of several elements of an organic, indivisible whole. Due to their visual integrity, these “poems” acquire the status of extraordinary works of art that evade traditional methods of interpretation.\footnote{Peter Ackroyd, \textit{Blake}, trans. Ewa Kraskowska (Poznań: Zysk i S-ka, 2001) 140-1.} Ackroyd identifies this unique and distinct nature of Blake’s works, which are neither merely pictures nor merely poems, and recognises a need for a more adequate way of reading that would account for their complex nature. In his discussion of critical editions, Jerome McGann points out that Blake’s work (in its original form) “has set in motion two large signifying codes, the linguistic code (which we tend to privilege when we study language-based arts like novels and poetry) and the bibliographical code (which interpreters, until recently, have largely ignored)” and also postulates that this should be accounted for in a critical analysis.\footnote{McGann, \textit{Textual Condition}, 56. However, due to the degree of authorial control over his texts, he considers Blake an exceptional case. On the other hand, McGann himself cites several authors who shared with the Romantic visionary a similar drive to consciously shape the bibliographic code of their books (57).} But such integrative criticism will be possible only if the scholar is aware of the distinct and specific nature of his or her object. So distinguishing and naming a distinct genre could facilitate research on such works as Blake’s, B.S. Johnson’s, Mallarmé’s, even Laurence Sterne’s as well as on many “excessively verbal” artist’s books.

Neither the artist’s book, nor Higgins’ intermedia, nor concrete poetry (which is another area of overlap with liberature)\footnote{The latter is the term introduced by German poets Max Bill and Eugen Gomringer to describe the work of the Brazilian Noigandres Group (to refer specifically to works exhibited in São Paulo in 1956). However, concrete poets, or \textit{Konkretisten} as they were called in German-speaking countries, emphasised de-psychologisation of the verbal message, concreteness (materiality/visuality) of the signs of writing and their graphic potential.} pay heed to the above mentioned writers, because theirs is a different focus. None of the tools of literary criticism so far, except for Malmgren’s notion of iconic space and W.J.T. Mitchell’s spatial form, has been able to tackle the
peculiarity of Blake’s or Johnson’s works. It is significant that they have usually been relegated to the margins of literature, referred to as its extreme, regarded as eccentric, experimental, and extravagant, the repetitive “ex-” emphasising their exclusion from the realm of “literature proper.” The etymology of “extravagant” illuminates the point: “extravagant” means to wander beyond; and these works indeed dare to wander beyond their prescribed territory, into the sphere of visual and formal or spatial excess. By doing so they trespass conventional readerly expectations, expose the limitations and insufficiencies of critical theories and, perhaps also, the illusory nature of the border between literature and the visual arts. They have been perceived as strange, impure, and hybrid, as those that incorporate the features of literature’s Other.

Such “protoliberary” or “liberary” works have been usually perceived as frivolous literary games, hoaxes, or a proof of their author’s unstable mind, as was sometimes the case with Joyce’s *Finnegans Wake*. But their ex-centricity and playfulness remind us of the jester whose mischief and wit subverted the established order and provided relief from tight constraints of court etiquette. Like jesters, these works have been those troublemakers that disturbed the dogmas of literary theoreticians. So to define a genre such as liberature would imply an inquiry into the status and nature of literature, and perhaps, a reconsideration of its medium. If liberature does not belong to fine arts, but, indeed, comprises a separate literary genre, it would serve to relocate a group of marginal, eccentric works closer to the centre, to reclaim them for literature proper, and, ultimately, to make us reread them from a fresh perspective.

Yet it must be acknowledged that by exchanging the transparent “t” for the bodily “b,” liberature would place itself in some kind of opposition to traditionally conceived literature, and in the realm of the visible (or, if you like, visual). The “b” stuck inside the well-known word, is often initially interpreted as a misprint by those unfamiliar with the term. The “b” makes the reader stop, look more carefully and see the alien in a familiar term – an intruding, visible, bold presence within a transparent, abstract idea. Liberary works are precisely those literary works that make the reader stop, notice their materiality embodied in the book and read it along with words.
They make their presence palpable – in the reader’s hands. So liberature would not be a Derridean *différance*: a visible but inaudible, elusive game played in search for an always already absent signified. Its “B” can be both seen and heard, written and uttered. Because liberature strives to maintain a balance (also drawing upon Latin *libra*): between voice and writing, word and image, ideal and real, abstract and material in the iconic sign of the book, which appears to the reader as a “verbivocovisual polyhedron of scripture” (*FW* 341.18, 107.08).94

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94 The conclusion of the present chapter is based on my article “Liberature – What’s in a Name,” Katarzyna Bazarnik and Zenon Fajfer, *Liberature* (Kraków: Artpartner, 2005) 9-11.
II

GIACOMO JOYCE

JOYCE’S SENSE OF TEXTUAL SPACE

“Why?”
“Because otherwise I could not see you.”

Giacomo Joyce

While collecting materials for his biography of Joyce in the mid-fifties, Richard Ellmann came across a notebook containing eight oversize sheets of heavy paper covered with strikingly neat handwriting. It differed from other of the writer’s notebooks insofar as it was not filled with hastily scribbled words and phrases. The text, carefully laid out, consisted of fifty passages of different lengths separated by white spaces of varying width. It did not look like a rough draft or a random collection of sketches, though some of the phrases can be found in *Ulysses* and Joyce’s minor poems. It looked like a private, handmade copy of a work especially dear to the author’s heart, reminiscent, as Ellmann noted, “of those parchment sheets on which in 1909 Joyce wrote out the poems of *Chamber Music* for his wife.” The text was “in his best calligraphic hand” and the whole had an air of purposeful arrangement.¹ The manuscript did not contain a title page, but the notebook was labelled “Giacomo Joyce” in someone else’s handwriting in the top left hand corner of the cover. Ellmann was electrified: he was convinced that he found another, totally unknown and hardly expected *new work* of the literary genius. Extensive excerpts accompanied by the description of the notebook layout were included in Joyce’s biography and

twelve years after his discovery Ellmann decided to edit and publish the whole manuscript, assuming for the title the inscription from the cover. Thus in 1968 Giacomo Joyce surfaced to the eyes of curious scholars.

Fig. 11. Cover of Giacomo Joyce with the original, handwritten title.
Who? A pale face surrounded by heavy odorous furs. Her movements are shy and nervous. She uses quizzing-glasses.

Cobweb handwriting, traced long and fine with quiet disdain and resignation: a young person of quality.

I launch forth on an easy wave of tepid speech: Swedenborg, the pseudo-Areopagite, Miguel de Molinos, Joachim Abbas. The wave is spent. Her classmate, retwisting her twisted body, purrs in boneless Viennese Italian: Che coltura! The long eyelids beat and lift: a burning needleprick stings and quivers in the velvet iris.

High heels clack hollow on the resonant stone stairs. Wintry air in the castle, gibbeted coats of mail, rude iron sconces over the windings of the winding turret stairs. Tapping clacking heels, a high and hollow noise. There is one below would speak with your ladyship.
Fig. 13. Reproduction of original, handwritten page 1 of “Giacomo Joyce” notebook (J. Joyce, Giacomo Joyce, ed. R. Ellmann, New York: Viking, 1968).
Since Ellmann felt that this work could not be properly appreciated without resorting to its actual, physical form, he decided to include in the book facsimiles of several manuscript pages and use the original handwritten label on the notebook as the title (see Figs. 11 and 13). Seeing in its idiosyncratic layout analogies with Mallarmé’s *Un coup de dés*, he attempted to reproduce it by spacing out the text as in the original. However, a smaller format did not allow him to preserve full correspondence. Ironically, in his preface he commented on the visual rendering of an interplay between voice and silence on those very pages his edition misrepresents (cf. Figs. 12-13). Nevertheless, he recognised the material form as potentially meaningful when he stated that “[i]n the final act of writing, the appearance of the work on the page may have become an element of its substance.”

Since then most scholars writing about *Giacomo Joyce* have commented on its manuscript form as bearing on the poem’s meaning. As John McCourt notes, they have become increasingly aware that the poem should be seen not as “a graphically conventional piece of writing but as a manuscript to be viewed through the lenses of visual arts.” Thus, Donatella Palloti refers to it as “a visual encounter,” Louis Armand speaks of “objecthood” as its inherent quality, Giuseppe Martella sees it as a “text designed to be perceived in its material body,” “surface poetry of fragment, collage, radical difference, calligraphic arabesque,” and McCourt himself calls it “a visualogue,” that is, a work characterised by a “bi-modal representation” which must be analysed in both linguistic and visual terms.

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7 McCourt, “Joycean Multimodalities,” 20.
Enrico Frattaroli, who has explored visual qualities of *Giacomo Joyce*, claims that the characteristic layout makes the reader perceive this work physically before it is read as a textual piece. The reading starts when the eye slides over alternating stripes of grey writing and white separating spaces. “All the elements of instruction,” writes Frattaroli, “which is implicit and made explicit in the very disposition of the text, inextricably bind the reading to visual experience. The reading slips on, enters into, and emerges from the written elements without any awareness of a break in continuity between the perfectly integrated graphic and verbal dimensions of the text.” The writing and its Other – the blank – appear as the extremes of the textual continuum. In opposition to sense-generating words, blanks denote *nonsense*, that is, the lack of sense, or *ab-sence*. They stand for primeval chaos, the eternal abyss from which a constellation of meaning emerges only to dissolve again in the empty space. In this respect the white spaces of *Giacomo Joyce* signify as Mallarméan *blancs* do.

As Frattaroli puts it: “[i]t is exclusively from the void that the graphic and visual dimension of *Giacomo Joyce* comes into being, and upon which it is founded. […] Writing & Void: profoundly separate and closely overlapping in a single textual system” combine to produce a “verbivocovisual presentment” (FW 341.18).

The layout of the poem enhances its verbal message as the fluctuation of blocks of text and blank spaces prepares the reader for the fluctuation of scenes, images and voices in the poem. “Why” is the text interspersed with stripes of whiteness? “Because otherwise” the reader “could not see.” Constituting 60% of the whole textual surface and visually dominating nearly every page, the blanks invest the work with as much meaning as words, informing the reader about the nature of *Giacomo Joyce* as “discrete, discontinuous,”

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11 Frattaroli, “The Proteiform Graph,” 304.
nonlinear, irregular, mutable, dynamic...“\(^{12}\) The blanks determine not only the visual rhythm but also the pace of reading: they stand for silence. If white space constitutes the Other for the written word, the written word, in turn, appears as the Other of speech. “Cobweb handwriting, traced long and fine with quiet disdain and resignation” emerges from the silence of the white page in the absence of voice. When the girl does speak to Giacomo, it is only in a dream:

She speaks. A weak voice from beyond the cold stars.
Voice of wisdom. Say on! O, say again, making me wise!
The voice I never heard.\(^{13}\)

And when he speaks, his voice falls soundlessly into her mind as if “cold polished stones sinking though a quagmire,” the line followed by a considerably wide blank-silence. One of the final paragraphs sums up the experience of such a fluctuating voice in a verbo-visual icon:

“Why?”
“Because otherwise I could not see you.”
Sliding – space – ages – foliage of stars – and waning
heaven – stillness – and stillness deeper – stillness of
annihilation – and her voice.\(^{14}\)

The form of the paragraph reflects the structure of the poem on a microscale: particular words and phrases correspond to passages, while dashes with their surrounding spaces stand for blanks separating blocks of text. The eye slides from a word, though a space and a dash to another word and phrase just as it slides through the pages of the poem. The reading is spaced as well as paced by such an arrangement.

This is reminiscent of Sterne’s use of dashes and blanks. Christopher Fanning convincingly argues that Sterne consistently used blanks to represent pauses in dramatic

\(^{12}\) Frattaroli, “The Proteiform Graph,” 306.
\(^{13}\) Joyce, Giacomo Joyce, 15.
\(^{14}\) Joyce, Giacomo Joyce, 16.
moments of his written discourse.¹⁵ For example, Sterne’s sermon on “Pride” features the following paragraph:

—Approach his bed of state—lift up the curtain—regard a moment with silence—

—are these cold hands and pale lips, all that is left of him who was canoniz’d by his own pride, or made a god of, by his flatterers?¹⁶

where the wider space breaking the sentence in half makes the eye pause for a second, suspending the reading in an enactment of silence. As in Giacomo Joyce, blanks become charged with meaning due to their juxtaposition with text. They let the preacher’s voice resonate, becoming a typographic gesture. Sterne paces his representation of speech also by double spaces, for example, in a conversation between Tristram’s parents in which “Walter Shandy’s sterile words fall upon Mrs Shandy’s frustrating silence.”¹⁷ The wife’s words are an ironic echo of the husband’s utterances, visualising the distance of the speakers through blanks. In the excerpt below I reproduce the original double spacing between particular lines of their dialogue to give the readers an impression similar to the one Sterne wanted to evoke in the readers of the editions published under his supervision:

—But indeed he is growing a very tall lad,—rejoined my father.

—He is very tall for his age, indeed,—said my mother.—

—I can not (making two syllables of it) imagine, quoth my father, who the deuce he takes after.—

I cannot conceive, for my life, said my mother.—

Humph!—said my father.


(The dialogue ceased for a moment.)

—(I am very short myself,—continued my father gravely.

You are very short, Mr. Shandy,—said my mother.

Humph! quoth my father to himself, a second time: in muttering which, he plucked his pillow a little further from my mother’s,—and turning about again, there was an end of the debate for three minutes and a half. 18

Mr Shandy’s words are given an ironic twist, reduced nearly to nonsense. Fanning claims that for the reader the original layout visually communicates that the dialogue is in fact a series of uncommunicative exchanges, “discrete textual islands,” separated by “visual silence.” Thus, blanks express distance between the interlocutors; in Fanning’s phrase, they function as “spatial metaphors for the lack of communication.” 19

Likewise, Giacomo is as much about communication as about the inability to communicate effectively, and about seeing and not being able to see, evoking a presence as well as absence, about a whole as well as fragmentation. The poem is full of such contrasts. The first passage mentions “quizzing-glasses,” an instrument for a thorough visual examination. But the promise of a deep insight is shattered almost immediately after it is given; the heroine’s glance is quick and superficial: “A brief laugh. A brief beat of the eyelids.” 20 If there is any communication between the admirer and the lady, it is silent: its agent is the eyes. Her eyes recur incessantly throughout the poem, but their look becomes increasingly sinister. The persona notices that “a burning needleprick stings and quivers in the velvet iris,” then “rancid yellow humour [lurks] within the softened pulp of the eyes.” 21 When they stand side by side, they do not speak and her look burns: “[her] flesh recalls the thrill of that raw mist-veiled morning, hurrying torches, cruel eyes.” 22 Finally, she darts at the admirer “out of her

20 Joyce, Giacomo Joyce, 1.
21 Joyce, Giacomo Joyce, 1.
22 Joyce, Giacomo Joyce, 10.
sluggish sidelong eyes a jet of liquorish venom." But a
discovery of these tensions begins with the visual appreciation
of the poem, with perceiving the contrast of white space and
black writing, the necessary first step that helps the reader to
grasp fully the verbal dimension of *Giacomo Joyce*. Due to the
standardised format, Ellmann’s edition does not fully render
this in print. It tries to make up for the loss by providing
photocopies of the original text. Thus, the published version of
the poem embodies yet another contrast: that of a private
voice and a public document, demonstrating what few readers
realise: that any edition of a literary work is in fact a
*translation* or *transcription* of the original which, like every
translation, inevitably alters the edited text.

The story of Joyce’s small notebook sheds light on how
editorial decisions concerning the seemingly irrelevant physical
arrangement of printed matter may influence, change, or
distort meaning. Ellmann’s decision to publish *Giacomo Joyce*
derived it of its original uniqueness, stripping it of the aura
Benjamin postulated for unique objects of art. Some of its aura
could have been preserved, though, if only the edition would
have reproduced the original spacing, or if it had been a
photocopy of the handwritten sheets. Since, as Frattaroli
notes, in the manuscript form “author, subject and scribe of
his work – *Giacomo Joyce* conserves an aura of uniqueness,
of ineffability, of irremissible corporeity,” adding that “only in
its manuscript state is the text given in all its expressive
integrity.” This impression is enhanced by Joyce’s
exceptionally careful handwriting: a visual icon of his own
individual voice. Here is the literal trace of the author’s shaping
hand. Translated into print, it is threatened with
standardisation and uniformisation. On the other hand, printing
made the work accessible to a wider audience which
immediately recognised and appreciated the aspect lost in
mechanically reproduced mass copies.

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nineteenth century writers, McGann demonstrates how editorial decision can
change not only the appearance but also meaning of texts.
25 Frattarolli, “The Proteiform Graph,” 305.
The editorial history of *Giacomo Joyce* and its physical distinctiveness have contributed to its unclear and marginal position among Joyce’s works. It has been usually described as a transitional piece, a carefully laid out bunch of epiphanic fragments which do not necessarily imply a whole, a poetical diary or exercise in style. Yet its physical features belie an assumption that it is merely a collection of notes: the arrangement of passages and blanks, though foregrounding the fragmentariness of experiences and of impression, implies a unity; also because the loose sheets were wrapped with the covers of the (note)book. Like “[a] long black piano: coffin of music,” this elegant little booklet is “[a] form of speech: the lesser [presence of the visible] for the greater [absence of the audible]” — “coffin of voice.” In accordance with the Derridean argument, it would testify that the book as a “total project” is always already destroyed:

*Youth has an end.* In the vague mist of old sounds a faint point of light appears:
the speech of the soul is about to be heard. Youth has an end:
the end is here.27

But we can also see it as the envoy of the literature’s Other. Perhaps *Giacomo Joyce* need not be seen as hesitating between genres and textual placements, but as a unique textual object in its own right, one of these book-works which I would like to call liberature:

*Youth has an end.* In the vague mist of old sounds a faint point of light appears: the speech of the soul is about to be heard. Youth has an end: the end is here. It will never be. You know that well. What then? Write, damn you, write it! What else are you good for?28

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26 Joyce, *Giacomo Joyce*, 16, 2.
27 Joyce, *Giacomo Joyce*, 16.
28 Joyce, *Giacomo Joyce*, 16.
III

**ULYSES**

“OUR SOCIAL SOMETHING”

...our social something bowls along bumpily, experiencing a jolting series of prearranged disappointments, down the long lane of [...] generations, more generations and still more generations. (FW 107.32-35)

If all Joyce’s works were put on a cline whose one extreme were *Giacomo Joyce*, *Ulysses* would occupy the other. Totally unlike the singular manuscript of *Giacomo Joyce*, *Ulysses* does not exist in any canonical form; as Sam Slote aptly puts this, it “is plural.” Not only is there no coherent manuscript of the book, but the novel is known to the reading public in several, significantly different editions, and despite repeated claims none of them is “definitive,” “authoritative” or “correct.”¹ As much as such a situation pertains to any published literary work, the “multiple condition” of the text of *Ulysses* is exacerbated by the book’s complicated production and publishing history. The following story shows how the author struggled for the textual and material integrity of his work and how he ultimately yielded to overwhelming circumstances.²


Ulysses as Joyce saw it

Joyce began writing Ulysses in 1914 and already in 1915 made an agreement to serialize it with the American The Little Review and the British The Egoist (which had already serialised the Portrait and was about to bring it out). Two years later he submitted the first batch of episodes to both journals. Consequently, fourteen instalments including the episodes from “Telemachus” up to the opening part of the “Oxen of the Sun” appeared in The Little Review from 18 March 1918 to December 1920. The novel was less fortunately handled by English printers due to whose objections finally only “Nestor,” “Proteus,” “Hades” and “the Wandering Rocks” appeared in The Egoist in 1919. However, The Little Review issues with “Lestrygonias,” “Scylla and Charybdis” and “The Cyclops” were soon confiscated by the U.S. Postal Authorities. This was followed by a law suit and trial of the editors, Margaret Anderson and Jane Heap, who were sentenced to a fine of $50 in February 1921. This practically blocked further publications and scared off any prospective publishers in the States. Joyce, still engaged in writing the book, was faced with the question of finding a publisher who would be brave enough to publish his potentially troublesome work.

As is well known, Sylvia Beach, an American bookseller living in Paris agreed to publish the novel in France under the imprint of her bookshop “Shakespeare and Company.” The printing was arranged with Maurice Darantiere, a printer from Dijon, who collaborated with contemporary French writers and was used to working with experimental fiction. Darantiere turned out exceptionally tolerant of Joyce’s constant additions,3 which proved significant in Ulysses taking shape. First of all, the book was not typeset from a uniform continuous manuscript or typescript. For the earlier chapters the proofread and expanded passages published in the magazines were used; for later episodes several successive typescripts were produced. Joyce continued revising and

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3 However, Ellmann testifies to Darantiere’s growing despair as the book seemed to expand indefinitely: “Darantiere’s characteristic gesture, throwing up his hands, became almost constant when the type had to be recast time after time, and Sylvia Beach was much tired; but Joyce won his point.” In Richard Ellmann, James Joyce (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1983) 513.
expanding even when typesetting was well underway. Consequently, about one third of the novel was written on galley and page proofs.\textsuperscript{4} So instead of the usual two sets of galley and page proofs, Darantiere had to prepare several more; in some cases even up to ten.\textsuperscript{5} As much as this exasperated the printers, it gave the author a unique insight into the structure of the book, and he took an advantage of this.

Many of his additions at that stage developed chains of cross-references that form symbolic and verbal networks running throughout the novel.\textsuperscript{6} Groden believes that this elaboration of symbolic patterns, motifs, and personal histories was connected with a major shift in Joyce’s interests. By the end of writing the novel, Joyce became more preoccupied with schemes and correspondences permeating his fictional universe than with realistic presentation of the characters’ minds and places typical for the initial episodes. Moving towards parody and pastiche Joyce searched for a way to provide integrity for “the immense panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history,” to use T.S. Eliot’s words.\textsuperscript{7} The networks of verbal echoes and correspondences could ensure that, and when identified by the reader, could be conceptualised as a mental map of the work, a map that does not represent the space of the book’s setting, but the territory of the textual space. These cross-references are partly responsible for the proclaimed spatiality of text in the sense Joseph Frank understood it.\textsuperscript{8} Such a structural view of the texture of \textit{Ulysses} is epitomized in “Sirens,” where the opening passage provides key motifs which are repeated and developed later in the chapter. As much as a musical prelude, the opening can be seen as a skeleton supporting the textual body or as a map of the text marking its most characteristic features. In this

\textsuperscript{6} Groden, \textit{Ulysses in Progress}, 196.
respect what Genette wrote about reading Proust’s *The Remembrance of Things Past* is pertinent to *Ulysses*:

It is not true that reading is only that continual unfolding accompanying the hours as they pass of which Proust spoke with reference to his boyhood; and the author of *La Recherche du temps perdu* no doubt knew this better than anyone – he who demanded of his reader an attention to what he called the “telescopic” character of his work, that is, to the relations at long distance established between episodes far removed from each other in the temporal continuity of a linear reading (but, it should be noted, singularly close in the written space, in the paginated thickness of the volume), and which requires for its consideration a sort of simultaneous perception of the total unity of the work, a unity which resides not solely in the horizontal relations of continuity and succession, but also in the relations that may be called vertical or transversal, those effects of expectation, of response, of symmetry, of perspective, which prompted Proust himself to compare his work to a cathedral. To read as it is necessary to read such works (are there any others?) is really to reread; it is already to have reread, to have traversed a book tirelessly in all directions, in all its dimensions. One may say, then, that *the space of a book, like that of a page*, is not passively subject to the time of a linear reading; so far as the book reveals and fulfils itself completely, it never stops diverting and reversing such a reading, and thus, in a sense, abolishes it.9

In his conclusion, Genette suggests that the material foundation of some, if not all, literary works may disturb traditionally expected linear perception (Butor, for example, was convinced that this is always the case due to the very structure of the book which exposes its simultaneity and three-dimensionality; cf. his “Le livre comme objet”). Hugh Kenner also noticed how “the technological space” contributes to the reading of *Ulysses*. Its text, he claims, is made present to the reader “on printed pages for which it was designed from the beginning. The reader explores its discontinuous surface at whatever pace he likes; he makes marginal notes; he turns back whenever he chooses to an earlier page, without destroying the continuity of something that does not press on,  

but will wait until he resumes.”¹⁰ The scholar is convinced that “the whole conception of Ulysses depends on the existence of something former writers took for granted as simply the envelope for their wares: a printed book whose pages are numbered.”¹¹ So Joyce, much like Proust for Genette, is not an author who overlooks or ignores the printed medium, but who uses it to enhance the integrity of his work. If the materiality of the book works against the linearity of the narrative, he does not choose to make it as transparent as possible by providing a continual, ungapped story, but foregrounds some constituents of narrative in such a way as to build complex relations among them and remind the reader that he is leafing through a book. He prompts the reader to (re)construct networks of associations that control the narrative: to go back, to look up and verify an emerging pattern. In such a reading the work is experienced not only as a perfect, straight line in the continuous succession of pages, or even as a looped and meandering Sternean curve, but – through physical manipulation, browsing and scanning of the book in remembrance of phrases past – also as “a polyhedron of scripture” (FW 107.08)

Once the illusoriness and insufficiency of the linear reading is exposed, the book and the page may become subject to an instantaneous, visual reading. They may appear as a visual message, transmitted firstly through the layout, and secondly through its verbal content. Such a reading was characteristically programmed into mediaeval manuscripts, especially those magnificent copies of the Gospels displayed in churches for the illiterate who could thus commune with God’s word. The analogy is not accidental, of course. Joyce wished for his pages to be as immediately recognisable as those of the Book of Kells and claimed that “some of the big initial letters which swing right across a page have the essential quality of a chapter of Ulysses.”¹² He had tested the visual reading in the manuscript of Giacomo Joyce and employed it again when he punctuated “Aeolus” with headlines and spaced out “Circe,” quite efficiently, since Kenner remarked that like Dublin, the

¹¹ Kenner, Flaubert..., 34.
¹² Ellmann, James Joyce, 545.
city Joyce set out to reproduce within the boundaries of his novel, his book “can be mapped and indexed, [it] has internal thoroughfares connecting points not textually contiguous, [it] contains zones defined and inimitably characterized (you could no more mistake a passage from “Eumaeus” for one from “Hades” than you could mistake Nighttown for Merrion Square).”\(^{13}\) He made “Penelope” visually conspicuous by stripping it of any punctuation, save the two full stops marking the middle and the end of the episode. And he provided a (typo)graphic answer to the closing question of “Ithaca”:

Where?

\[ \square \]

\((U\ Oxford\ 689)\)

instructing the printers to make the dot conspicuously enlarged.\(^{14}\) Ironically, it has been frequently mistaken for a blemish of paper, the graphic removed altogether in later editions he did not personally supervise. Slote writes about it thus:\(^{15}\)

Joyce left instructions on two sets of proofs that this point should be “bien visible” \((JJA\ 21: 140; \text{ also } JJA\ 27: 212).\) Because of printing limitations, the point appears somewhat square in the first edition. However the second edition removes the point altogether so that “the point was the least conspicuous point about it” \((UG\ 16: 819-20).\) In this way, this episode ends with an unanswered question. The elimination of this point can be found in quite a few subsequent printings of \textit{Ulysses} over the years and can be attributed to “the printers who saw the blot and believed they were doing the right thing in retouching it out.”

However, one could speculate that the point was deliberately a square, such as is sometimes used to complete mathematical proofs instead of “Q.E.D.” If we agree with Gifford and Seidman’s suggestion that S, M, P, the initials opening the three parts of \textit{Ulysses}, are supposed to be read as a syllogism, the “tombstone” \[ \square \] (as it is also called) would provide an

\(^{13}\) Kenner, \textit{Flaubert, Joyce...}, 55.

\(^{14}\) \textit{JJA}\ 21: 140; \textit{JJA}\ 27: 212.

\(^{15}\) Slote, \textit{Ulysses in the Plural}, 17.
ultimate typographic countersign to the book as the printed object.

Significantly, Joyce made those decisions only when he saw the page proofs, that is, when he was already dealing with an emerging book, and not just amorphous, continuous text. This was the point at which he started conceiving of his gestating book as an organic unity of the linguistic, narrative, symbolic and material. In a letter to Linati, accompanying a scheme of the novel, he wrote:

> It is the epic of two races (Israel-Ireland) and at the same time the cycle of the human body as well as a little story of a day (life). [...] It is also a kind of encyclopaedia. My intention is not only to render the myth sub specie temporis nostris but also to allow each adventure (that is, every hour, every organ, every art being interconnected and interrelated in the somatic scheme of the whole) to condition and create its own technique.16

Thus, some of his very late additions seem to bind the verbal layer with the space of the book as if to enhance their somatic, almost physical unity. The insertion of the headlines not only indicates the setting (both the newspaper office and the layout of a newspaper), but also visually separates chunks of text with blank spaces, thereby forming “typographic” Aeolian islands. The layout of the chapter becomes a diagrammatic icon of the episode’s mythical setting. Such diagrammatic correspondences can be pursued in other places, too. For example, on page 77 “Seventh heaven” was inserted as the seventh sentence in a paragraph where Bloom muses on what people feel taking the Holy Communion (cf. U Oxford 77). On page 88 Joyce added: “Aged 88 after a long and tedious illness” to an obituary Bloom is scanning (cf. U Oxford 88). When Bloom is thinking about weight, gravity, and the rate of falling bodies, he recalls its value: “thirty two feet per second,” in the thirty-second sentence of the paragraph (cf. U Oxford 69). And in “Calypso” the punctuation of Milly’s letter was so modified as to contain fifteen sentences. Bloom was struck by a coincidence between Milly turning fifteen on the

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fifteenth of June, the day she wrote the letter.\textsuperscript{17} The sentence pattern may appear as yet another concurrence (which “incidentally” escaped Bloom) but such an accumulation implicates a prearranged order.

If one pursued such numerology further, one could notice, as John Kidd did, that the first edition of the novel counts 732 pages. This is the number of nights and days in the leap year – coincidentally, 1904, when \textit{Ulysses} is set, was a leap year, too; and the date features in the text four times. Yet few scholars are prone to believe that Joyce could have engineered this with such precision. Some claim that \textit{Ulysses} was not finished as such, but rather “abandoned,” because Joyce desperately wanted to keep up to the deadline of his birthday.\textsuperscript{18} But, undoubtedly, he had had an insight into the book’s structure for some time before the final pages were typeset. As late as in September 1921, he informed Frank Budgen that the version of “Penelope” he was just working on was “only a draft” and “a great deal will be added or changed on 3 page proofs.”\textsuperscript{19} If he had hit upon the idea of imposing such a numerological symbolism on the novel, adding as much text to the last episode as would be necessary seems to be a way of ensuring that imposition. Considering his long-time experience with the page proofs, he must have been able to figure out how much text he needed to add to arrive at the required number of pages. Curiously, the very last addition sent to Darantiere only two days before the official publication contained extensive passages added precisely to “Penelope.”

Groden’s account of the last moments before the printing reverberates with astonishment:

\textsuperscript{17} All the above examples are quoted in McKenzie \textit{Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts}, 58-60 and come from John Kidd’s conference papers: “Thirteen. Death’s Number. Structural Symbolism in \textit{Ulysses},” delivered at the Second Provincetown Joyce Conference, June 1983; and “Errors of Execution in the 1984 \textit{Ulysses},” delivered to The Society for Textual Scholarship, New York, April 1985. For further discussion of Kidd-Gabler controversy see their letters in \textit{The New York Review of Books} (cited in bibliography and briefly discussed in the following chapter).


On January 23 Joyce described the state of the proofs for the last episodes as “uncorrected semifinal form” (III, 57), and he returned them to Darantiere during the next week with an incredible number of additions and corrections, “Ithaca” on January 25 and 27, and “Penelope” on January 31 (…). To achieve the publication of *Ulysses* on February 2, Darantiere practically reset both episodes in two days to incorporate all Joyce’s last-minute changes and additions.\(^{20}\)

A comparison between one of the additions reproduced by Groden in his book\(^{21}\) and the final form of the respective passage (*U* Oxford, 704-705) demonstrates that the text was expanded by more than a page. If the ultimate result of resetting the episodes was indeed coincidental, Joyce noticed and happily embraced it, as his “thank Maurice” and the allusion to the number of the pages in *Ulysses* (FW 123.04) in *Finnegans Wake*, indicate. But an experienced bibliographer such as McKenzie does not see such revisions as accidental:

...the 1922 edition shows Joyce working to make textual meaning from book forms, rewriting in proof in a creative interplay with the fall of the text on the page, and nudging it into patterns of page to text, which offer markers, boundaries, and divisions directly related to its final “book” form. Being largely peculiar to that edition, these correspondent readings are automatically lost in any new setting which does not keep the identical form. They are therefore lost from the new edition, simply because its physical form is incompatible with them.\(^{22}\)

Besides, *Ulysses* of 1922 includes other textual gestures which point out to the controlling presence of an agent within or behind or beyond or above the character and the narrator. The Ulysscean day finishes at the end of “Nausicaa,” which falls on page 365 with the sunset. At this point a curious thought flashes through Bloom’s mind: “Round the Kish in eighty days. Done half by design” (*U* Oxford, 364.13). Its placement at that moment of the story points outside the Dublin environs to the proper *mise-en-scène*: in this “other

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\(^{20}\) Groden, *Ulysses in Progress*, 191.

\(^{21}\) Groden, *Ulysses in Progress*, 192.

\(^{22}\) McKenzie, *Bibliography*…, 58.
world” the reader has just completed half of her textual journey. Such a symmetrical division of the work into diurnal and nocturnal parts was perhaps emphasised by the two-volume edition of the novel published in 1932 by the Odyssey Press in Hamburg, of which the first volume finished at this point (this edition was also supervised by Joyce). When a moment later Bloom throws away the stick he used to write on the beach, “his wooden pen” sticks upright in the sand (U Oxford, 364.14). He attributes it to “chance.” But the readers should not be misled into thinking that the actual hand which wrote the words dropped them here by accident. Neither should they be confused as to the involuntariness of Martha’s slipping hand that confuses “word” with “world.”23 The author leading their pens seems to have posed himself as the Creator who created the world through three: number, word and writing.

Of course, Bloom is aware neither of the “retrospective arrangement” (U Oxford, 88) superimposed on the book nor the subtle irony of his message on the beach: “I,” “AM. A”. It is the reader who can see it for what it is: an inscription of the real Author, the Alpha and Omega of Bloom’s world leaving “hides and hints and misses in print” (FW 115.06). It is only the reader who can perceive discursive relations Bloom could never see. “Accidentally,” Bloom finds himself in the very same place where at noon Stephen pondered on the mystery of “signatures of all things [he is] here to read.” Dedalus’ thoughts anticipate the evening scene, sending the reader forward: “Where? To evening lands.” His next reflection again bears the ambiguous quality of an authorial statement: “Evening will find itself. […] Yes, evening will find itself in me, without me. All days make their end” (U Oxford, 50).

However, this is not an evident metalingual interpolation explaining when and where a story or a motif will be taken up again. Here the voices of the protagonist, narrator and author

23 Earlier in the day Bloom collected a letter from his secret correspondent Martha Clifford, where she wrote: “I called you naughty boy because I do not like that other world. Please tell me what is the real meaning of that word” (U Oxford 74-5). Stephen, on the other hand is haunted by “that word known to all men” whose meaning remains hidden to him.
confusingly blend,²⁴ and alert the reader to the fabric of Joycean textuality: to the warp and weft of the Ulyssian text, and the effects “of expectation, of response, of symmetry, of perspective.”

Finding themselves in the selfsame spot, both Stephen and Bloom look at Kish lightship, recall a dream with Turkish ambience, feel drowsy. Both reflect on the influence of light on colours, and on questions of visual perception. Both contemplate writing inscribed in the same “rocks with lines and scars and letters” (U Oxford 364). Both attempt to write to a woman and ponder on transience and futility of writing: Bloom on sand, Stephen on paper:

Stephen:
The flood is following me.
I can watch it flow past from here. Get back then by the Poolbeg road to the strand there. [...] These heavy sands are language tide and wind have silted here. [...] Sands and stones. Heavy of the past. (U Oxford 44)

[...]
His shadow lay over the rocks as he bent, ending. Why not endless till the farthest star? Darkly they are there behind this light, darkness shining in the brightness, delta of Cassiopeia, worlds. Me sits there with his augur’s rod of ash, in borrowed sandals, by day beside a livid sea, unbeheld, in violet night walking

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

Some flatfoot tramp on it in the morning. Useless. Washed away. Tide comes here. Saw a pool near her foot. Bend, see my face there, dark mirror, breathe on it, stirs. All these rocks with lines and scars and letters. O, those transparent! Besides they don’t know. What is the meaning of that other world. I called you naughty boy because I do not like. AM. A.

No room. Let it go. Mr Bloom effaced the letters with his slow boot.

beneath a reign of uncouth stars. I throw this ended shadow from me, manshape ineluctable, call it back. Endless, would it be mine, form of my form? Who watches me here? Who ever anywhere will read these written words? Signs on a white field. [...] What is that word known to all men? (U Oxford, 48)

In “How to read Ulysses” Hugh Kenner notices this and several other analogies between Bloom’s and Stephen’s meditations and sees them as a source of subtle ironies characterising the treatment of the protagonists. But Stephen’s questions are disturbingly ambiguous. Just as Bloom’s, his thoughts seem to ring with the voice of the dybbuk-author. When he is wondering who is watching him at that moment (this moment?) and who will be reading “these written words,” we cannot help but hear Joyce-the author speaking through his hero. Of course, Stephen may be thinking of God; a moment earlier he recalled bishop Berkley’s idea of God’s gaze sustaining the world. But he is thinking them as an author (of a poem he is just composing) and in this capacity he reflects the Author who wrote them in his and His own name. Finnegans Wake addresses a similar dilemma in a commentary on the manuscript discovered by a hen in dung heap:

...while we in our free state [...] may have our irremovable doubts as to the whole sense of the lot, the interpretation of any phrase in the whole, the meaning of every word of a phrase so far deciphered out of it, however unfettered our Irish daily independence, we must vaunt no idle dubiosity as to its genuine authorship and holusbolus authoritativeness. [...] Anyhow, somehow and somewhere, before the bookflood or after her ebb, somebody mentioned by name in his telephone directory, Coccolanious or Gallotaurus, wrote it, wrote it all,

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Yet, as Kenner points out, passages tying Stephen’s with Bloom’s reflections also ring of inescapable irony, and so does the above quoted comment. After all, “this downright there you are and there it is is only in his eye. Why?” (FW 118.16-17) The following chapters will demonstrate how ironies of Ulysses’s textual history twisted the book’s world into word.

Joyce and his “Anticollaborators”

In fact, Joyce took an active part in virtually every stage of the book production. First of all, he asserted his authorship and authority over Ulysses by the austere appearance of the cover which bore only the title and his name. He was very meticulous about its design. Its plain light blue with white lettering was to be reminiscent of the Greek flag. Since Darantière’s printers could not obtain the exact shade, Joyce asked his friend, a painter Myron Nutting, to prepare a correct sample which was sent to Dijon as the model.26 Together with Beach they decided that because of exceptional circumstances Ulysses should be issued as a de luxe edition available mainly through subscription. It consisted of 1000 copies, printed in three limitations: the first one hundred copies on fine handmade Dutch paper and signed by the author, a hundred and fifty copies on vergé d’Arches paper, and the remaining 750 copies on vergé à barbes. The choice of vergé d’Arches influenced the size of the book: it was necessary to recast the plates to adjust the text to a larger paper size. The first to be printed were the 750 copies of vergé à barbes series.27 The first two copies of Ulysses reached the author on his birthday, the 2nd February 1922. The novel presented itself as a massive tome, nearly a sculptural object hacked out from paper (as if alluding by its shape to the Greek derivation of “tome” from “cut, cutting”): “as large as the telephone directory or a family bible, and with many literary and social characteristics of both.”28 Its shape and size indicated that the

26 Ellmann, James Joyce, footnote on 524.
27 Slote, Ulysses in the Plural, 12.
28 Slocombe in Slote, Ulysses in the Plural, 13.
reader was not offered yet another handy entertainment, but *the book*: to be read and reread, to be studied and revered.

But despite the stately appearance, both the material form of the book and the text it contained turned out to be very unstable. Its covers were not a solid, hardback binding, but rather a kind of wrapping, as was customary for French *de luxe* editions since their owners were expected to have the books rebound at their own expense. When it reached the subscribers, many English and American readers, unaware of the French editorial practices, complained that the book literally fell apart in their hands.²⁹ Its material fragility anticipated the notorious instability of its text. Numerous revisions and expansions on proofs, and the French typesetters who did not know English, had an unwelcome side effect: since some pages were reset several times, the book contained so many misprints that Beach decided to include an apology, asking “for the reader’s indulgence for typographical errors unavoidable in the exceptional circumstances.”³⁰

Correcting and corrupting the novel began already during the printing of the first edition, as some minor emendations were introduced during recasting the text for the verge d’Arches limitation. But there was too little time to introduce any substantial corrections, nor even an erratum list, into the so-called second edition³¹ brought out in November 1922. Though it was published under the imprint of the Egoist Press, London, by John Rodker, Paris, it was in fact the same book as the one by Shakespeare and Company, and Beach even faced an accusation of publishing a “bogus first edition.” Four later printings in the years 1923-25 were also made from the same plates. The sole variation of the design occurred in the 1924 cheaper edition, which reversed the colours of the cover. In it the lettering was in Greek blue on a white background. This annoyed Joyce very much, as he wished to preserve the


³¹ “So called” because it did not vary from the first one. Cf. Sylvia Beach, *Shakespeare and Company* (London: Faber, 1960) 104; Ellmann also reports that this issue aroused some legal controversy as these two editions were nearly identical (*James Joyce* 541-2). Slote refers to all the printings made up to 1926 as “the first editions,” and calls “the second” edition only the one printed in 1926-30.
original design; the colours were restored in the next printing.\textsuperscript{32} The reasons for that were as much aesthetic as symbolic. As Bernard Benstock observes,

The colors of the Greek and Jewish flag so determinedly intended by the author were the first symbolic gestures of \textit{Ulysses}, a nautically Mediterranean blue that had its immediate counterpoint in the snotgreen sea (\textit{U}, 5) of St. George’s Channel separating Ireland from England, just as the “Ulysses” on that blue cover is first set off against “Stately, plump Buck Mulligan” (\textit{U}, 2-3), and then rights itself to complement “Mr Leopold Bloom” (\textit{U}, 54-55). In effect, each consequent edition of \textit{Ulysses} that introduces its own color scheme for the covers of the book is tampering with Joyce’s carefully controlled text.\textsuperscript{33}

Benstock, just as McKenzie, even McGann and several other scholars, sees Joyce’s involvement with the design of that edition as part of his writing process that did not stop with providing words but continued till the book took a specific shape. However, each subsequent printing inevitably brought new textual corruptions (the book was set in movable type) and finally Darantiere suggested to Beach that the book should be typeset anew. This new version, which is identified as the proper second edition, but which was named the eighth printing, was published in 1926 under the imprint of Shakespeare and Company. At that time Joyce was already deeply involved in \textit{Work in Progress}, and did not supervise the publication as closely as he had done before. Therefore, to improve the text Beach hired a professional proofreader who, in fact, ironed out some Joycean idiosyncrasies of style.\textsuperscript{34} Not only did the edition contain some undesirable textual alterations, but it also had a different layout. The text was expanded to 735 pages, instead of the original 732, and the final full stop of “Ithaca” was lost. Beach recalls that when Joyce saw a copy of the new edition for the first time, he

\textsuperscript{32} Beach, \textit{Shakespeare and Company}, 105. For the detailed list of \textit{Ulysses} editions with information about corrections and errata lists see Slote, \textit{Ulysses in the Plural}, 47-51.


\textsuperscript{34} Slote, \textit{Ulysses in the Plural}, 16.
scanned the opening pages with the help of his two pairs of glasses and a magnifying glass and exclaimed “Three errors already!” Nevertheless, four further printings of that edition were published until 1930 (each including corrections), at which time the European publication of the book was taken over by Albatross Press in Hamburg. In 1932 it brought out a two-volume *Ulysses* under the specially created imprint of Odyssey Press. That edition restored the lost final full stop of “Ithaca” and corrected many other textual errors. It bears a note that it “may be regarded as the definitive standard edition, as it has been specially revised, at the author’s request, by Stuart Gilbert.” But only its second printing may be considered as fairly accurate, since the first included some new typesetting errors, the best known being a botched “Aeolus” headline: “LINKS TH BYGONE DAYS OF YOREWI.” Nevertheless, it was considered the most adequate representation of Joyce’s text until 1961, when Bodley Head, and later 1984/86 Gabler editions did not challenge this claim.

Strikingly, it was not the Odyssey Press *Ulysses* that was supposed to be the copy text for the first legal American publication of Joyce’s novel. When the ban on the book was lifted in the States by the famous verdict of Judge Woolsey in 1933, Random House rushed the novel into print for the sake of copyrights. However, they made a consequential mistake in basing the typesetting on a copy of the pirated edition published in 1929 by Samuel Roth, which closely imitated the layout of the 1927 Shakespeare and Company printing, but contained numerous textual errors. When Joyce learnt about this, he organised an international protest against the breach of his copyrights, and, generally, in protection of copyrights of foreign authors in the States. He managed to collect 167 signatures of influential public figures in support of his cause. But Sam Slote mentions in passing that one of Joyce’s


36 This edition was also published in three limitations: a single volume on thin paper in a white cloth binding; a two volume-set on wove paper in grey paperback covers; and a two volume-set on wove paper also in grey paperback covers of only 35 copies (Stacey Herbert, “A Draft for ‘Ulysses in Print: the Family Tree’, an Installation for the Exhibition ‘James Joyce and Ulysses at the National Library Ireland’,” *Genetic Joyce Studies. Genetic Joyce Studies* 4 (Spring 2004), Web, 23 Dec. 2005) para.19).

essential motives was also a highly corrupted state of the text that misrepresented his work.\textsuperscript{38} Why the publisher chose that particular printing and not the 1930 one, explicitly specified by Joyce in the contract,\textsuperscript{39} must remain unanswered. In fact, as Stacey Herbert points out, none of the author’s conditions concerning the publication was fulfilled, which clearly shows how little control the author could exert over the publishing process at that point. Joyce did not wish to include any preface or commentary, but, ultimately, the book opened with a foreword by Morris Ernst focusing on overriding moral censorship in literature, followed by a reprint of Woolsey’s verdict, and Joyce’s letter to Bennet Cerf of Random House. The typesetting also omitted the previously mentioned full stops, but included a new typographic feature, which clued the readers to the syllogistic structure of the novel as well as alluded to the heroes’ names: each part began with a full-page letter faintly reminiscent of the enormous initials of the \textit{Book of Kells}.

When Cerf realised what had happened, he decided to have the text thoroughly proofread for the 1940 Modern Library imprint, which alleviated the problematic condition of the text, but still left it far from perfection. Unfortunately, the 1949 Random House reprint reverted to the corrupt text of 1934. Thus, subsequent American editions reproduced either the 1940 text or 1934 faulty one until a new revised and reset edition was prepared in 1961. This was based on an entirely revised text published by Bodley Head in Great Britain in 1960. But that was not free of textual errors either, just as a \textit{de luxe} edition of the Limited Editions Club with Henri Matisse’s drawings, based on the first printing of the Odyssey Press brought out in 1935,\textsuperscript{40} while Joyce was still alive. In fact,

\textsuperscript{38} Slote, \textit{Ulysses in the Plural}, 21.
\textsuperscript{39} Herbert, “A Draft for ‘Ulysses in Print,’” para. 30.
\textsuperscript{40} This edition was brought out by George Macy, who invited Matisse to make illustrations for the book. However, Matisse did not read the book and based his drawings on Homer. The book was also set differently than any other edition: the text was in two columns and “Aeolus” headlines were in different typefaces to imitate the variety of the newspaper page (but the author was not consulted on that matter). It was arranged that Joyce would sign the 250 copies, which he did. At first approving of the project, Joyce withdrew his support when he saw the book and, especially, when he realised that
most American editions offered their readers rather corrupted texts.  

The lifting of the ban and publication of the book in the U.S. paved the way for its British edition. *Ulysses* was finally brought out in 1936 by Bodley Head and also included Woolsey’s decision as well as other relevant documents to counteract possible obscenity charges. It had an entirely new appearance: the deep green cloth cover was decorated with Odysseus’ bow impressed in gold, designed by Eric Gill. The text spanned nearly 800 pages. Although it claimed again to be “final and definitive,” it was not free of new typesetting errors. A year later Bodley Head issued a trade version, including Joyce’s new corrections, and its plates were used for several later printings. None of them was ideal, however. Each emendation inevitably resulted in new misprints, as if to exemplify Fredson Bowers’ notorious dictum about “the remorseless corrupting influence that eats away at a text during the course of its transmission.” Typically, chance interfered and the 1955 reprint was made from the earlier, 1936 plates. The acclaimed 1960 Bodley Head edition was in fact based on a corrected version of the 1955 printing and lacked some of the revisions Joyce made for the 1937 edition. However, it did not parade itself as a “correct” version, but only bore a note that it was “completely redesigned.” It became the standard British trade edition and the basis for the above mentioned “scrupulously corrected” (as it was proudly labelled by the publisher) Random House edition of 1961. The accuracy of the latter was soon challenged by Jack Dalton, who is supposed to have called it “the kind of

Matisse’s drawings had no bearing on his text (Slote, *Ulysses in the Plural*, 22).

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44 For example, it modernised the layout of “Circe.” Instead of Joyce’s preferred format with the speaker’s name in the centre and stage directions and speaker’s parts subsequently indented to the right the typographer, John Ryder had the names moved to the left margin (Slote, *Ulysses in the Plural*, 24).
book you could use only a few minutes in a chemistry lab before blowing the place up.” But the Joycean world blew out only some twenty years later when Hans Walter Gabler, assisted by Wolfhard Steppe and Claus Melchior, brought out their Critical and Synoptic Edition of Ulysses.

**Ulysses as Joyce never saw it**

When Gabler set to work on *Ulysses*, he decided that all previous editions were too corrupt to function as a potential copytext. Instead, he chose to construct what he called “a continuous manuscript text,” that is, a *reconstruction* of what Joyce would have written, had he preserved all the fair copies of final stages of manuscripts, typescripts, galley and page proofs. In other words, Gabler set out to construct an ideal text Joyce had intended to write but had never succeeded in producing, due to production limitations: typists’, printers’ and proofreaders’ errors as well as his own working habits, poor eyesight, and oversights in copying and correcting. In order to do so, Gabler and his co-editors went through the extant materials from the fair copy stages up to the final page proofs, tracing and recovering corrections and additions that never made it into print. Thus, Gabler’s edition is “not an objective representation of the composition of *Ulysses*, but rather a theoretical construct,” a *Ulysses* as it might have been, had Joyce had ideal conditions for writing and never changed his mind trying to make up for mistakes in transmission.

It came out in 1984 in Garland Publishing, New York, as a three-volume *Critical and Synoptic Edition of Ulysses* with the note announcing it as “the corrected text.” The verso pages presented the reconstructed text with diacritical marks indicating subsequent stages of its development, and the recto pages offered an unmarked reading text based on a reconstructed final layer of the “continuous manuscript.” Two years later Penguin and Bodley Head published the one-volume reading edition incorporating some alterations suggested by


46 Slote, *Ulysses in the Plural*, 27.
scholars in the meantime. Advertised and welcomed as “the ultimate, correct text of Ulysses,” it was to sweep all previous editions off the market, and to establish a monopoly on the representation of Joyce’s novel.47

While some of Gabler’s emendations indeed correct evident mistakes, others are more problematic. When he restores the lost “-y” in “eighty” of the price of land sold by Agendath Netaim, he corrects an obvious slip of the pen (type), as the mortgage in the previous versions amounted to an absurd sum of “eight marks,” with ten marks paid down and the rest of the balance in yearly instalments (cf. U Oxford 58; UG 49).48 More controversial are his decisions based on the so-called “rule of the invariant context.” It pertains to passages in which a word or phrase was omitted and the omission never restored. If a given passage did not contain any further alterations modifying the original context, Gabler restored the omission, deciding that Joyce would have wanted it so. Perhaps the most notorious restoration of this kind is the passage pinpointing the meaning of “the word known to all men” as love. After an initial enthusiasm over such discoveries came a realisation that, if reinstated into the reading text, they can spoil much of the interpretive fun, and in fact change the meaning of the book by closing down some legitimate interpretive possibilities. So, for example, Slote and Jeri Johnson recognise its drawbacks, but admit that it is valuable in correcting many transmissional errors as well giving insight into Joyce’s techniques of revision and elaboration, while Agnieszka Graff

47 Later Gabler explained that the label was added in consequence of an agreement between the publisher and the James Joyce Estate (see his letter in New York Review of Books 35.13 (18 Aug 1988). Web. 16 March 2006). However, in his analysis of the publishers’ policies concerning the book Daniel Klyn pointed out that: “[w]hat today’s reader is likely to miss when confronting multiple available editions of Ulysses is the fact that from the June 16, 1986 publication of ‘The Corrected Text’ until June of 1990, all other versions of the novel were withdrawn from circulation worldwide. To this extent, Gabler’s editions did indeed embody the definitive text of Ulysses — but only by default” (see Daniel Klyn, Part II “The Kidd Effect,” “Haveth Versions Everywhere – or – Here Comes Everybody’s Edition(s) of Ulysses,” 19 Nov. 1998. Wayne State University. Web, 6 April 2006, para. 7). This was one of the reasons why John Kidd objected to this edition so fiercely. See also Julie Sloan Brannon’s Who Reads Ulysses?: the Rhetoric of the Joyce Wars and the Common Reader (New York and London: Routledge, 2003): 73-74.

48 Slote, Ulysses in the Plural, 28.
thinks that Gabler failed in what he was most interested in, namely, in representing the diachrony because of his excessively complex system of notation.\textsuperscript{49}

Gabler’s edition was most vigorously (if not viciously) attacked by John Kidd, mostly on the grounds that Gabler and his collaborators worked with facsimiles, which resulted in several misreadings, and that he did not collate the final stage of his continuous manuscript text with any edition published during Joyce’s lifetime.\textsuperscript{50} Essentially, the bone of contention seems to be Gabler’s method of combining genetic editing with Anglo-American critically eclectic editing. Kidd’s attack launched a series of articles, scholarly analyses, and private debates known as “the Joyce Wars,” which were even accounted in detail in a book-long \textit{The Scandal of Ulysses}.\textsuperscript{51} Without going into a detailed analysis of the controversial textual modifications, which dominated the debate, I would like to concentrate on an issue raised in passing, and consistently marginalised by literary critics.

The critically eclectic editing tradition, to which Gabler subscribed, aims to present “the evidence used in the text’s construction”\textsuperscript{52} and strives to correct errors of transmission “by proposing readings that more accurately represent what the author intended to write.”\textsuperscript{53} However, Gabler modified its

\textsuperscript{49} Graff, “This Timecoloured Place,” 180.


\textsuperscript{52} Williams and Abbot, 57, quoted in McGann, \textit{Textual Condition}, 49.

\textsuperscript{53} McGann, \textit{Textual Condition}, 49, emphasis KB.
methods by resorting to genetic editing in his construction of the copy-text, i.e. “the one state of the text that is determined to be most authoritative.” As we know, instead of choosing any of the versions published during the author’s lifetime under his supervision (as is usually done), Gabler chose to come up with “a continuous manuscript reconstruction of an ideal text.” Thus, his reading text, as he explained, should be seen as “the sum of the acts of writing that shaped *Ulysses*. This reading text is an editorial suggestion – as any and every edited text is an editorial suggestion – of a valid text for *Ulysses*.”

However, we may ask if, given the degree of the author’s involvement in the technical process of publishing the book, it was justifiable to disregard so completely the author’s intentions regarding the bibliographic code which he chose for his text.

In the same letter Gabler insisted that this is “a possible and defensible representation” of Joyce’s *text*. Undoubtedly, it is a defensible reconstruction of the *text*, but only if one chooses to see the book as a “transparent phial,” that is, when one rejects its bibliographic code and its materiality as valid means of signification along with the evidence suggesting that the author used it in this capacity. Among Kidd’s initial accusations against Gabler’s *Ulysses* was that it did not preserve the correspondences *intentionally inscribed* into the material form of the book discussed above. For Kidd it is the published book that constitutes the final stage of construction of the text (thus, the final stage of “a continuous manuscript”) and Gabler’s mistake was also to have ignored the evidence suggesting that the appearance of the book was deliberately shaped by the authorial intention. Consequently, for example, the intended numerical symbolism of *Ulysses*, a legitimate component of the work’s overall meaning, was irrevocably lost (even more so, as due to publisher’s policies the edition was to replace and invalidate all previous ones). Joyce’s superstitions are well-known and may be dismissed with a condescending smile. Believing or not in “Joyce’s numerology,” however, an editor should neither ignore the fact that the author believed in it, nor disregard data suggesting that he may have employed it

54 Williams and Abbot, 58, quoted in McGann, *Textual Condition*, 49.
in his work. If it played a part in the artistic design, it should be accounted for in a critical edition. That is why Gabler’s reconstruction, helpful as it may be in giving insight into the textual history of the work, does not represent the book as Joyce wrote it.56

Both Gabler and his defenders seem to have ignored the question of how the linguistic and material (textual and bibliographic) layers of the work co-produce meaning and contribute to an aesthetic effect. Obviously, they treated such correspondences, even if intentional, as accidental. This is probably because literary scholars rarely recognise how the material form of the literary work relates to its content. One reason may be that they think of the literary work in terms of “text”: a continuous succession of words, i.e. Lessing’s Nacheinander; Derridean “writing” or “Text,” Barthes’ “methodological field.” Barthes makes a clear distinction between “Text” as a dynamic, sense-generating field, which can even extend across several works in a productive intertextual interplay, and “work,” which is “concrete” and occupies a portion of book-space,”57 stressing that one should not be confused with the other. (But what if they are so inextricably bound that one cannot be divorced from the other?) Another reason is that books are seen as products of a certain place and time, the result of the collaborative efforts of the author, publishers, typographers, printers and even booksellers. As such, they include a bibliographic code that can indeed speak: of the circumstances of their production and of the society which produces and circulates them. But then the bibliographic code, as a product of its time, is accidental and therefore hardly relevant to the book’s linguistic content. And it is the linguistic, verbal content of books that is of interest to literary scholars. In other words, a general conviction among them seems to be that the study of the

56 Though Kidd’s initial objections were related to the question of how the linguistic and material (documentary and bibliographic) layers of the work co-produce meaning and contribute to an aesthetic effect, he later concentrated on Gabler’s transitional errors and personal attacks. This shifted the focus of the controversy and made many scholars suspicious of Kidd’s other arguments.

bibliographic code and material forms of literary works have little application in literary criticism and interpretation.

Such a sociological approach to the bibliographic code resulted in yet another, severely criticised, edition of *Ulysses* published by Danis Rose in Lilliput Press in 1997. Rose questions any possibility of reconstructing a definitive text of *Ulysses*. He clearly subscribes to the view that the making of a book is by definition a collaborative effort. Consequently, different production teams will necessarily come up with their own versions of its embodiment. Rose holds that “the editor should replace the original production crew when copyreading, and the edition’s publishers, typographers and designers should replace their original counterparts. Only in this way can one produce an edition that is of its own time and that can, intellectually and aesthetically, stand on its own two feet.”

In other words, Rose advocates modernisation of the language of the literary work for the sake of accessibility. Yet, though liberal with the linguistic layer, Rose seems to have drawn on the tradition of limited de luxe editions and in fact exploited the bibliographic code for marketing purposes. His *Reader’s Edition of Ulysses* included 1026 copies issued in three limitations: the first hundred were bound in blue Chieftain goatskin and blue cloth, gilt stamped on the spine and gilt at the head, the remaining nine hundred copies were bound in light blue cloth, and the 26 lettered copies were bound in blue full leather, all issued in slipcases and clearly targeted at collectors, arguably a material echo of the first edition.

Rose’s views on the publishing process parallel Raymond Federman’s first proposition concerning the future of the novel put forward in “Surfiction.” The American writer claimed that:

> In all other art forms, there are three essential elements at play: the creator, the medium through which the work of art is transmitted from the creator, and the receiver (listener or viewer) to whom the work of art is transmitted. In the writing of fiction, we have only the first and third elements: the writer and the reader. Me and you. And the medium (language), because it is neither auditory nor visual (as in music, painting, and sometimes, poetry), merely serves as a means of

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58 Qtd in Herbert, “A Draft for ‘Ulysses in Print,” para. 59-60.
transportation from me to you, from my meaning to your understanding of that meaning. If we are to make of the novel an art form, we must raise the printed word as the medium, and therefore where and how it is placed on the printed page makes a difference in what the novel is saying. Thus, not only the writer creates fiction, but all those involved in the ordering of that fiction; the typist, the recorder, the printer, the proofreader, and the reader partake of the fiction, and the real medium becomes the printed word as it is presented on the page, as it is perceived, heard, read, visualized (not only abstractly but concretely) by the receiver.60

But, as demonstrated above, even such a shared authorship does not invalidate authorial intentions as an instrumental agent for the final form of a book. Besides, it is worth quoting Federman so extensively, because he pays so much attention to what Rose, and Gabler, too, have overlooked: that printed language is, in fact, a non-transparent medium and there are authors aware of this fact. As a practicing writer, Federman quickly recognised and exploited the visuality of writing and the expressive function of the bibliographic code. One wonders why Rose, most likely familiar with this well-known essay and fashioning his edition after the one supervised by Joyce, assumed that the Irish writer was a less perceptive artist than the American post-modernist.

Rose’s editorial decisions included, among other alterations, standardising Joyce’s idiosyncratic orthography and punctuation (which, as we said before, distinguished him visually and stylistically among English writers) as well as introducing punctuation and apostrophes into Molly’s monologue, thereby reinserting all the “pins and needles” Joyce so carefully removed from her “feminine clothiering fiction” (FW 109.31). Rose argued that this would make the text more accessible to the contemporary reader, but what he achieved was the estrangement of the writer from his own creation to such an extent that many readers rejected his Ulysses as “no longer Joyce’s text, per se.”61 His other

61 Herbert, “A Draft for ‘Ulysses in Print,” para. 59. In 2004 Rose brought out a revised version of his edition, excising from it the 200 words introduced before from the manuscript materials, and removing the contentious punctuation. “I must announce – to the relief of her many suitors – that Molly has once again
interventions involved correcting factual errors and replacing Joyce’s scientifically inadequate data with the latest findings (e.g. he corrected “confused” initials and titles of clergymen and the value of atmospheric pressure in the Bloomean “catechism” of “Ithaca). The scope of alterations was so vast that he ultimately faced legal charges of copyright infringement and “passing off,” that is, of modifying the text to such a degree that it could no longer be regarded as Joyce’s Ulysses. He lost the first one on the grounds that he had not obtained permission to use unpublished manuscript material in editing his text. He won the second, the court being of “textual” persuasion in its understanding of literature. But in general opinion his edition constitutes “[t]he last word in stolentelling! And what’s more rightdown lowbrown schisthematic robblemint! Yes” (FW 424.35-36), rather “a curiosity to show” than the standard reader’s text he aimed for.

What moral, if any, can be drawn from the story of Ulysses editions? While it is clear that no perfect, fully corrected version of its text will ever be available to readers, scholars and editors should perhaps be more sensitive also to one another’s findings, even if they find them controversial. Another, which I would like to advocate here, is that in the case of “liberatic” writers editions supervised by them (faulty as they may be) should be treated as another valid document that cannot be simply ignored. It is striking to find out how many scholars, such as Hugh Kenner, Patrick A. McCarthy, Bernard Benstock, and last but not least, John Kidd, have paid attention to the bookishness of Joyce’s novel, and to see how some of its editors ignored it, despite exploitation of the bibliographic code for their own ends. As Patrick A. McCarthy points out: “It is partly through the exposure of the pitfalls of print that Ulysses becomes, in Kenner’s felicitous phrase, ‘a


Herbert, “A Draft for ‘Ulysses in Print,” para. 60.


new kind of book altogether, a Berlitz classroom between covers: a book from which we are systematically taught the skills we require to read it” 65. Perhaps one of the skills we need to acquire is connected with his further observation of the same page. Just as the realistic 19th-century novel was based on stable, Newtonian physics and Euclid’s geometry, so *Ulysses* is based on the premises resembling those of modern, Einsteinian or quantum physics, in which the shape of observed reality is dependent on its observer who, inevitably and unavoidably, modifies it.

**“Blue Book of Eccles” in the Squinting Mirror of *Finnegans Wake***

For that [...] is what papyr is need of, made of, hides and hints and misses in prints.

*(FW 20.10-11)*

In chapter 5 of *Finnegans Wake* we read about a mysterious manuscript dug out by a hen from a midden heap. The “untitled mamafesta” *(FW 104.04)* turns out to be a letter written by Anna Livia Plurabelle in defence of H.C. Earwicker, who had been accused of some obscure crimes. The chapter contains detailed analyses of the document that in many ways resembles an illuminated Irish manuscript; and much attention is devoted to its appearance, or to its bibliographic code. Although the letter is usually interpreted as “a palimpsestuous précis of *Finnegans Wake* itself,” 66 it bears many characteristics not only of Joyce’s nocturnal work, but also of the “usylessly unreadable Blue Book of Eccles” *(FW 179.26-27)* and the story of *Ulysses* resonates humorously, though at times bitterly, in speculations about it.

The first hint at a similarity between ALP’s letter and Joyce’s book is a remark concerning the lack of inverted commas in citations *(FW 108.29-36)*, one of the typographic peculiarities of *Ulysses* that aroused some criticism. For example, R.C. Churchill attributed much of the work’s

notorious stylistic novelty to “typographic tricks.” Evidently disturbed by them, he claimed that if Joyce’s idiosyncratic typography were “translated” into Standard English typography, much of his acclaimed originality would be lost. Accusing Joyce of posing as a stranger, Churchill was blind to what he himself read from the bibliographic code: that a typographic modification may be a meaningful, stylistic difference. While linguistically Joyce acknowledges his belonging to the English literary tradition, writing in the “language of the masters,” typographically he alienates himself from it, thereby making his pages as immediately recognisable (within the body of English literature) as those of the Book of Kells.

The allusion to Joyce’s style of citation is immediately followed by an extensive passage in which the narrator prompts scholars to devote some time and analytical effort to the usually ignored container of a text (FW 109.01-36). It is one long, elaborated sentence that focuses on the relationship between the literary form and content. The commentator wonders if “any fellow [...] ever looked sufficiently longly at a quite everydaylooking stamped addressed envelope? Admittedly it is an outer husk” (FW 109.01-08), yet a conscientious critic should not ignore it since “to concentrate solely on the literal sense or even the psychological content of any document to the sore neglect of the enveloping facts themselves circumstantiating it is just as hurtful to sound sense” (FW 109.12-15) as assaulting a lady by ignoring her elegant attire. While the commentator is aware that the material shape of any document (“a quite everydaylooking stamp addressed envelope” [FW 109.07-08]) is an imperfect product of circumstances: a compromise between the efforts of the author and his “anticollaborators,” he points out that it encodes more than just the history of its production (“its face

67 Churchill was not the only critic that complained about unconventional typography and punctuation of Ulysses. In the previously mentioned article “Ulysses and the Printed Page,” Patrick A. McCarthy cites Holbrook Jackson’s complaints about the arrangement of the book, its flawed or missing punctuation, and even the format which was “an affront” in itself (McCarthy, “Ulysses and the Printed Page,” 70).

... is its fortune" [FW 109.08-09]). The perfectly imperfect (because imperfections cannot be avoided) appearance of the document is nevertheless “featureful” (FW 109.10): it shows and tells a lot. So if one concentrates critical efforts only on the “literal sense” (i.e. verbal content) or “even the psychological content” (FW 109.12-13), one will miss some significant aspect of the work. Such an approach is “hurtful to sound sense” (FW 109.15): both to understanding words as they are read (aloud), and to a thorough and competent analysis of the text. The document can only be read and understood fully when one devotes attention to both the content and the container.

A proper reading is a matter of “ethiquethical fact”: that is, of both etiquette and ethics (FW 109.21). If the work is “dressed up” like a lady, that is, if its material form is carefully fashioned, it is rude to ignore that. But it is not only a question of “good manners,” of appreciating the beauty of an artefact; a proper attitude towards such a piece involves discovering and following rules of reading dictated by such a design. The meaning is hidden in the visual features of the document (a letter, a book) as a woman is hidden in her clothes. However, ignoring the “feminine clothiering” (FW 109.31) and going straight to the verbal layer is comparable to assaulting a lady by ripping off her clothes: consequently, the work appears as “an inharmonious creation” (FW 109.23). On the other hand, if it is attended to properly, it will reward the critic/ voyeur by revealing “its local colour and perfume” and tell much more than the words (FW 109.26). This “feminine fiction” (FW 109.32), conveyed by the material shape of the text, is here all the time, only backgrounded by our reading habits. Neither should it, nor, in fact, can it be separated from the linguistic content. They should be considered as a whole and read as one.

Surprisingly, on such binding of writing and meaning Derrida has something to say which may stand us in good stead (and we shall see in a while how Sterne does that, too). Having remarked that the Western tradition has always considered writing as the body of speech, therefore, of the spirit, he moves on to another parallel between writing and clothes:
Writing, sensible matter and artificial exteriority: a “clothing.” It has sometimes been contested that speech clothed thought. Husserl, Saussure, Lavelle have all questioned it. But has it ever been doubted that writing was the clothing of speech? For Saussure it is even a garment of perversion and debauchery, a dress of corruption and disguise, a festival mask that must be exorcised, that is to say warded off, by the good word: “Writing veils the appearance of language; it is not a guise for language but a disguise” (p. 51) [p.30]. Strange “image.” One already suspects that if writing is “image” and exterior “figuration,” this “representation” is not innocent. The outside bears with the inside a relationship that is, as usual, anything but simple exteriority. The meaning of the outside was always present within the inside, imprisoned outside the outside, and vice versa.\(^69\)

It is exactly this close relation of the outside and the inside that the Wakean passage is concerned with. The “envelope” and its “message” (the book and its content) are as inextricably bound as the intertwined nymphs of Mallarmé’s “Afternoon of a Faun.” It seems that in *Finnegans Wake* the link between carnality, femininity and materiality of writing is quite consistent and enhanced visually, too. After all, it is ALP’s body that is represented in the only diagram in the *Wake*, and the only other pictures are most probably sketched by Issy since they appear in the footnotes in II.2 (*FW* 293, 308). No wonder then that the non-verbal, “feminine” aspect of literature has been suppressed, overlooked or treated with suspicion as subversive to the logocentric order.

The allusion to the “feminine clothiering” of “the Blue Book of Eccles” (*FW* 179.27) follows an extensive analysis of the visual features of the manuscript. Firstly, one is struck by its numerous analogies to the *Book of Kells* (it is even suggested that the Wakean letter inspired the tenebrous illuminations of the famous mediaeval manuscript); we have already noticed how Joyce employed idiosyncratic typography to make his book visually recognisable at first sight (apart from “Aeolus,” the two feminie episodes: “Circe” and “Penelope” are most conspicuous in this respect). But the most explicit comment tying the letter with his “ulykkhean” “baedeker” (*FW* 123.16, 26) appears at the end of the analysis, when one notices:

\(^69\) *Derrida, Of Grammatology*, 35.
the toomuchness, the fartoomanyness of all those fourlegged ems: and why spell dear god with a big thick dhee (why, O why, O why?): the cut and dry aks and wise form of the semifinal; and, eighteenthly and twentyfourthly, but at least, thank Maurice, lastly when all is zed and done, the penelopean patience of its last paraphe, a colophon of no fewer than seven hundred and thirtytwo strokes tailed by a leaping lasso – who thus at all this marvelling but will press on hotly to see the vaulting feminine libido of those interbranching ogham sex upandinsweeps sternly controlled and easily represuaded by the uniform matteroffactness of a meandering male fist? (FW 122.36-123.10)

Several features of the first edition of *Ulysses* are mentioned here. The book consists of eighteen episodes stretching over 24 hours of one day and night and reflects the 24 books of *The Odyssey*. Its size must have been carefully calculated in ems\(^70\) by Maurice Darantiere and amounted to 732 pages. (Does the author thank the printer for following his instructions or does he thank him for a fortunate coincidence?) It closes with a unique, non-punctuated episode, an unmistakable “paraph” of the novel, preceded by “the cut and dry aks and wise form of the semifinal” chapter (“Ithaca”). “Penelope,” this most “feminine” of all Ulyssean fiction, the verbal record of Molly’s libidinal reflections, was as “sternly” controlled as the whole book. As Joyce explained in a letter to Frank Budgen, the episode was structured in a way evocative of the shape and movement of the globe or Gea-Tellus, the Mother Earth.\(^71\) Besides, “sternly” evokes Laurence Sterne, another writer who controlled the printed body of his books, and inextricably bound their bibliographic and textual layers. Some phrases describing the Wakean manuscript remind us of his *Tristram Shandy*: the “final droopadwindle slope of the blamed scrawl, a sure sign of imperfectible moral blindness” and “a leaping lasso” closing the document (FW 122.34-36) allude to uncle Toby’s argument for celibacy or of meandering, looping lines.

\(^70\) An em is a unit of measurement for printed matter, equal to the square of any size of type used for matter printed in that type size. Printers used to calculate the number of pages in ems.

\(^71\) Joyce, *Selected Letters*, 285. For a further discussion of this theme see the chapter “Female body as the earth: “Gea-Tellus” of *Ulysses* and “Geomater” of *Finnegans Wake*.”
graphically representing the shape of Shandean narration that aspire to “[this] right line, – the path-way for Christians to walk in […] – [the] emblem of moral rectitude.”

Interestingly, just as the Wakean narrator associates meaning with clothing, Sterne gathers thinking, dressing and writing in one image, too. Commenting on his writerly practices, Tristram puts forward a humorous claim that when an author is properly dressed, his ideas formulate themselves in his mind so clearly and elegantly that he feels compelled to put them down, as we may guess, equally properly attired. And we are justified in assuming that such writing can be represented by a perfectly straight line: “A man cannot dress but his ideas get cloath’d at the same time; and if he dresses like a gentleman, every one of them stands presented to his imagination; genteelized along with him – so that he has nothing to do, but take a pen and write like himself.” To illustrate this he remarks that Archbishop Benevento wrote “his nasty Romance of Galatea, as all the world knows” in purple clothes, drawing a link between the colour and the language of the Archbishop’s book. If writing is an embodiment of the author’s ideas, its shape may constitute a similar kind of code as clothes (which can speak of one’s wealth, social status, religion, etc.). Although some believe that the outward appearance is “entirely an affair of the body (εξωτεριχη πραξις),” they are deceived, claims Shandy, because “the soul and the body are joint-sharers in everything they get,” and he visualises his argument by putting his opponent’s view in the Greek alphabet. The learned appearance of Greek words lends a mistaken conviction an air of authority, and, simultaneously, belies it, supporting Shandy’s view that meaning and form cannot be divorced from one another.

However, having seen several of his works into print, Joyce was already well aware how futile the desire to preserve their integrity may be. If the numerical symbolism of the book happened to be “ulykkhean,” i.e. accidental (from Danish “ulykke” meaning “accident” or “misfortune”), it was happily incorporated into the author’s grand scheme. But if, as

73 Sterne, *Tristram Shandy*, 506
74 Sterne, *Tristram Shandy*, 508
evidence suggests, it was the author who engineered the bibliographic code of *Ulysses* to coincide with its content, he became “easily represuaded by the uniform matteroffactness of a meandering male fist” and yielded to circumstances. The book turned out to be “ulykkhean” in the other sense, too. As has been shown, getting *Ulysses* into print was a frustrating struggle against time and adverse circumstances: “the hare and turtle pen and paper” race (*FW* 118.24), in which the apparently obvious winner inevitably had to fail. In *Finnegans Wake* all involved in the publication process are called: “the continually more and less intermisunderstanding minds of the anticollaborators” (*FW* 118.24-26). Spotting more and more alien interventions in his text: Pound’s expurgations, the compositor’s well-meant but faulty proofreadings, “corrections” of the author’s idiosyncratic style, botched print, etc., Joyce must have realised the deceptive simplicity of the statement that: “somebody mentioned by name in his telephone directory, Coccolanious or Gallotaurus, wrote it, wrote it all, wrote it all down, and there you are, full stop.” Thus, the commentator warns us that “one who deeper thinks will always bear in the baccbuccus of his mind that this downright there you are and there it is only all in his eye” (*FW* 118.12-17). Once in print the book inevitably becomes “our social something” (*FW* 107.32), expropriated by various production crews. In subsequent editions it turns out to contain: “variously inflected, differently pronounced, otherwise spelled, changeable meaning vocable scriptsigns” (*FW* 118.26-28). Finally,

... the littleknown periplic bestteller popularly associated with the names of the wretched mariner (trianforan deffwedoff our plumsucked pattern shapekeeper) a Punic admiralty report, *From MacPerson’s Oshean Round By the Tides of Jason’s Cruise*, had been cleverly capsized and saucily republished as a dodecanesian baedeker of the every-tale-a-treat-in-itself variety which could hope satisfactorily to tickle me gander as game as your goose. (*FW* 123. 22-28)

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75 Sam Slote informs us that due to his imperfect English a compositor called Hirschwald swapped rarer words for more familiar ones; e.g. he changed Bloom’s “vailed [half-closed] eyes” into “veiled eyes” (Slote, *Ulysses in the Plural*, 17).

76 This author of a cock-and-bull-story is another allusion to Sterne.
This seems to reflect the lot of *Ulysses*’ early American editions: pirated, faultily typeset and poorly proofread, practically travesties of the book as Joyce had intended it. But although the text of the novel was extremely unstable and the production crew hardly reliable since: “every person, place and thing in the chaosmos of Alle […] was moving and changing every part of the time” (*FW* 118.19-23), the commentator assures us that:

it is not a miseffectual whyacinthinous riot of blots and blurs and bars and balls and hoops and wriggles and juxtaposed jottings linked by spurts of speed: it only looks as like it as damn it; and sure, we ought really to rest thankful that at this deleteful hour of dungflies dawning we have even a written on with dried ink scrape of paper at all to show for ourselves, tare it or leaf it. (*FW* 118-28-34)

Ultimately, “when all is zed and done,” the readers are left with a heap of bound paper leaves to read and to interpret.

But as a comment on the condition of any manuscript, the above passage also refers to *Finnegans Wake* itself. W. Y. Tindall suggests that at this point the voice of Joyce-the Author takes over from the voice of Professor-commentator. If this is so, this passage is of a similar nature to Stephen’s ambiguous thoughts about “signs on the white field” and Bloom’s pondering on the beach. It aims to draw the reader’s attention to the weight and shape of the container of the writing: the “tare” and “leaf” of it; let us note that “to tare” means “to take account of and allow for the weight of the container or receptacle.” Take it or leave it, the material artefact: “the proteiform graph […], a polyhedron of scripture” (*FW* 107.08) is the point of departure for reading. As Hugh Kenner points out, “the reader of *Ulysses* holds a book in his hands,” which is a possibility Homer did not envisage but


78 Even electronic texts must be displayed through the material object: the screen of a computer or palmtop, and specific features of the electronic medium may influence the structure and perception of a text. The fascinating subject of how the electronic medium may modify the meaning of texts is, however, beyond the scope of the present argument.
Joyce was fully aware of.⁷⁹ A Polish scholar Tadeusz Sławek draws our attentions to the fact that the tactile experience of the “tare” of the text constitutes the primary stage of reading. He also suggests that the material book as an ontological fact weighs and its features should be weighed in a critical analysis, especially when its shape is not incidental, but authorial.⁸⁰ Though belonging to the sphere of the verbally inarticulate, the material, visual, typographical side of the book is expressive. Similarly, in the “museyroom” of FW I.1 a guide advises the readers to “(Stoop) if you are abcedminded, to this claybook” (FW 18.17-18), encouraging them to do material excavations in the textual book-object they are holding. In search of meaning the reader should return to its firm grounding: its “Terracussa” (FW 119.02), “to cassay the earthcrust at all of hours” (FW 18.31): to analyse the book’s constituents, composition and potentiality of generating meaning. Such an analysis will allow the reader to discover what and who is hidden in its literal matter. For example, it can reveal the presence of HCE, the major male protagonist, in the above phrase FW 18.31. It can also help to establish the identity of the author and scribe of the analysed text at the end of chapter 5. Such a closer look at the textual space of Finnegans Wake will be the subject of the following chapters.

⁷⁹ Kenner, Flaubert, Joyce..., 32.
IV

“A SQUARE WHEEL”
FINNEGANS WAKE’S COMPOSITIONAL SPACE

“Riot of blots and blues”

Because, Soferim Bebel [...] every person, place and thing in the chaosmos of Alle anyway connected with the gobblydumped turkery was moving and changing every part of the time: the travelling inhorn (possibly pot), the hare and turtle pen and paper, the continually more and less intermisunderstanding minds of the anticollaborators, the as time went on as it will variously inflected, differently pronounced, otherwise spelled, changeably meaning vocable strictsigns. No, so help me Petault, it is not a mischplent whyacinthinous riot of blots and blurs and bars and balls and hoops and wriggles and juxtaposed jottings linked by spurts of speed: it only looks as like it as damn it; and sure, we ought really to rest thankful that at this deleterful hour of dungflies dawning we have even a written on with dried ink scrape of paper at all to show for ourselves, tare it or leaf it.

(FW 118.18-34)

The above deletion is not my Derridean game with Joyce’s text. It is a modified quotation of a quotation from Finnegans Wake in Louis Armand’s Technē. James Joyce, Hypertext & Technology.1 It comes from a chapter in which he discusses the notion of hypertext in relation to Joyce’s work. He entitles it “Books of Sand,” immediately setting out to rebut the view of any material grounding of texts. “What, until recently, has been called for alternatively empirical and mystical reasons the

1 Louis Armand, Technē: James Joyce, Hypertext and Technology (Prague: Karolinum, 2003) 33-34.
book is entering a distinct epoch in which it will no longer be possible to limit the range of a material body of writing by enclosing it with a published volume, as, for instance, something we could call a definitive or even standard edition."

What has been called the book is an illusion, the more confusing because the book is often mistakenly used to denote “text,” thereby identifying it with a material object, which it is not. As such the book implies completeness, closure, finiteness, authority, and in a Derridean reading, an assumption of reference to a pre-existing order. So the book has denoted linearity and stability, which generations of scholars have internalised as “the rules of thought.” But for Armand text, especially Joycean text permeated with technē, is a dynamic, self-conscious sense-generating machine which defies all possible constrictions of material limitations. As he explains in the preface:

[My study] is to examine how Joyce’s work is aware of its own position against and within contemporary developments in the sciences and electronic media, and that Joyce incorporated material from these developments into his texts.

Consequently, this study is concerned with the ways in which Joyce’s text can be said to solicit hypertext: from constituting a non-sequential writing, to deploying itself as a type of textual apparatus or machine, to motivating a type of hypertextual genetics. The question here centers on the notion of solicitation – the extent to which Joyce’s text can be said to both call for and motivate a hypertextuality irreducible to a stable field, or placement, whereby a text could be defined in relation to a structural epistēmē.

Admittedly, the critic has a point here. On one hand, we have seen how the concept of writing as a reflection of speech associates literature with temporality and linearity, thereby marginalising such works which resisted absolute subjugation to the temporal and linear order. On the other, due to its design and compositional history Finnegans Wake yields well to a hypertextual reading But we have also pointed out that through its objecthood the book may enable writers to employ

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2 Armand, Technē, 31.
3 Armand, Technē, 34.
4 Armand, Technē, xi.
resources of spatial arts and resort to non-verbal rhetoric of the bibliographic code. Discussing Mallarmé, we have seen how writing spatialises text and how this can contribute to its intrinsic dynamism, which is grounded in the “material stability” of the layout prescribed by the author5 (an agent of material concreteness and completeness).

Armand is also right in saying that Joyce’s work displays an awareness of the technological development of its age. However, one must remember that in his day electronics had not yet revolutionarised the printing process. Thus, his books, though referring to radio, gramophone and television, are primarily products of the printing press and movable type still set by hand. But when, in her preface to the 1992 Oxford reprint of the first edition of *Ulysses*, Jeri Johnson comments on a self-awareness of that book as a printed medium, she insists on reading the material artefact through the notion of Derridean “writing”:

[…] by the time of arrival of this second generation of Joyceans, readers had begun to attend very carefully to the book’s language, to its predisposition not only to fulfil conventions but to push them to the bursting point, to its seeming self-conscious awareness of itself as a written yet material artefact, to the way in which it seemed not only to say things but to do them. In short, readers became aware of *Ulysses* as, in Roland Barthes’s use of the term, a “Text”: an actively productive, literally paradoxical, non-closed, irredicibly plural, playful, self-pleasuring writing.6

Armand also warns us against confusing the signifying “materiality” of the text (its graphicness that can be rendered on the computer screen) with the artefactual value of the printed book. He claims that a confusion of “book” with “work” and “text” affects literary criticism in an unfortunate way, or “what continues to pass for ‘literary criticism’,” which, irrationally, mixes up separate linguistic and

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5 For a discussion how typographic misrepresentation of *Un coup de dés* may seriously affect a text, hence a possibility of reading its meaning, see K. Bazarnik and Z. Fajfer “Nota redakcyjna. O wcześniejszych przypadkach Rzutu kościami” in Stéphane Mallarmé Rzut kościami nigdy nie zniesie przypadku (“Liberatura” vol.3. Kraków: Halt 2005) 25-30.

bibliographic codes. Regrettably, Joyce himself was guilty of this confusion when he was troubled by *Ulysses*’s generic classification. As Johnson reminds us, Joyce “began by calling it a novel, soon abandoned this for ‘epic,’ ‘encycyclopaedia,’ or even maledettisimo romanziaccione,” and finally settled simply for ‘book.’ Yet, Armand’s deconstruction (destruction) of the book betrays how he himself has internalised the logocentric, temporalising view of language, which hypertext is supposed to explode. If dynamism and hyperlinking (a non-linear *epistēmē*) is a truer model of cognition as reflected by literature, why deny this feature to its printed form, especially if Joyce creatively exploited and skilfully employed it to achieve a hypertextual effect? Why should we then deny the materiality of the book such a subversive, a-totalising potential? Perhaps it is in the printed book that Joyce’s works better demonstrate the *coincidentia oppositorum* of the authoritative, totalising vision and hypertextuality that defies stabilisation in any fixed structure pointing to the “chaosmos of Alle” (*FW* 118.21).

Armand argues that Joyce is ridiculing “this preoccupation with the artefactual value of the book,” especially in chapter I.5, which contains a series of analyses of ALP’s letter. The letter, found by a hen in a midden heap, is in such a corrupted state that it is hardly decipherable. Besides, it has been damaged and soiled by those investigating it, i.e. both the bird and “à grave Brofèsor” (*FW* 124.09) who have left their traces upon its paper, effectively blurring the identity of the author. So, a multiplicity of personalities materially inflicted on the document has transformed it so much that, as Armand puts it, a “hermeneutic recovery” is no longer possible. Any “trace of the author’s” hand must have been deleted by interferences of external factors. The stability of the material artefact turns out to be a misunderstanding and an illusion. In

8 Jeri Johnson, “Introduction,” xiii.
order to prove his point Armand cites the passage quoted in the opening of the chapter, shortening it in the way indicated by the struck-out phrases.

However, as one easily notices, a glimpse at Joyce’s text (let us assume for the sake of this argument that what has been reproduced in several different printings of *Finnegans Wake* lying on my desk is what Joyce actually wrote with the intention to see it in print) shows that Armand’s excision deleted an emphatic “No” that could have belied his argumentation. “[It] is not a whyacinthinous riot of blots and blurs,” it only looks like that and we should be thankful that we have at least this scrap of paper to “cling to as with drowning hands, hoping against hope all the while […] that things will begin to clear up a bit one way or another within the next quarrel of an hour” (*FW* 119.03-06), the Wakean commentator continues. Indeed, the critic has given us an object lesson in textual instability, showing how the personalities of commentators bear on the state of the text and its interpretations.

Admittedly, Joyce was well aware that any printed text is subject to inevitable corruption and he does give voice to this awareness in the reflections of the commentator in the above quoted excerpt. We have discussed in the previous chapter how *FW* I.5 reflects to an extent his own experience with publishing *Ulysses*. Perhaps this should be seen as a self-ironic comment on his naiveté and frustrated desires. But, undoubtedly, the narrator asserts the readers that despite all external interferences caused by technology and the human factor, and despite conflicting critical readings, there remains “at least this scrap of paper” whose material features can throw some light on “[the] unmistaken identity of the persons in the Tiberiast duplex” (*FW* 123.30).¹⁰ For an Irishman like Joyce, the book could not have been merely an illusory

¹⁰ In *Finnegans Wake* these are: ALP, the authoress (matrix) of the letter and simultaneously the hen revealing it to the world, and her amanuensis, Shem the Scribe (the writer who gives it a shape in language), and even possibly Shaun, the carrier (the medium of writing), who in the guise of “à grave Brofèsor,” manages “to = introduce a notion of time [upon à plane (?) su’ f âc’e’] by punct! ing h oles (sic) in iSpace?!” (*FW* 124.09-12). Their relation to the book’s textuality will be discussed in chapter “Iconic spaces in *Finnegans Wake.*"
phenomenon. Belonging to the nation whose sacred emblems are fabulously illuminated mediaeval manuscripts, boasting of descending from a people who invented the alphabet, cherishing the Book of Kells as the epitome of Irish art, Joyce could not have been indifferent to the bibliographic code of his works nor their material and textual integrity. And, as we have seen and shall see, he was not.

When in the following chapter of Finnegans Wake (I.6), the narrator presents us with Shem the Writer at work, the hero is shown inscribing his book on his own body, thereby identifying the author with his work. Common speech uses such an image metonymically; here the figure is inverted, and the narrator informs us that the body of the letter-book is the body of the writer. This image testifies to what is well known to Joyce’s scholars and biographers, namely, to the centrality of the relationship of the artist and his work, of authorial identity, and authority in his life and work. Protesting against pirating Ulysses in the U.S.A., Joyce could not understand on what possible grounds the author could be denied control over his work. But when Armand takes up the question of the work’s material identity and its relation to authorship, he relegates his insightful comment to an endnote:12

The question of authority and authenticity, in regards to the letter, is most clearly illustrated in the “Tales Told of Shem and Shaun” episode of the Wake, where not only does Shem become in one moment both the body of the text and its author, but as “Sham” marks the letter as originary forgery. In this sense the letter defines a simulacrum at the origin of textual production, and of logos (which Shem “embodies” in his moment of autopoiesis or auto-writing, mimicking the work of God).13

To mimic the work of God is to write the Book of the World. Accordingly, in further chapters we shall see how the Irish

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12 Where few readers care to look, but if they do, they are immediately reminded of the awkward physicality of the volume.
13 Armand, Technē, 197 n11.
writer imitates God’s original gesture, creating his textual world through the word, letter and number. To investigate this we shall explore its iconic spaces first.

Genetic History & Hayman’s Nodal Structure of *Finnegans Wake*

... a huge chain envelope, written in seven divers stages of ink, from blanchessance to lavandaiette, every pothook and pancrook bespaking the whisherwife, subscribed and subpencilled. (*FW* 66.13)

If the story of the composition of *Ulysses* seems complex, it is even more contrived in the case of *Finnegans Wake*. Famously, the book took Joyce seventeen years to write, and by no means is this a story of a linearly progressive development. Nor is this simply a case of additions to a straightforward skeleton narrative. It is rather a story of a creative construction, an engineering effort of fusing various elements to build a whole.

Like the master builder of his grand narrative, Joyce began writing the book by laying the foundations of his textual edifice. He started with drafting a series of unconnected, brief sketches based on Celtic mythological stories. The first, referred to as “King Roderick O’Connor,” written in March 1923, finally found its place in pages 380-382 of the book. It was followed by: “Tristan and Isolde” (*FW* 383-399), “St. Kevin” (*FW* 604-606), “St. Patrick and the Druid” (*FW* 611-612), “Here Comes Everybody (30-34), “Mamalujo”14 (383-399), and a passage referred to as “The Letter” which later evolved into two considerable sections of the novel: “The Untitled Mamafesta,” i.e. the chapter 5 of Book I and the “Revered Letter” (now 615-619).15 In October 1923 Joyce

14 The collective name for the four old men, an incarnation of the evangelists: Mathew, Mark, Luke and John. In *FW* they are accompanied by the fifth character, the Ass.

15 The genetic history of *FW* presented in this chapter is reconstructed on the basis of Ellmann’s *James Joyce*, *James Joyce Archives*, A. Walton Litz’s *The Art of James Joyce. Method and Design in Ulysses and Finnegans Wake*,
wrote to H.S. Weaver: “I work as much as I can because these are not fragments but active elements and when they are more and a little older they will begin to fuse of themselves.”\footnote{Joyce, Letters I, 205.}

The sketches became springboards for the developing textual tissue of the work in progress and provided its major thematic dominants. The development proceeded in two directions. Firstly, initial sketches were expanded by additions and creative transformations of the base texts. Secondly, Joyce wrote “fillers,” that is, passages which were supposed to function as joints between already existing fragments. These transitional passages contain echoes of the major motifs, the more diluted, the further they appear from their thematic core, which David Hayman refers to as a “nodal” structure. He believes that the initial sketches, placed strategically at the beginning, middle and end of the book, functioned as “pegs” or a backbone for the final text.\footnote{Hayman, The “Wake” in Transit, 37.} They provided the earliest working outline before the author came up with more elaborate schemes such as Vico’s historiographic theories, or the Hindu cycles identified in the Wake by Clive Hart. The protagonists of the sketches became some of the key incarnations of the major figures in Finnegans Wake: St. Patrick and the druid appear as incarnations of the twins: Shem and Shaun, Isolde becomes Issy; King Mark, King Roderick, and Here Comes Everybody are merged in the father figure of H.C. Earwicker, while the authoress of the “mamafesta” crystallises into H.C.E.’s wife, Anna Livia

Besides, the sketches provided some important thematic motifs, such as: the rise and fall of a great man, sexual relationships, betrayal, writing-creating and interpreting, and the idea of *coincidentia oppositorum*. Ultimately, these thematic and narrative nodes serve as a cohesive device for the dense and non-linearly composed text of *Finnegans Wake*.

Beside the “prime nodes,” Hayman recognises other, lesser nodes that can be built around minor narrative sequences: historical parallels, descriptive tropes pertaining to elements of landscape (river, mountain, ocean, tree, stone), clusters of foreign language words, rhythmic clusters associated, e.g. with the river or the four old men (Mamalujo), song tags, etc. In more conventional narratives similar procedures help establish a “symbolic,” “thematic” or “motival” status of a given image or body of images. In Joyce’s eccentric work, they constitute minor “centres” and hold together often disparate material, providing balance and unity for its textual body. What is more, in the work where the narrative does not constitute the fundamental structural principle such reiterated elements enhance the readability of the text, serving as textual paths for the reader. As Hayman sees it, while writing, Joyce struggled to create:

...a semblance of comprehensiveness, an all-bookness similar to the one posited by Stéphane Mallarmé. His effort was partly to make language obey his rules rather than its own, partly to exploit the givens of language. It is the result of this process which the reader reacts to and experiences in his mirror struggle to master the “proteiform graph” that has immeshed him. Like the writer’s, his is an effort to assert a self (by imposing a pattern or a flux of patterns) or rather to win a self back from the language over which he repeatedly gains and as often loses mastery. To this process the “proteiform” network of nodal systems contributes importantly through its imposition, on the very texture of the text it now permeates, of rhythmic orders with recognizable if unfixed dimensions.

Hayman, who wrote a study of Joyce and Mallarmé, recognized in the Irish writer a similar desire to inscribe his

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19 Hayman, “Nodality and the Infra-structure of *Finnegans Wake,*” *James Joyce Quarterly* 16 (Fall 1978/ Winter 1979): 148.
vision in an all-embracing Book, and to invent a new poetic language that would enable him to do so. The novelty consists as much in multilingual neologisms, as in a spatial distribution of verbal motifs, which produces an effect comparable to Mallarméan espacement. The work, woven out of threads of interplaying motifs, appears as a spatial totality embodied in the typographic form of the book. According to Hayman, Joyce repeats the creative gesture of the French symbolist, who rejuvenated the poetic language by breaking up its logic and conventions. The reader’s task, in turn, is to pick up and follow verbal threads in order to reconstruct or rediscover meaningful constellations which to a great extent are built around the nodal stories.

Hayman is convinced that the functional role of the sketches in the structure of the book finds a sound confirmation in the chronology of the book’s composition. Other critics, such as Roland McHugh and Clive Hart share the view that the position of sketches testifies to a deliberate design. Though, as Crispi, Slote and Van Hulle tell us in the “Introduction” to How Joyce Wrote Finnegans Wake, it should be remembered that the final shape of the book emerged gradually from Joyce’s writing experiments with the sketches and the notebook materials. Commenting on parallelisms evident in Finnegans Wake, McHugh stresses that these vignettes can be more easily perceived if one is familiar with the book’s genetic history. Indeed, Joyce commenced work on Finnegans Wake from two directions: the beginning and the end. The first large sections he drafted were passages from book I, including the material of the future chapters 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, and 8, and all the four chapters of book III, which spanned the years 1923 – 26. He also drafted smaller passages of the central book II, i.e. “Roderick O’Connor and “Tristan and Isolde,” but put them aside until the “warp and weft” of Book I and III were finished. Generally, his method was to draft separate units which were later interconnected by superimposition of denser and denser allusions to the major


motifs. In May 1926 he wrote to Weaver: “I have the book now fairly well planned out in my head. I am as yet uncertain whether I shall start on the twilight games of ⊙, △ and ⊤ which will follow immediately after Δ or do K’s orisons, to follow △d.”22 On some other occasion he compared his writing to construction work, commenting on it to August Suter: “I feel like an engineer boring through a mountain from two sides. If my calculations are correct we shall meet in the middle. If not...,”23 and stressed this aspect of his work again in a postcard to Weaver:

I am making an engine with only one wheel. No spokes of course. The wheel is a perfect square. You see what I am driving at, don’t you? I am awfully solemn about it, mind you so you must not think it is a silly story about the mooks and the grapes. No, it’s a wheel, I tell the world. And it’s all square.24

In the letter which followed the postcard he explained: “My remarks about the engine were not meant as a hint at the title.

22 Joyce, *Letters I*, 241. In this letter the character △ denotes Shaun, whereas △d stands for III.4. The twilight games of ⊙, △ and ⊤ (i.e. Shem, Shaun and Issy) refers to the present chapter II.1 of *FW*, which indeed follows Δ, i.e. “ALP” chapter I.8, whereas K’s orisons are included in book IV. These symbols are known as sigla. Joyce used them as shorthand while writing *Work in Progress* and later incorporated some into the finished book. In the letter of 24 March 1924 he provided Weaver with the following list (Joyce, *Letters I*, 213):

⊠ (Earwicker, HCE by moving letter round)
△ Anna Livia
⊙ Shem-Cain
△ Shaun
∫ Snake
Ｐ S. Patrick
Ț Tristan
⊥ Isolde
Ｘ Mamalujo
□ This stands for the title but I do not wish to say it yet until the book has written more of itself.


I meant that I wanted to take up several arts and crafts and teach everybody how to do everything properly so as to be in fashion." When passages of *Work in Progress* were scheduled to appear in a magazine, he expressed a wish that a scientist, a mathematician, and a musicologist should comment on them; and he insisted that the structure of the book was mathematical. This implies that Joyce saw his work as a kind of synthesis of the arts, executed in language in its all forms: oral/aural, written/visual, and gestural as well as reflecting some geometric and numerical relations.

The question of the “joint of two tunnels” was put off until he had almost the whole of the book ready and solved only when he was finishing writing. After a break caused by family problems, he resumed work in the early 1930s moving to the central part, i.e. book II. He revised and merged all hitherto written passages in the late 30s, intensifying the work on the central section, and wrote the closing pages only at the very last stage of the book’s composition. A more detailed chronology of the work in progress is presented in Charts 1 and 2 (the former for practical reasons presented in the appendix). Chart 1 traces the book’s growth from initial sketches, through revisions, often inspired by prospective publications in journals, to the final stages. Given Joyce’s non-linear method of work and the ways in which he linked particular fragments of the work in progress, it is clear why critics such as Louis Armand underline the book’s inherent hypertextuality. The tables map the chronological and spatial linking that was taking place during subsequent phases of the composition. It also indicates which excerpts of *Work in Progress* appeared in journals and separate booklets. These publications testify that Joyce must have treated respective sections of *Work in Progress* as self-contained units, which, as can be seen from the chart, indeed, “fused of themselves” when the time came.

Chart 2, in turn, presents the chronology of composition in a graphically more condensed form, visualizing Joyce’s statement that he was “boring a mountain from two sides.” It displays the direction of boring: from chapter 2 of book I

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inwards and from book III outwards. The parallels discernible from the chart find an interesting counterpart in Clive Hart’s discussion of polar balances in *Finnegans Wake*:

Around a central section, Book II, Joyce builds two opposing cycles consisting of Books I and III. In these two Books there is established a pattern of correspondences of the major events of each, those in Book III occurring in reverse order and having inverse characteristics. Whereas Book I begins with a rather obvious birth (28-9) and ends with a symbolic death (215-16), Book III begins with death (403) and ends with birth (590); “roads” and the meeting with the King (I.2) reappear in III.4, the trial of I.3-4 in III.3, the Letter of I.5 in III.1, and the fables of I.6 earlier in III.1.²⁷

Further, to support his interpretation Hart cites Joyce’s letters in which the author explicitly mentions these correspondences: I.6 as the structural equivalent of ▲abcd (i.e. Book III), and the writer’s account of a dream about a Turk picking threads from heaps on his left and right sides, and weaving a fabric in the colours of the rainbow, which Joyce interpreted as a symbolic picture of Books I and III.²⁸ Another constructive moment, noticeable in the chart, occurred at the end when Joyce simultaneously worked on the middle and final parts of the book. The effects of his “engineering work” analysed by Clive Hart in *Structure and Motif*, still one of the most accurate and insightful discussions of Joyce’s work, will provide background of our discussion of the iconic spaces of *Finnegans Wake*. But before we look at the whole, it is worth considering “all the little typtopies” that followed in the wake of “the tome of Liber Lividus” (*FW* 14.29-30), waking us up to “the Liber Lord” (*FW* 250.25).

Chart 1. *Finnegans Wake*: chronology of composition graphic chart: "as paint and spickspan as a rainbow." (613.24)
“Mister Typus, Mistress Tope & all the little typtopies”: *Work in Progress* in Fine Art Presses

Before “the book of Doublends Jined” (FW 20.16) was finally published in 1939 as *Finnegans Wake*, Joyce brought out several of its fragments in book form. In each case the publication was very carefully designed and its production closely supervised by the author. The printing was usually executed in small presses, specialising mostly in Anglo-American literature which was or most likely would be banned in its native countries, and in limited, bibliophile editions of “fine books” or artist’s books. In most cases the publication was issued in two limitations: one, cheaper and less refined, intended for sale, the other, more exclusive, was for family and friends. In the latter and to some extent in the former, the writer coordinated the linguistic content and its material embodiment so that they would complement each other. Though sharing some of the qualities of artist’s books, Joyce’s fine booklets should be rather seen as “writer’s books”: that is, books in which the writer consciously co-created their design for aesthetic and expressive purposes.

The first of the publications was *Anna Livia Plurabelle*, containing the full chapter 8 of book I, brought out by Crosby Gaige in 1928. It was rather modest in size (12 x 18 cm) to underline the humble nature of its protagonist, bound in brown cloth to remind one of the muddy waters of its namesake Anna Liffey, the Dublin river. As Ellmann notes, “[t]he book had to be published in a tea-coloured cover because the Liffey was the colour of tea.”

It bore an inverted triangle of three rules gilt stamped on the cover: an inverted pictogram of ALP, the major female protagonist of *Work in Progress*, an icon of her *mons veneris* and her deltoid estuary – “muddy old triagonal

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29 The images of all the booklets described in this chapter are available on-line in a slide show based on “In Good Company: James Joyce and Publishers, Readers, Friends. An Exhibition of McFarlin Library’s Special Collections”, produced in conjunction with a print catalog on occasion of the North American James Joyce Symposium, The University of Tulsa, and a material exhibit in summer 2003. The exhibition was curated by Luca Crispi, Stacey Herbert, then at State University of New York, University at Buffalo, and Lori N. Curtis (www.utulsa.edu/mcfarlin/speccoll/collections/joycejames/Web_Gallery/index.htm).

delta, ...first of all usquiluteral threeingles” (FW 297.23-26) (cf. FW 198). The text was set in a beautiful typeface, Arrighi italic Vicenza and Vicentino, drawing upon the work of sixteenth century scribe and printer Lodovico degli Arrighi da Vicenza, newly designed by Frederic Warde, a well-known type designer and printer.31 The sloping typeface may have been chosen to enhance the fluid quality of the text, filled with hundreds of river names and references to water, seas, and sailing.

ALP had its male counterpart, Haveth Childers Everywhere, published by Henry Babou and Jack Kahane of the Fountain Press, in Paris in 1930. Its format: 28 cm x 19.2 cm, was appropriately larger to reflect the hero’s imposing statue. The contrast between the two books is so telling that the curators of the exhibition felt compelled to remark that: “In Finnegans Wake, HCE is ALP’s complement and the format of the books reflects the characters whose stories they tell: HCE is as exaggerated as ALP is diminutive.” The colophon of Haveth Childers Everywhere, copied below, testifies how much effort was put into making its four different limitations:

THIS VOLUME CONSTITUTING THE ONLY | COMPLETE ORIGINAL EDITION OF A | FRAGMENT OF WORK IN PROGRESS, | COMPOSED BY HAND IN FRESHLY CAST ELZEVIR CORPS 16, COMPRISES: 100 | COPIES ON IMPERIAL HAND-MADE IRIDES- | CENT JAPAN, SIGNED BY THE WRITER | Nos 1 TO 100; 500 COPIES ON HAND- | MADE PURE LINEN VIDALON ROYAL | (SPECIALY MANUFACTURED FOR THIS | EDITION) Nos 101 TO 600; HALF OF | EACH CATEGORY BEING FOR THE UNITED | STATES OF AMERICA. THERE HAVE ALSO | BEEN PRINTED: 10 COPIES CALLED | WRITER’S COPIES ON IMPERIAL HAND- | MADE IRIDESCENT JAPAN, Nos 1 TO 10; 75 COPIES CALLED WRITER’S CO- | PIES ON PURE LINEN HAND-MADE | VIDALON ROYAL, Nos 11 TO 85.

31 This and all following information on the bibliographic code of the booklets comes from “Little Magazines and Fine Arts Presses” (online catalogue of University of Tulsa Special Collections, McFarlin Library), items 57 and 5 <www.utulsa.edu/mcfarlin/speccoll/collections/joycejames/little_magazines.htm> as well as from personal inspection of some items in Maciej Słomczyński’s private collection.
A multiplicity of paper types and different bindings, including simple white paper, glassine wrapper, and green slipcase gilt on edges, reflects the multiplicity of HCE’s incarnations, “whose published combinations of silkinlaine testimonies are, where not dubiously pure, visibly divergent, as wapt from wept” (FW 34.22-24), and their quality points to an air of pompousness surrounding HCE’s giant figure. Together, the booklets constitute a meaningful, complementary pair, visually reflecting the qualities of their protagonists, while the relationship of the heroes is iconically reflect in their format.

As if to match the parental figures of Work in Progress, Joyce brought out their offspring: Two Tales of Shem and Shaun (Faber, London 1932), The Mime of Mick, Nick and the Maggies (the Servire Press, the Hague 1934) and Storiella as She Is Syung (the Corvinus Press, London 1937). Of special interest among these is The Mime, (along with Storiella) illuminated by the author’s daughter Lucia. Joyce not only inspired the graphics, but also played on the number symbolism associated with the content of the book. The Mime was issued in two limitations: of one thousand market copies and of twenty-nine copies not intended for sale, printed on exclusive Japanese paper. Issy, the daughter-figure of FW is characterised by a split personality and appears in The Mime in twenty nine leap year girls’ incarnations. It is clear that the special limitation represents her multiple personality. Storiella, the last of separately published fragments of Work in Progress, was also issued on especially handmade paper, in a limited number of copies (175), and bound in orange vellum. The hue of its cover probably anticipated that of Finnegans Wake, which was to be “saffron red” (that is, very dark orange) the colour of both Buddhists and the Irish (in its paler hue, along with green and white, appearing on their flag).32

Although not a part of Finnegans Wake, equally interesting in these respects is Pomes Penyeach, another of Joyce’s minor publications, brought out by Shakespeare and Company in 1927. This small volume of poetry was to prove to the readers that its author was still of sound mind and capable of artistic

32 Information from private e-mail correspondence with Stacey Herbert, a researcher at the James Joyce Special Collection in State University of New York, Buffalo, NY.
production. It included thirteen short poems: twelve of them with titles referring to the content of each poem and the thirteenth one entitled “Tilly,” as in the phrase “twelve and a tilly,” where it indicates a bonus. As with *Ulysses* and his booklets, Joyce was closely involved in the design and production of the volume. The colour of the cover was to be pale green to recall the colour of the eponymous apples. The price of the book was symbolically associated with its content: it was sold for 1 shilling (that is, twelve pence) in Britain, and for 12 Francs in France, so that each poem cost one pence, and “Tilly” was offered for free (Joyce was superstitious about the number 13), which is reminiscent of Mallarmé’s planning *Le Livre’s* price. What is more, thirteen copies of this edition were printed on handmade Dutch paper, numbered accordingly, signed by the author and distributed among friends. Even the format was coordinated to fit the numerical symbolism: the thirteen booklets were in the form of a square of approximately 13 cm long side (the two millimetre difference of the sides can be ascribed to the handmade trimming of the book). No dimension that could be controlled was left to chance, then. The regular trade edition contained a note about this exclusive series, additionally drawing the reader’s attention to the play on numbers.

*Pomes Penyeach* was published once more during Joyce’s lifetime by the Obelisk Press of Paris. This was the most beautifully designed of all his books, printed on specially imported Japanese paper (called Japan nacre or iridescent Japanese vellum). It consisted of nine loose folio sheets, folded and laid one within the other, placed in a portfolio bound in pale green silk (the loose sheets reminiscent of the then private *Giacomo Joyce*). The poems were printed in black on recto of each leaf, in facsimile of Joyce’s handwriting and opened with illuminated, multi-coloured initials designed by Lucia. Additionally, the pages were interlaid with sheets of transparent tissue on which the title and text of each poem was printed in green in the lower left-hand corner. The book appeared in 25 numbered copies, six additional were made “hors commerce,” probably to make the overall number 31.

33 Ellmann, *James Joyce*, 593.
34 “Little Magazines and Fine Arts Presses”, items 52 and 53.
the reverse of 13 (however, this time the price amounted to 1000 Francs, reflecting the effort and intricacy put into the book’s making). The title page bore a simple, handwritten inscription: “Pomes Penyeach / by / James Joyce,” gilt stamped in gold. This visually exquisite book, due to Lucia’s illuminations and handmade paper suggestive of mediaeval Celtic manuscripts, should probably be classified as both a specimen of book art (or artistic printing) and a writer’s book, again confirming that its author was sensitive to the potential entailed in the bibliographic code and strove to integrate the poetic text with its material vehicle.

These minor publications also testify to Joyce’s holistic, or as I would like to call it, “liberatic” approach to his works. Whenever he was able to exert control over their every aspect, he did so, considering every element as potentially meaningful. That is why he was so careful about the colours of covers, types of paper, and even, sometimes, about the colour of print. 35 His choices point to iconic relationships between the linguistic content and material forms of his books, and emphasise structural or symbolic functions of certain motifs and numbers. In fact, Ellmann points out that Joyce’s defence of his artistic choices was grounded in (diagrammatic) iconicity: he stressed “the appropriateness of linguistic distortion to a book which traced the distortion of dream” and “the indivisibility of meaning from form.” 36 Of course, Joyce also appreciated the musical qualities of his language and did once remark that Finnegans Wake was pure music, but like Mallarmé, he must have realised that what he ultimately offered his readers was a kind of musical score, that is, a

35 Ellmann’s biography contains two other details about Joyce’s fastidiousness in this respect. Once his daughter-in-law ordered a birthday cake for him with a replica of his seven books on top, instructing the baker to be sure to ice their covers in appropriate colours, which seems to imply that his relatives must have been aware of their importance for the writer. On the other hand, in a letter written on Joyce’s behalf to his biographer Gorman, Paul Leon remarks that this time “[a]ls to the colour of the binding [of the biography] he is more or less indifferent,” but objects to the idea of printing on it the arms of Dublin or the Joyce family (Ellmann, James Joyce, 715; 725). See also Ira Nadel, Joyce and His Publishers, The National Library of Ireland Joyce Studies 20 (Dublin: the National Library of Ireland, 2005) 49.

36 Ellmann, James Joyce, 703, cf. also 716.
graphic representation of sounds and tunes imprinted in a book.

**Hart’s Cycles and Crux: Linear Versus Non-linear Ways of Reading**

The whole *Finnegans Wake* is characterized by similar, though less overt, iconic relations between the book’s content and its (material) form. Spatial structures distinguished in it by Clive Hart are, after all, grounded in the book’s materiality. Whether the cycle, circle, cross or triptych, these shapes are not only more or less overtly alluded to throughout the text, but particular phrases and images associated with them are distributed across the pages in such a way that their position reflects these shapes in an almost palpable way. Hart stresses this particularly in his discussion of Shem and Shaun’s circular voyages and the figure of the cross determined by their movements.37

At the most basic level the brothers move around the pub in Chapelizod and its environs, but they simultaneously wander round Ireland, Europe, the globe, and even the heavenly spheres. The text is permeated with hundreds of geographical names: of continents, countries, states of the USA, counties of Great Britain and Ireland, rivers, lakes, cities and towns. The twins’ wanderings are associated with the writing and delivery of the letter as well as, symbolically, with Christ-Shaun and Satan-Shem’s confrontations. According to Hart, Shaun-the postman moves in the east-west direction. He sets off from Ireland, goes to America to collect the letter from Boston, Mass., and “[a]fter rounding his world of ancient days” (*FW* 623.36), arrives at Dublin via Europe. He travels backwards, facing the East, with his back towards the West: “…most easterly (but all goes west!)” (*FW* 85.15). This weird way of travelling may be associated with his moving backwards in time: in his voyage “round the world in forty mails,” he passes the date-line “receding on [his] photophoric pilgrimage to [his] antipodes in the past” (*FW* 472.17-18). Shem-the writer, the artist and revolting spirit, circumnavigates the world, going down from the north (Ireland) to the south (Australia), symbolically plunging into the depth of hell. Hart visualises the

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brothers’ trajectories in the figure of two intersecting circles constructing the globe (see Fig. 14 below) and postulates that the points of intersections are in Dublin, and in Australia.\textsuperscript{38} The adversaries meet at two symbolically and geographically opposite points. Their first encounter takes place on the middle ground, in Dublin, which according to Hart represents “the earthly mean” (or Patrick’s Purgatory) in the hierarchy of the Wakean universe, with the USA as the land of hope and a new beginning, or “the three united ‘states’ of God (Trinity). The other meeting occurs in “the down under,” where many Irish were sent for life imprisonment; this is where the Satan-like Shem originates from. In Book IV Shaun-Christ in the guise of St. Kevin descends to this hellish land of the dead to dispute and defend Shem-Satan-Berkeley.\textsuperscript{39}

![Fig. 14. Reproduction of Figure III “the map of the soul’s groupography rose in relief” in Hart’s Structure and Motif in FW (117) showing Shem and Shaun’s trajectories circumnavigating the globe](image)

The brothers’ north-south, west-east trajectories form another important symbolic figure: of the cross – as much an emblem of Christianity as the Platonic symbol of constituents of the

\textsuperscript{38} Hart, Structure, 111-116.
\textsuperscript{39} Hart, Structure, 118-122.
World-Soul. In *Timaeus* the Greek philosopher describes how the creator laid out two elements in the shape of the letter X, bent its arms and joined their ends so as to form two circles, then set the circles in opposite motions of the Same and the Other, thereby creating the sphere of the universe — the solid, when visualised, very much like Hart’s globe reproduced above. Especially chapter II.2 reverberates with references to the Platonic dialogue, and Yeats’ *A Vision* (which draws upon the Platonic text). “Plutonic loveliaks twinnnt Platonic yearlings” revolve in a way reminiscent of the motion of the World-Soul, “lurking gyrographically down inside his loose Eating S. S. collar” (*FW* 292.28-30). The phrase makes even more sense if one considers a correction provided in the Dutch translation: in the proofs it contained one more element: “lovelinks twinxnt,” accidentally omitted in typesetting. While the repetition emphasises doubleness, the lost phrase modifies “twinnt” to “twinxt” by introducing the letter X, thereby enhancing Platonic reading of the twins: “-nn-” as the Same, and “-nx-” as the Other, crossed and joined in the “lovely X.” Another iconic echo of the World-Soul figure appears a few pages later in a passage describing their gyrating movements again. It is formed by a modulated size of “than or less than”:

greater **Than** or less **than** the unitate we have in one or hence shall the vectorious ready-eyes of evertwo circumflicksrent searchers never film in the elipsities of their gyribouts those fickers which are returnally reproductive of themselves.

(*FW* 298.12-18)

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40 Plato, *Timaeus*, trans. Benjamin Jowett, 36 B, C. This is picked up by Yeats in *A Vision*. On page 300 of *FW* Joyce plays on both texts, ascribing the motion of the Same and the other to the twins: “…while that Other by the halp of his creactive mind offered to deleberate the mass from the booty of fight our Same with the holp of the bounty of food sought to deluberate the mess from his corructive mund, [...] with his sinister cyclopes after trigamies and spirals’ wobbles pursuing their rovinghamilton selves” (*FW* 300.20-28).


42 Erik Bindervoet and Robbert-Jan Henkes, “Tekstvarianten” (James Joyce, *Finnegans Wake*, trans. By Erik Bindervoet and Robbert-Jan Henkes, Amsterdam: Athenaeum – Polak & Van Gennep, 2002: 629-656) 642; *JJA* 53:214, 53:64. This is an appendix gathering 27 pages of so-called transitional departures, i.e. mistakes occurring during typing and typesetting of the manuscript material, discovered by the translators.
which resembles the infinity sign $\infty$ obtained by joining the ends of the cross before its extremities are joined. Finally, the diagram on page 293 constitutes, according to Hart, the ultimate visualisation of the crossing circles of the World-Soul$^{43}$:

![Diagram](image)

Fig. 15 ALP’s diagram (or “The Vortex. Spring of Sprung Verse. The Vertex.”) (FW 293 L2)

However, inscribing the (bent) cross into the text is not limited to intertextual games and (typo)graphic insertions, reinforced by verbal allusions to its shape. Let us note that the only other iconographic elements in FW are two drawings that visually resemble the cross: cocking the snook, and as if crossed bones, on the margin of p. 308, accompanied by two footnotes including “crossbuns” and “kish for anticheirst,” i.e. kiss (marked in correspondence with the letter X) for Antichrist, implicating a parody of Christ’s cross in the above mentioned gesture made with a thumb, called anticheir in Greek:

![Footnotes](image)

1 Kish is for anticheirst, and the free of my hand to him!

2 And gags for skool and crossbuns and whopes he’ll enjoyimsolff over our drawings on the line!

Fig. 16. *Finnegans Wake*, bottom of page 308

More fundamentally, thematic density of particular parts of the book follows, as Hart stresses, a clearly discernible pattern, reproducing “the spatial image as closely as possible in terms of the physical disposition of the pages of the book.” He notes that the densest fragments are “at the coincident”: the beginning and end of the book, and its central chapter, II.3. The conversations of Mutt and Jeff in I.1 and Muta and Juva in IV establish the meeting points of the brothers, corresponding to the bending and joint of the extremities of the cross, while the centrally located Butt and Taff episode at the end of which the brothers fleetingly merge, only to separate and diverge in Book III, constitutes the central crossing point. As Hart puts it, “the book begins and ends at one of the nodal points,” while, when Joyce has cut the circles and stretched them out flat, the other nodal point falls exactly in the centre of the text. Represented in this way, the basic structure of *Finnegans Wake* looks rather like a figure 8 on its side, which forms the ‘zeroic couplet’ (*FW* 284.11) $\infty$, or the symbol ‘of infinity.’

The geometrical figures, beside the crossed circles including the spiral and the mandala, discerned by Hart in the texture of Joyce’s work, inspired Agnieszka Graff to castigate him as a spatialist who ultimately wants to reduce the text to a set of abstract patterns and the reading process to discovering networks of leitmotifs that would enable such an operation:

Mandalas, crosses, charts, the Möbius strip – any one of these models is as fitting as any other, and just as meaningless in the face of reading practices actually induced by the *Wake*. For these are always partial, always entwined in particulars and particulars of particulars. The reader has no choice but to put into practice the *Wake’s* own instruction: “When a part so ptee does duty for the holos we soon grow to use of an allforabit” (*FW* 18.36).

Rejecting both exclusively spatial and exclusively temporal interpretations, she proposes a solution which, according to

44 Hart, *Structure*, 129, emphasis KB.
45 They are the nodal points of the World-Soul figure, not to be confused with Hayman’s nodal points mentioned above.
47 Graff, “This Timecoloured Place,” 220.
her, transcends previous reductive critical practices. Following George Otte, Robert Scholes and Umberto Eco, she finds that the key to reading *Finnegans Wake* lies in motion, in the self-reflective and in “chaosmos” of combating, yet ultimately cooperating, forces.\(^{48}\) She challenges spatialists’ pretension of “anti-narrative readings” on the grounds that narrative constitutes a fundamental cognitive framework through which we come to grips with works even as eccentric as *Finnegans Wake*. According to her, the essentially dynamic nature of Joyce’s book is constituted by endless overlapping narratives that begin, develop and are brought to an inconclusive halt. It is in them: in “one thousand and one stories, all told of the same,” that the time-space binarism is reflected and resolved. “The question, then, is not whether or not *Finnegans Wake* is a narrative, but, whether we have at our disposal any reading strategy alternative to a narrative reading, in which, to quote the Kings from *Alice in Wonderland*, you: “Begin at the beginning and go on until you have come to the end: then stop.”\(^{49}\)

While it is true that every act of reading must by necessity begin, last, and stop at some point, it is also true that a typical reading practice in the case of *Finnegans Wake* resembles reading a hypertext. Therefore, we can see why Louis Armand is convinced that Joyce’s final work explodes the material framework of the book. Even readers who begin “at the beginning,” often stop to go back and verify if and how a passage they are plodding through resembles what they have already read. Other first-time readers frequently choose to browse through the book rather than read it from A to Z. And even when they finally do this, they seem to read in search for the familiar in the unfamiliar, mentally linking similar elements. Those who reread the book usually pick up a chapter or a passage, and, struck by a detail or a motif, begin to search its reiterations in other parts of the book. Their movements remind one of reading patterns proposed by Julio Cortázar in *Hopscotch*, in which the author suggested one non-sequential order of the episodes as well as encouraged the readers to

\(^{48}\) Graff, “This Timecoloured Place,” 223-4.

\(^{49}\) Graff, “This Timecoloured Place,” 218-19.
select randomly their own alternative paths through his book.\textsuperscript{50} The reader of Joyce’s book comes across many self-referential remarks that prompt him to such reading. C.D. Malmgren classifies them as indexical signs of the speaker which co-create the narrational discursive space. They are frequently made by the voice of the anonymous, first person narrator who comments on the letter. For example, near the end, the book is called “[o]ur wholemole millwheeling vicocyclometer, a tetradianational gazebocroticon” that provides “the dialytically separated elements of precedent decomposition for the verypetpurpose of subsequent recombination” (\textit{FW} 614.27-34), elsewhere a “proteiform graph” and “a polyhedron of scripture” (\textit{FW} 107.08), and “[t]hat letter selfpenned to one’s other, that neverperfect everplanned” (\textit{FW} 489.33-4).

These comments encourage the reader to conceive of the work in terms of spatial figures, including those proposed by Hart. However, they are not, as Graff thinks, superior patterns to which the text should be ultimately reduced, but an inherent element of meaning, ordering principles according to which the stories are told and retold. They function as alternative paths left by the narrators along which the stories can be followed rather than structures artificially superimposed on narratives, and totally alien to them. They are perhaps more akin to fractals than to traditional figures and solids of Euclidean geometry and own their emergence before the reader’s eye to iterations of the smallest parts: letters and words (this will be the subject of the final section of this chapter). What is more, these emergent geometrical figures partake of the temporal aspect, as they are to be discovered in consequence of the characters’ journey through the fictional universe, and of reading which progresses through time and space of the book. So they contribute to building up of what Malmgren called the compositional space, determining to some extent the shape and size of the book.

\textsuperscript{50} This is, incidentally, another example of a book that in fact parades its materiality through the hypertextual reading. Unlike its (potential) electronic version, the printed work demonstrates how “one story” (contained in one book) can be told in multiple ways and from multiple points of view which are not mutually exclusive.
The Paginal Space
Beside their function as cohesive devices, the spatial figures also add to the symbolic meaning. In imitation of the Platonic creator, Joyce took Shem (the Same-Shame-Time-literature) and Shaun (the Other-Space-medium), and mixed them, adding the third element, epitomised by their sister, Issy. This is most explicit in II.2, where the body of the chapter consists of the central column of text, the sister’s footnotes, and the brothers’ glosses on the margins, which swap sides in the middle of the chapter in accordance with the Platonic vision. Its layout imitating the layout of a scholarly book creates a distinctive iconic paginal space, visually distinguished as the Other of the remaining text. This part of *Finnegans Wake*, a typographical amalgamation of the three, contains the most explicit intertextual games with the Platonic dialogue. This is how the process of creation is described in the chapter itself:

*Primanouriture and Ultimo-geniture*

Wherapool, gayet that when he stop look time he stop long ground who here hurry he would have ever the lohtst word, with a sweet me ah err eye ear marie to reat from the jacob’s³ and a shypull for toothsake of his armjaws at the slidepage of de Vere Foster, […] *(leo I read, such a spanish, escribibis, all your mycoscoups)* wont to nibbleh ravenostonnoriously his mum to me in bewonderment of his chipper chuthor for, while that Other by the halp of his creative mind offered to deleberate the mass from the booty of fight our Same with the holp of the bounty of food sought to deluberate the mess from his corrtuctive mund, with his muffetee cuffs owncconsciously grafticking with his sinister cyclopes after trigamies and spirals’ wobbles pursuing their rovinghamilton selves and godolphing in fairlove to see around the waste of noland’s browne jesus⁴…

> SICK US A SOCK WITH SOME SEDIMENT IN IT FOR THE SAKE OF OUR DARNING WIVES. 

³ Bag bag blockcheap, have you any will?
⁴ What a lubberly whide elephant for the men-in-the straits!

*(FW 300.09-28)*
The passage opens with a reminiscence of the story about HCE meeting a cad in Phoenix Park. Hurrying HCE was stopped and asked about the time, but the seemingly innocent question disturbed him so much that he began to stutter in denial of a mysterious sin. The anecdote and the question constantly reverberate in Shem and Shaun’s confrontations, especially in the fables of the Mookse and Gripes, and the Ondt and the Gracehoper, where the former is an incarnation of Shaun-Space and the latter of Shem-Time. In an insightful analysis of the space-time dichotomy in the first of the fables Graff argues that their conflict is in fact a misunderstanding and cannot be resolved by the victory of either side, since their respective realities are incompatible. The deaf Mookse “had a sound eyes right” but could not possibly communicate with the blind Gripes who “had light ears left” (FW 158.12-13). Exhausted by the argument, they recede to an elm tree and a stone when “Nuvoletta, a lass” (FW 159.06) appears on the scene. She tries to attract their attention but they ignore her, so she throws herself into the river. Graff, after George Otte, identifies her with the nouvelles lettres, a kind of integrative writing exemplified by Joyce, but overlooked or misunderstood by critics of both temporal and spatial persuasions. “Nuvoletta represents what is perhaps the last chance of combining time and space in a new art and ‘like Ophelia, she is not so much a suicide victim as a victim of murder by neglect,’” Graff repeats Otte’s words, but she does not explain exhaustively enough what “the new art” consists in.

In the above quoted passage, the story develops according to the same pattern. “Time” and “ground” considered separately are a source of confusion and make HCE “lost for words.” The eye and the ear, if applied separately, mislead. Engaged in the ongoing conflict, the Same-Shem and Shaun-the-Other ignore the third voice, the voice of “feminine fiction,” relegating it to the margin. But having reached thus far in the book, the reader should have already learnt to pick up iconic clues interwoven into the text. Issy-Nuvoletta’s comments ironically question – or under-mine – the authority of the dominating, pompous voice of the central column. Although pushed down to the bottom of the page, Issy realises

51 Otte in Graff, “This Timecoloured Place,” 215.
that none of discourses can exist without one another. They are as inseparable as the Poles, as two sides of a coin, as the body and soul: “booty/bounty” and “Same/sought” (FW 300.22-23) From her squinting perspective she is able to integrate their contradictory aspects and see “a lubberdy whide elephant” as a whole.52

If Issy-Nuvoletta represents “new writing,” she also cues us how to “reat” it. Her footnote suggests that reading practices should engage both the ear and the eye and account for sonorous and visual qualities of the work (note that it is she who resorts to “the Doodles family” and pictures in her script). If one wants to see “a whide elephant” as it is and not as it appears to the deaf and blind, one should balance53 the two modes of perception. Moreover, “reat” combines “read” with “write”54 and “eat.” If one wants to read the new letters,55 one needs to absorb (consume) the text and “creactively” or “corructively” write it anew. This should involve reacting to impulses coming from the text, cracking it, and recreating one’s own version. Such “nastilow disigraible games” (FW 301.F4) are inscribed in it, “[s]o you need hardly spell me how every word will be bound over to carry three score and ten toptypsical readings throughout the book of Doublends Jined” (FW 20.13-16).

John Cage’s Writings through Finnegans Wake can provide an excellent, though admittedly radical, example of such an innovative, non-narrative reading of Joyce’s book. For the American composer fascinated by Joyce’s book, it constituted pure “nonsense,” that is, a necessary counterpart of “sense,” a type of discourse complementary to the one governed by Western, linear logic. In his view, Joyce wrote his work deliberately in such a way as to create multiple, often contradictory senses so that the reader could choose his own path, instead of following the only one determined by the

52 This may be a reference to an Arabian tale where a group of the blind are touching different parts of the animal and each is describing it according to what he can feel; obviously their perceptions of what “elephant” is are radically different and none of them can see (grasp) what it really looks like.

53 “[R]avenostonnoriously” rings of Russian “ravnostroono,” i.e. equilaterally.

54 Most beginner learners of English tend to mispronounce and confuse these two words, as I know from my own teaching experience; and we should bear in mind that Joyce used to work for years as an English teacher.

55 The black sheep of the family, Issy asks: “have you any will” to do it?
author. Inspired by this, Cage wrote five series of mesostics built out of words from subsequent pages of the *Wake* selected according to strict formal principles.\(^{56}\) Varying density of those texts, as well as the lexical choices and the layout actuate the visual and the verbal potential of language while the eye and the ear cooperate in an effort to make sense.\(^{57}\)

It is also Issy-Nuvoletta who introduces another language into play. The sigla: “[t]he Doodles family, ¶, Ð, ☹, X, □, ∧, ⊥” (*FW* 299.F4) and the two pictures discussed above appear in her footnotes. One of them is a mockery that ridicules both speech and writing – paradoxically, an iconoclastic gesture expressed through an image. The other shows crossed bones placed under a skull used to mark poison, left there as if a warning against the deadly content of the letter or the book. It is apt that the visually distinguished chapter should end with purely iconic elements, a representation of the gesture of *body language* so eloquent in its critique of verbal communication. The readers cannot overlook these signs: “the babes that mean too” (*FW* 308.24). Perhaps they will also notice how the left-side gloss points out that the text they are reading is an amalgam, a mixture of the abstract (“theoric”) and the physical (“factual”) enclosed in a “Boox,” a book and a box (*FW* 308.L2).

### The Lexical and Alphabetic Space

In the beginning was the gest he jousstly says, for the end is with woman, flesh-without-word, while the man to be is in a worse case after than before since she on the supine satisfies the verg to him! [...] Art, an imperfect subjunctive. [...] So dactylise him up to a blankpoint and let him blink for himself where you speak the best ticklish. (*FW* 468.05-18)


Joyce was deeply interested in Marcel Jousse’s theory of the origin of language that derived it from gestures. The French linguist believed that having lost its link with the original, genuine form of expression through gestures, alphabetic writing had become a dead conventionalism, a *dead letter*, so to speak. Thus, he postulated a regeneration of the dormant or deadened side of language, and called for some new, activating forms of writing (and reading). Inspired by this, Joyce offers such a regenerative and activated form of alphabetic writing in *Finnegans Wake*. In his rejuvenated language rotating Es and Fs become agents of alphabetic gesticulation ("gest" in the opening quote points to *chanson de geste*, Latin *gestus*, and Polish "gesture"), while single letters "intruding upon" conventional words function as invigorating particles. Consequently, Wakean portmanteaux reveal multiple vectors of meaning, causing it to fluctuate, vibrate and oscillate between extremes. Simultaneously, these active graphemes build up the extremely rich alphabetic and lexical spaces of *Finnegans Wake*.

Joyce alerts the reader to the alphabetic and lexical spaces already in the opening paragraph, beginning the book with a word with a lowercase letter: “riverrun, past Eve and Adam's, from swerve of shore to bend of bay, brings us by a commodius vicus of recirculation back to Howth Castle and Environs” (*FW* 003.01-04). This little detail bears heavily upon the meaning of the whole: it informs that the book begins *in medias res* as if contradicting the intuition that the story begins *ab ovo*, which might be implied by the names of the biblical parents. As the reader will soon discover, such contradictions will form an inevitable part of any effort to make sense of what is happening in the text. Besides, the reversed order of “Eve and Adam’s” points to the importance of the lexical and syntactic levels and suggests a retrograde, circular movement. This is enhanced by alliterations: “swerve of shore” and “bend of bay” are rounded elements of the landscape, their roundness reflected in the shape of the repeated letters, that “bring us back” to an “utterly

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unexpected sinistrogyric return to one peculiar sore point in the past” (FW 120.27-8) on the final page where the sentence supposedly begins. Paradoxically, this point awaits the first-time reader only in the future, that is, when he or she reaches the last page of the book. It is indeed “a sore point,” a distressing moment when one discovers that the final full stop is missing, and the route may only be completed by re-arriving at the beginning.

The imminent presence of the main protagonist is also to be traced back to the alphabetic space of the opening passage.59 “Howth Castle and Environs” include the initials HCE that are later deciphered as initials of a Humphrey Chimpden Earwicker. The reader gradually learns to recognise H.C. Earwicker hidden under the disguises of “Howth Castle and Environs” (3.03), “Haroun Childeric Eggeberth” (4.32), “Head-in Clouds [that] walked the earth” (18.22-23), “Humpheres Cheops Exarchas” (62.21), “hagious curious encester” (96.34), and “heavengendered, chaosfoedted, earthborn” (137.14). Mystery, obscurity and uncertainty seem to be immanently connected with him: he is a “hallucination, cauchman, ectoplasm” (133.24), “his hes hecitency Hec” (119.18), definitely, the “hardest crux ever” (623.33), “ech?” (623.09). Hundreds of such phrases refer to various aspects of his personality, and the only definite clue that lets the reader identify him are the initials: H, C, E. In case the readers have missed the topographic clue of the opening sentence the narrator directs their attention to it in the second chapter devoted to the origin and background of the hero:

[t]he great fact emerges that [...] all holographs so far exhumed initialled by Haromphrey bear the sigla H.C.E. [...] which gave him as sense of those normative letters the nickname Here Comes Everybody. An imposing everybody he always indeed looked, constantly the same as and equal to himself and magnificently well worthy of any and all such universalisation. (FW 32.18).

59 The following discussion of HCE’s and ALP’s formation of alphabetic space is based on my article “Iconic Identity of Characters in James Joyce’s FINNEGANS WAKE” (Language and Identity, vol.1 Literature, ed. Z. Mazur and T. Bela, Kraków: Jagiellonian University Press, 2006: 359-367).
Likewise, his female counterpart can be traced in phrases beginning with the letters A, L, and P, as in the following: “Anna… Livia… Plurabelle” (FW 21.24), “Amnis Limina Permanent” (FW 153.2), and “appy, leppy and playable” (FW 41.23). In fact, the major dimension of the alphabetic space in Finnegans Wake is created precisely through acronyms HCE and ALP connoting the main male and female figures of the book, and its male and female creative agents. Different readings of HCE and ALP invest them with multiple personalities; HCE as Here Comes Everybody and Haveth Children Everywhere becomes an exemplary Everyman; while the best-known expansion of ALP is Anna Livia Plurabelle. A massive number of such acrostic strings scattered throughout the whole book may be seen as an iconic device that directly reflects the characters’ inherent plurality and universality. These initials function as indexical signs of their presence, as if they were “traces” left in the text by the protagonists. Armand compares them with “holographs,” initialled by the dead author, or a kind of “genetic blue-print” that engenders “a species of signifiers,” or else a cybernetic programme whose schematic signature would be, in this case, the normative letters H.C.E. He also relates them to the Peirceian notion of “trace” and its relation to the proper noun as an “index” modelled upon demonstrative pronouns. Yet Wakean pointing does not refer to any unequivocally definable proper name: never in the book do we come across “Humphrey Chimpden Earwicker.” His name can be only reconstructed following a series of textual encounters with his acrostic traces. Armand explains how this cybernetic programme of name-presence-identity generation operates in the Wake:

Underlying this concept of proper nouns is a particular nominalism in the distinction between signifying function and materiality, on the one hand, and between the specific and generic on the other. These ostensibly metaphoric and metonymic relations operate a type of structural grid against which the “normative letters” H.C.E. can be thought as describing indexical discontinuity. As such the signifying value of each term is multiplied across an identical denominational space, within which differing vectors can be brought to

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60 Armand, Technē, 112.
communicate simultaneously. This in turn suggests what we might call a “hypertextual edifice,” in which each letter or combination of letters in this “grouptriad” (FW 167.04) would be capable of virtually infinite subscriptions across the entire field of language without any one subscription assuming the unique role of an indexical value. Joyce, well before Derrida, locates this aspect of signifying materiality with the materiality” of language itself: “But the world, mind, is, was, and will be writing its wrunes for ever, man, on all matters that fall under the ban of our infrarational sense...” (FW 19.35-20.01).61

Yet for Joyce the materiality of language was definitely tantamount to the materiality of writing embodied in a volume. His normative initials can also be seen as cabbalistic matrixes which emanate textual beings and whose activity creates the material world. His “hypertextual edifice” is the Babelian structure of the material book: “And shall not Babel be with Lebab? And he war.” (FW 258.11). In the palindromic pair: Babel-Lebab, the biblical tower of confused tongues is reflected as in the mirror in Irish lebhar, the book.

**Iconic Identity of Wakean Characters**

The multiplicity of ALP's and HCE’s incarnations makes it impossible to define them in the same way as characters in traditional fiction, even those who conceal or change their identity, such as, for example, Dickens’ Provis/Magwitch of *Great Expectations*, or even Joyce’s Leopold Bloom in “Circe.” Although the convict assumes different names, he does so to avoid the hand of the law and remains unequivocally one and the same person. Bloom, on the other hand, undergoes several transformations in the dramatic episode of *Ulysses*, but this is only a singular, hallucinatory episode of an otherwise fairly stable and definable personality. While HCE and ALP manifest themselves in hundreds of names and phrases. The Wakean heroes can be defined rather as bunches of features manifested in various historical, fictional, legendary or mythical figures, rather like dybbuks speaking through the bodies they haunt. Wojciech Kalaga sees Joycean characters as examples of the dissolved or blurred ego that question the Cartesian,

coherent subject. Ultimately, since their only permanent trait is their initials, they boil down to HCE and ALP. They become indistinguishable from the graphic characters, which not only function as indexical signs of their presence, but in a way become one with the protagonists. The identification is so absolute that any differentiation between the characters as people represented in the story and the characters as graphic symbols becomes impossible. The signifier merges with the signified, the signs cease to point to any reality outside the textual world, as they signify themselves. The Earwickers boil down to: “Mister Typus, Mistress Tope and all the little tytopies” (20.12), and “The Doodles family: ꔹ, ꔻ, ꔸ, ꔹ, ꔺ, ꔻ, ꔺ, ꔻ. Hoodle doodle, fam.?” (FW 299.F4)

Other Doodles appear also elsewhere in the book. The first one to encounter is the rotated ꔹ (FW 6.32), resembling a human figure, a bug lying on its back, and one of the cabbalistic matrices ꔹ (the letter shin or shen represents two sounds: s and sh, which might point to another analogy to Shem-Shaun double). In this passage, as Joyce explained in a letter to Harriet Weaver, the father-Earwicker-earwig assumes the form of the mythical giant Finn McCool interred in the landscape of Dublin and its environs, with his head in the Howth, the penis as the Wellington Monument in Phoenix Park and the feet as the Wicklow Hills, the vertical strokes of the letter representing them respectively. His body extends from a tiny island near the Howth Peninsula, called Ireland’s Eye, to the Wicklow Hills to the south of Dublin: “Well, Him a being so on the flounder of his bulk like an overgrown babeling, let wee peep, see, at Hom, well, see preegge ought he ought, platterplate. ꔹ Hum! From Shopalist to Bailywick or from ashtun to baronoath or from Buythebanks to Roundthehead or from the foot of the bill to ireglint’s eye he calmly extensolies” (FW 6.30-35). The words preceding the icon encode the hero’s initials: E sounds in “wee peep,” “see” stands for C, “Him” and “Hom” indicate the capital H. The passage alludes to yet another mythological figure: Osiris, the ancient Egyptian god of

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62 Wojciech Kalaga, Mgławice dyskursu (Kraków: Universitas, 2001) 246. Also published in English as Nebulae of discourse: interpretation, textuality, and the subject (Frankfurt am Main, New York: Peter Lang, 1997).

63 For the list of the sigla with their identification see footnote on page 77.

64 The letter of 31 May 1927, Joyce Letters I, 254.
the dead. Maciej Słomczyński, the Polish translator of *Ulysses*, discovered that this is a reference to page 88 of A. Moret’s *Rois and Dieux D’Égypte*, where one can see a picture of dead Osiris stretched in the same position as Earwicker, whose name “Humphrey” derives from Osiris Unefer. But also the Chinese ideogram denoting “mountain.” The hump on HCE’s back makes him look like one, and the narrator confirms later that “this man is mountain and unto changeth doth one ascend” (32.04-5; cf. also “a man that means a mountain” in 309.04).

Just as HCE is a mountain, so ALP is a river, her siglum being $\Delta$, the delta, the triangle reminiscent of the estuary of numerous rivers, as well as the Greek letter derived from the Egyptian word meaning “door” or “gate” (incidentally, the Chinese ideogram for “enter” and “entry” is nearly alike). She is the Dublin River Anna Liffey and all the rivers of the world, as well as water in all forms. Her fluvial delta is the inlet to the sea: “the cold mad feary father” (628.02) and death: “A way a lone a last a loved a long the” (628.15), as well as the gate or source of life issuing from her pubic triangle. “Anna Livia Plurabelle,” i.e. chapter 8 of book I known under her name, begins with the triangularly shaped text issuing from a big O as if a river gushing from the spring. Here the imagic iconicity is reinforced by euphony as the initial words contain several liquid “l’s,” giving an impression that the words flow effortlessly from “O”:

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O
tell me all about
Anna Livia! I want to hear all
about Anna Livia. Well, you know Anna Livia? Yes, of course,
we all know Anna Livia. Tell me all. Tell me now. You’ll die
when you hear. Well, you know, when the old cheb went futt
(FW 196.01-06)
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Joyce also uses other graphic elements to enhance ALP’s visual character and make the reader see this. She is

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represented in the diagram on page 293, which unities all her above mentioned vital aspects, including her as the source of language (words and verses), as the drawing represents “Uteralterance or the Interplay of Bones in the Womb” (293.L1), “The Vortex. Spring of Sprung Verse. The Vertex” (293.L2). As Alef – א – she is one of the letters-matrices, the most prominent of all three, since according to the cabballistic tradition alef is their mediating factor, the most universal sign, as it can replace any other letter of the alphabet.\(^{66}\) During the visit in the Museyroom (FW l.1), she is alluded to as the mother of ALPhabet, the matrix of language in its visible form, which is writing:

(Stoop) if you are abcedminded, to this claybook, what curios of signs (please stoop), in this allaphbed! Can you rede (since We and Thou had it out already) its world? It is the same told of all. Many. Miscegenations on miscegenations. Tieckle. They lived und laughed ant loved end left. Forsin. Thy thingdome is given to the Meades and Porsons. The meandertale, aloss and again, of our old Heidenburgh in the days when Head-in-Clouds walked the earth. [...] A hatch, a celt, an earshare the pourquoise of which was to cassay the earthcrust at all of hours, furrowards, bagawards, like yoxen at the turnpaht. Here say figurines billycoose arming and mounting. Mounting and arming bellicose figurines see here. Futhorc, this liffle effingee is for a firefing called a flintforfall. Face at the eased! O I fay! Face at the waist! Ho, you fie! Upwap and dump em, ace to 4 ace! When a part so ptee does duty for the holos we soon grow to use of an allforabit. (FW 18.16-19.01)

The passage deals with the genesis. Clay and word are the primary materials of creation: God created the world with word and letter, and man from clay. Returning to the origins of civilisation is tantamount to a return to the origins of writing: origins of alphabets from pictorial hieroglyphs, and conventions of recording texts, initially imitating the movements of a ploughman in the field (as in boustrophedon). “[T]his claybook” is simultaneously a clay tablet of the first written records, and ALP’s bed where she conceives and gives birth to generations

\(^{66}\) Beside ו and א, the third matrix is ע or Mem, which resembles Joyce’s icon □ for Finnegans Wake. The triad of matrixes constitutes the foundation of all creation. See more about the cabbala in FW in chapter “The book as the world.”
of HCE’s offspring. In her capacity as Mother Earth, her body is cultivated like a fertile soil: ploughed and sewn, it bears fruit. On the other hand, a connection between writing and cultivating the land contributes to the metaphor of the book as bodily (feminine) fiction cultivated by a (male) writer involved in a (re)productive activity.

Such an erotic and procreative reading is further enhanced by the “little figurines” πλυα, “arming and mounting,” again in an iconic re-enactment of the lying bodies, followed by a passage on the development of different alphabets: Futhark, Phoenician, Hebrew, and Greek. In such a claybook even the minutest elements – letters of the alphabet – need to be taken into consideration, noticed, pondered upon and analysed. The readers should be “abcedminded” if they want to be able to read the world created by such characters. It is going to be a tale reaching back to prehistoric times, the “meandertale” about “the days when Head–in-Clouds walked the earth.” So one should start reading from the lowest layer, the alphabet, in order to discover HCE as pre-historic giant interred in the “langscape” (FW 595.04), or the linguistic landscape of the book.

If people can be identical with letters, letters can behave like human beings. They can somersault and jump around the page, lie down, make love and fight. The horizontal position of “the lying effs” is an indexical trace of the actual movement of the compositor’s hand. The letters have been turned on their side, and now resemble two bodies lying upside down in relation to each other, in the same position as Leopold and Molly at the end of episode 17 in Ulysses. This is another example of direct, imagic iconicity, immediately perceivable by the reader, who is encouraged to see the characters-letters as suggestive of lovemaking or fighting. The position of Fs is reinforced by the symmetrical structure of the two preceding mirror sentences, in which the other is an almost perfect reversal of the first one, which is supposed to reflect their meaning. This time it is diagrammatic or secondary iconicity at work.

As the passage concerns different alphabets: the runic futhorc, as well as the Greek, Hebrew, Latin (“Olives, beets, Kimmels, dollies, alfrids, beatties, cormacks and daltons.” 19.08), the animated Fs may also refer to obscene body alphabets in which shapes of letters were reproduced by
various postures of naked bodies. But the reader has been warned that there are “curios of signs […] in this allaphbed. (...) Miscegenations on miscegenations” (18.17, 20). So HCE and ALP may be literally made up of several persons, perhaps like this:

Fig. 17. HCE and ALP based on Joseph Balthazar Silvestre, *L’Alphabet Album*, 1834.

The animated F, “that fretful fidget eff, the hornful digamma of your bornabarbar,” appears again in chapter I.5, which contains an analysis of the manuscript of ALP’s letter. It is identified with “digamma” (διγαμμα), an obscure Greek letter resembling F, pronounced as “W,” and corresponding to the Hebrew י (Vav). It was gradually simplified until it disappeared as a letter, and the labial sound φ was introduced in its stead. In the Latin alphabet it was substituted by F. The passage reconstructs its gradual disappearance. The digamma is:
rarely heard now save when falling from the unfashionable lipsus of some hetarosexual (used always in two boldfaced print types – one of them as wrongheaded as his Claudian brother, is it worth while interrupting to say? – throughout the papyrus as the revise mark) stalks all over the page, broods, sensationseeking an idea, amid the verbiage, gaunt, stands dejectedly in the diapered window margin, with its basque of bayleaves all aflutter about its forksfrogs, paces with a frown, jerking to and fro, flinging phrases here, there, or returns inhibited, with some half-halted suggestion, \( E \), dragging its shoestring; the curious warning sign before our protoparent’s *ipsissima verba*… *(FW 120.33-121.08)*

Curiously, the \( F \) or \( E \) seems to be a faded, corrupted version of an even earlier sign. In the “litteral” genealogy of *Finnegans Wake* it appears as a graphic “half-halted suggestion” of \( E \) without the upper or lower stroke. \( F \) and \( E \) look like broken types, or visual echoes of \( E \), or, more likely, an anticipation or imperfect prototypes of the proper protoparent \( \Psi \). In the Wakean equation:

\[
(\text{διγαμμα resembling } F \text{ and pronounced as } W) = FW
= \text{Finnegans Wake} = \square = \text{ALP’s letter} = \Delta = \text{a character} = \varepsilon = \Psi \text{ or } \Pi
\]

The equation does not so much suggest identity of its elements as indicate a chain of overlappings or translations from one sense to another in a chain of signifiers. It also points out to a fractal-like nature of *Finnegans Wake*, in which the whole volume can be split into smaller units: books, chapters, pages, words and finally individual signs (letters and sigla) related to one another by virtue of uncanny similarity. Or, reversely, when amassed and multiplied the individual signs form what Armand referred to as a “structural grid,” filled with words (e.g. various denominations of HCE and ALP), minor narratives (stories about his sin and her letter), which combine into larger textual units (chapters that focus on particular characters and their “adventures,” and books corresponding to the phases of the Viconian cycle), which build up the
“hypertextual edifice.” 67 This corresponds to a paradoxical aspect of *Finnegans Wake* that Gabriele Schwab associates with its fractal structure:

Joyce wants his text to contain the whole universe with all its recursive times (recurso) and histories. He also wants the whole of the *Wake* to be contained in each of its self-similar parts. His ideal reader is supposed to grasp the text both in recursive loops of readings and in a holistic perception of the whole text in each part. If one wants to imagine a fractal text that entails the “infinite self-embedding of complexity” (100), *Finnegans Wake* comes as close to it as possible. The *Wake* enfold words into words that enfold other words, and all these imaginary word-worlds enfold narratives within narratives of other narratives, or characters that are the effects of other characters, and so on ad infinitum. Joyce even seems to tease us about this infinite process of self-embedding when he deposits the Great Letter in the muddy surface of his text. The Great Letter is figured as a miniature of *Finnegans Wake* which in turn, contains the Great Letter which contains *Finnegans Wake* which contains *Finnegans Wake*.... Chaos theory has termed this well-known mise-en-abîme “self-similarity.” Defined as symmetry across scale, self-similarity “implies recursion, pattern inside of pattern” (Gleick 103). “Fractal meant self-similar,” writes Gleick (...). The *Wake* drives this dream of infinite self-similarity to its extreme: as an enfolded replica of *Finnegans Wake* which, in turn, is figured as a text able to store all texts, sounds, and signs of all times, past and future, the Great Letter also embodies, somewhat self-ironically, the *Wake*’s dream of being a written hologram of a self-similar universe. 68

67 Armand, *Technê*, 113. Louis Armand, who calls *Finnegans Wake* “hypertextual edifice,” understood it as “a model of hypertextuality, whose ‘form’ would thus be situated between acrostics and geometrical figurations” (*Technê*, 113), yet emphasises an illusory nature of this structure since “the textual edifice itself is always in medias res, a work in progress between morphological emplacement, on the one hand, and and indeterminable anamorphosis on the other” (*Technê*, 116).

In the above formula this relation of self-embedding is extended even further: the Great Letter (a document) contains small letter(s) (HCE or E, and ALP or Δ). But these in turn contain the Great Letter which contains *Finnegans Wake* since we know that “[w]hen a part so ptee does the duty for the holos we soon grow to use of an allforabit” (*FW* 18.36-19.02). As Schwab notices, the reader is thereby enticed “to a holistic perception, a global qualitative definition of the textual process, the ‘ph(r)ase space’ of the *Wake*” while the HCE, ALP, Shem-Shaun, and Issy (in all their forms: as sigla, as names, as extended descriptions or metaphoric references, and as characters in a narrative) function as “strange attractors” channelling “the 'chaos' of multidimensional, overlaid, and condensed narrative strands from different historical and textual spaces.” Hence, they may be also seen as these “active elements that fuse of themselves” in time and allow the holographic image of the compositional space to emerge in front of the reader’s eyes. “In both cases the effect is one of a containment of time – namely, infinity – in a finite space.” The shape of this finite space, delimited by the 628 pages of the printed volume, will be presented in the following chapter.

69 “The strange attractor” is a term used in chaos theory to describe the dynamics of a system whose elements arrange themselves chaotically. It was, however, discovered that strange attractors “have detailed structure on all scales of magnification; a direct result of this recognition was the development of the concept of the fractal (a class of complex geometric shapes that commonly exhibit the property of self-similarity”). “Chaos theory.” *Encyclopædia Britannica Online*. Encyclopædia Britannica, 2011. Web. 04 Sep. 2011.

70 Schwab, *The Mirror and the Killer-Queen*, 79.

71 See the chapter “Genetic history and Hayman’s nodal structure of *Finnegans Wake*.”

SPATIO-TEMPORAL UNITY
THE GLOBE

Female body as the earth: the “Gea-Tellus” of *Ulysses* & the “Geomater” of *Finnegans Wake*

All the non-linear readings discussed in previous chapters do not contradict or annul either the narrative mode of interpretation or a conviction that the stories constitute the essence of *Finnegans Wake*. In fact, the narrative reading of the *Wake*, such as the one offered by Agnieszka Graff, may lead to a conclusion that structural patterns must be seen as necessary elements of the overall meaning of Joyce’s book, forming its compositional space. Wakean “sintalks” are narratives of transgressions and trespasses; thus, etymologically, they are stories of going across or beyond borders. As much as they concern HCE’s obscure offence, the twins’ fight with and defeat of their father, and the Oddysey of ALP’s letter in defence of her husband, they involve journeys around the world: of the “Megalomagellan” (512.05), “[t]o the vast da game” (512.14), “the circumconversioning of antelithual paganelles” (512.16). The last phrase combines Latin *circumconversio*, i.e. a rotating movement with conversation and conversion, as if hinting that turning the pages transforms reading into a metaphorical circumnavigation of the textual world. And by the end of the book, the feminine voice of ALP explicitly connects her writing with geography: “And watch would the letter you’re wanting be coming may be. [...] Every letter is a hard but yours sure is the hardest crux ever. [...] But once done, dealt and delivered, tattat, you’re on the map. Rased on traumscript from Maston, Boss. After rounding his world of ancient days” (*FW* 623.29-624.01).
Interestingly, this passage was added to the page proofs as one of the very last revisions, when the typesetting of the book was nearly finished. We should bear in mind that several of Joyce’s last minute additions to *Ulysses* are believed to bind its verbal layer with the material space of the book. Thus, the reference to the cartographic nature of the text added in the final stages of the book’s production may hint at a cartographic network of textual nodes possibly interwoven in the text of *Finnegans Wake*.

If “the *nouvelle lettres*” offered by the *Wake* are to involve both time and space, travelling is precisely the archetypal activity through which this can be achieved. It is through journeys of Shem-the-Gripes-Time and Shaun-the-Mookse-Space that Joyce unites the temporal and spatial *in motion*, setting to work the *coincidentia oppositorum* principle. Following the twins in their journeys, the reader may sketch a map of the book’s universe, experiencing it as a spatio-temporal entity. Hart, for that matter, is quite convinced that [*the “intention may have been geodetic”* indeed: “*Finnegans Wake* is laid out like a map of the globe – ‘a chart expanded’ (593.19) – for geography is as important to Joyce as history.”1 And geography is also this special science in which *space* is measured through *time*: in which the latitude and longitude are expressed in grades, minutes, and seconds.2

Geography features as one of young Stephen’s early preoccupations in Clongowes Wood College. In the opening pages of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* the young hero recollects how Dante taught him about the longest river in America, the Mozambique Channel and even the highest mountain on the moon. During a self-study session, looking at a picture of the globe in his geography notebook, he reflects on the cyclicity of time and its dependence on the rotation of the earth. He is overwhelmed by the size, complexity, and the hierarchical order of the world, the multitude of geographical names. Finally, he locates himself within this vast expanse by scribbling the well-known list of “coordinates”:

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1 Hart, *Structure*, 111.

2 Graff notes that, while time is usually spatialised (by the language we use), truly fascinating things happen when space is temporalised (cf. Graff, “This Timecoloured Place,” 32-34).
He opened the geography to study the lesson; but he could not learn the names of place in America. Still they were all different places that had different names. They were all in different countries and the countries were in continents and the continents were in the world and the world was in the universe.

He turned the flyleaf of the geography and read what he had written there: himself, his name and where he was.

Stephen Dedalus
Class of Elements
Clongowes Wood College
Sallins
County Kildare
Ireland
Europe
The World
The Universe

That was his writing (...).³

Stephen’s fascination reflects Joyce’s fascination with hierarchies, plans and maps which he used extensively while writing, as well as with the re-creative power of language. The writer is known to have boasted that if Dublin were destroyed, it could be reconstructed on the basis of Ulysses, so accurate were the details of the city in his book. Arguably, even Joyce’s oeuvre developed according to the scheme sketched above. In the Portrait he described Stephen Dedalus within the context of the school (Class of Elements, Clongowes Wood College), the places where his hero lived: Sallins, County Kildare, and his own country, Ireland. In Ulysses he set the action in Dublin, Ireland, but thanks to mythological parallels also in Europe. However, the image of life in this book is so rich and all-inclusive that many critics have seen it as a literary picture of the whole world. In The Book as World Marilyn French claimed that “Joyce literally set out to create a replica of the world – not a metaphor for it, but a copy of it – reproducing within it all the coincidences, mysteries, and incertitude that pervade

actual life.”\(^4\) According to her, the reader is taken on a voyage through styles during which she is presented with a cubist vision of human reality. She sees the structure of the novel as a series of concentric circles through which the reader moves upwards, gradually embracing with her sight and comprehension the city, the world and the universe. In “Ithaca,” together with Stephen and Bloom, who symbolise astral bodies, the reader moves away from the world (familiar human reality: the place where we live and which we experience) and looks at it from a cosmic perspective. Consequently, the ultimate episode represents what the reader would see from space – the earthly globe.

The vision closes with the notorious, large full stop, as if to graphically demonstrate the tiny dot to which the world has been reduced. According to Walton A. Litz, this adds to the spatial quality of the text, as well as anticipates the symbolic structure of the ultimate chapter:

At the end of “Ithaca,” which is the end of *Ulysses* as novel and fable, Bloom subsides into the mythic world of the giant roc, where light is born out of darkness, and into the womb of infinite possibilities. “La réponse à la dernière demande est un point,” Joyce instructed the printer on his typescript, and that point contains a double meaning. As a full-stop it marks the conclusion of Bloom’s day, the terminus of the novel’s literal action, but as a spatial object it represents Bloom’s total retreat into the womb of time, from which he shall emerge the next day with all the fresh potentialities of Everyman. Like the Viconian *ricorso*, the final moment of “Ithaca” is both an end and a beginning. [...] “Penelope” is indeed the “indispensable countersign to Bloom’s passport to eternity,” as Joyce once called it,\(^5\) since it substantiates the novel’s promise of cyclic renewal [...] On Joyce’s schema for the novel “Penelope” alone is assigned no specific time; its material (Bed, Flesh, Earth) are essentially timeless.\(^6\)

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\(^5\) *Letters*, I, 160 (W.A. Litz’s note).

Hence, for Litz, “Penelope” constitutes a textual counterpart of the full stop, a transitory phase between today becoming tomorrow which is already turning into yesterday. It is the episode that embraces all the events and themes of the book and poses them in the timeless “now”. In the schema of the novel “Penelope” is the only episode which does not have any particular time or hour ascribed to it, its symbol being earth and its attribute movement. It is not only a special but a spatial episode too, perhaps to an even greater extent than the cubist “Wandering Rocks.” In a letter to Frank Budgen Joyce made it clear that not only did he conceive of Molly (as presented in “Penelope”) as Mother-Earth, but that he actually structured her soliloquy in a way evocative of the shape and movement of the globe.

The first sentence contains 2500 words. There are eight sentences in the episode. It begins and ends with the female word yes. It turns like the huge earth ball slowly surely and evenly round and round spinning, its four cardinal points being the female breasts, arse, womb and cunt expressed by the words because, bottom (in all senses bottom, button, bottom of the class, bottom of the sea, bottom of his heart), woman, yes. Though probably more obscene than any preceding episode it seems to me to be perfectly sane full amoral fertilisable untrustworthy engaging shrewd limited prudent indifferent Weib. Ich bin der Flesch (sic) der stets bejaht.7

Her monologue begins and ends with the same word: “yes” as if indicating roundness and circularity unbroken by any punctuation marks except for two full stops: one falling exactly in the middle of the episode after its fourth “sentence” and the other at the end. They divide the monologue into two parts and, if the text were visualised as “the huge earth ball,” these full stops would determine the axis around which it would rotate. The episode has “its cardinal points”: “the female breasts, arse, womb and cunt” indicating “anterior and posterior female hemispheres,” corresponding to the cardinal points of the compass. These are explicitly used in the preceding episode to coordinate Bloom’s and Molly’s positions in the bed: “Listener, S.E. by E.: Narrator, N.W. by W.: on the

7 Joyce, Selected Letters, 285.
53rd parallel of latitude, N., and 6th meridian of longitude, W.: at an angle of 45° to the terrestrial equator” (UG, 606).

Interestingly, particular directions are separated from one another not by commas or semicolons, but by colons, as if anticipating the two points determining the axis of the earth or the full stops structuring Molly’s monologue.

There are thematic parallels between the corresponding passages of the two parts of the monologue, too. In his essay on “Penelope” in James Joyce’s Ulysses Robert Boyle analyses the correspondences between the two parts of the monologue in more detail and notices: “The first sentence corresponds somewhat with the fifth, the second with the sixth, and so on. To some extent, each sentence is a unit whose ending echoes its beginning.” Both parts begin with Molly thinking about an unattractive, sanctimonious, old woman: Mrs Riordan in the first “sentence” and Mrs Rubio in the fifth “sentence.” Both parts end with her reflecting on female submission to man: “answer to a gentlemans proposal affirmatively,” “and yes I said yes I will Yes.” However, the first one finishes with the phrase “in the bottom of the ashpit.” with Molly’s mood going down, as if indicating the character of the geographical area determined by one end of the earth axis – “the bottom” of the earth, the “lowest” point of the globe, the South Pole. In the end her memories and reflections on male-female relationships are much more exhilarated, so that metaphorically the final, climactic “Yes” would determine the “highest” point of this textual globe, i.e. the North Pole. Such a reading of Molly’s soliloquy is anticipated when, by the end of “Ithaca,” Bloom looks at his wife as if she were an embodiment of Gea-Tellus, Mother-Earth. This vision allows him to accept her unfaithfulness and placate his jealousy. He experiences:

Satisfaction at the ubiquity in eastern and western terrestrial hemispheres, in all habitable lands and islands explored or unexplored (the land of the midnight sun, the islands of the blessed, the isles of Greece, the land of promise), of adipose anterior and posterior female hemispheres, redolent of milk and honey and of excretory sanguine and seminal warmth,

reminiscent of secular families of curves of amplitude, insusceptible to moods of impression or of contrarities of expression, expressive of mute immutable mature animality. (UG, 604)

In this respect “Penelope” resembles the “Eggsmather” (296.21) of the “Nightlesson” chapter of Finnegans Wake (II.2). Also referred to as “our Frivulteeny Sexuagesima,” she “extends herself as sphere as possible, paradismic perimutter, in all directions on the bend of the unbridalled, the infinisissimalls of her facets becoming manier and manier…” (FW 298.27). Although described in more mathematical or geometrical terms, she bears many resemblances to Molly when she appears “distinct and isoplural in its (your sow to the double) sixuous parts, flument, fluvey, and fluteous, midden wedge of the stream’s of [her] muddy old triagonal delta, […] the constant of fluxion, Mahamewetma, pride of the province” [Issy footnotes this: “4 And all meinkind”] (FW 297.20-29).

Molly and ALP are both paradigmatic females: impressions of roundness, vastness, abundance, and eroticism are the same in both cases. They stand for the everlasting life-giving force which fascinates men. Simultaneously, they constitute perfectly shaped, spherical entities, matrixes of Joyce’s textual worlds.

This fascination leads the young Dolph and Kev (Shem and Shaun respectively) to investigate the female body under the guise of studying mathematics. “Problem ye ferst, construct ann aquilittoral dryankle Probe loom! […] Concoct an equoangular trilliter” (FW 286.19-22). Yet Kev is unable to solve the problem and asks Dolph to do it for him. The other promises to help him “to see figurateavely the whome of [his] eternal geomater” (FW 296.31-297.01). To solve the task, they use an art combining “spacious arithmetic” (geometry), and computation of mystical numbers, a kind of algebra so improbable that it invokes hysterical laughter of disbelief: “heaving alljawbreakical expressions out of old Sare Isaac’s universal of specious aristmystic unsaid” (FW 293.18). Consequently, they come up with the drawing (FW 293, see

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9 It is called gematria, a branch of cabбалah that deals with calculation and interpretation of the numerical values of words. For further discussion see the next chapter.
Fig. 15) that was already discussed above as a parodistic depiction of the Platonic World-Soul, but, in fact, reproduces exactly the first proposition from Euclid’s *Elements*.

In Joyce’s mocking vision, geometrical and algebraic computation, drawing, and writing are tantamount to divine creation. The diagram Kev and Dolph study represents the “geomater” (*FW* 297.01) who “expense[s] herselfs as sphere as possible, paradigmic perimutter” (*FW* 298.27-29), as “Great Shapesphere puns it” (*FW* 295.04). “Shapesphere” is, of course, Shakespeare, who established “The Globe.” The parallel may (partly) explain the playwright’s omnipresence in the *Wake*, which struck Adaline Glasheen so much, though she was unable to satisfactorily explain it. The playwright functions as yet another model for the creator. However, the seriousness of this implication is immediately undermined by a marginal gloss: “Sarga, or the path of outgoing” (*FW* 294.L1). This Sanskrit word means “process of world creation,” but in Indian concepts the world is merely a play of “Maya” or illusion. Note the other gloss: “*Maya-Thaya. Tamas-Rajas-Sattvas*” (*FW* 294.L2). *Tamas, rajas* and *sattva* are the so called *gunas*, or three threads of creation, that is, qualities of all created things, denoting darkness, passion and goodness respectively. Hence, the writer is also a weaver of fictions.

The brothers’ constructing of the equilateral triangle is also reminiscent of circumnavigating the earth (or drawing a route on the map as if in navigation). Dolph, who draws the diagram, is a traveller (in *FW* 286.F2 Issy calls him “the trouveller”). He starts the drawing by establishing the main axis of the diagram using geographical directions: “Oc, tell it to oui, do Sem! Well, ‘tis oil thusly” (*FW* 286.30), which McHugh annotates as referring to South (Fr. *Langue d’Oc*) and North (*Langue d’oil*). The twins use a “coastmap” and a compass to find the “bearings,” i.e. a horizontal direction expressed in degrees east or west of a true or magnetic north or south azimuth. And they make geographical discoveries on their way: “Another grand discobely! After Makefearsome’s Ocean. You’ve actuary entducked one!” (*FW* 294.12). Their findings are

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“straorbinaire,” that is extraordinary (after Italian “straordinario”), orb-like and binary (FW 295.17). Finally, they discover the two points where the circles intersect. These seem to be of special importance as the brothers discuss them in detail:

Now, as will pressantly be felt, there’s tew tricklesome poinds where our twain of doubling bicirculars, mating approxemetely in their suite poi and poi, dunloop into eath the ocher. [...] Nun, lemmas quatsch, vide pervoys akstiom, and I think as I’m suqueez in the limon, stickme punctum, but for seminal rations I’d likelong, by Araxes, to mack a capital Pee for Pride down there on the battom where, our monsterbilker, balked his bawd of parodies. And let you go, Airmienenius, and mick your modest mock Pie out of Humbles up your end. Where your apexojesus will be a point of order. (FW 295.29- 296.11)\[11\]

In the diagram on page 293 the points are labelled π and Ρ. They mark the borders or the extremities (It. ochar) on the sphere, one lying “down at the bottom” and the other “up the end.” However, the travellers seem to have discovered them from within as they are “squeezed” inside these mathematical and geographical “limits” (Lat. limes). Thus, the diagram also represents their mother’s womb in which the brothers swap sides in “Uteralterance or the Interplay of Bones” (FW 293.L1). If they are inside the “geomater,” the apex and nadir of the diagram represent the two “capital” P’s of the globe, the South (lower) and North (upper) Poles. As in “Penelope” these points correspond to parts of the female body, the anus and the vagina, and the navel: “the maidsapron of our A.L.P., fearfully! till its nether nadir is vortically where [...] its naval’s napex will have to beandbe” (FW 297.11). But the points are upside down as ALP is probably shown lying face down. Interestingly, Louis O. Mink links this passage with the end of “Ithaca”

\[11\] The passage has other geo-mythical overtones. It also hints at the area between northern Iran and Armenia, along the River Araxes (ancient name of the River Aras) which flows along the border of these countries. According to legendary beliefs, Biblical Eden, where history of mankind began (“where Hoddum and Heave [...] balked his bawd of parodies” FW 296.06-07), was located just below that area. The chaos brought about by the original sin ended with the coming of Jesus; his appearance on the earth was an apex of human history and restored order.
suggesting that the hero and heroine of *Finnegans Wake* lie in the same positions as Molly and Leopold. He believes that the passage describes the position of ALP with respect to HCE interred in the landscape:

But the diagram can be seen as a view of Dublin (293.12) as well as a map. Since Anna Liffey reaches the sea feet first, her hair trailing behind her, the view of her vulva in the diagram is from Dublin Bay. And if “capital Pee... on the bottom” and “modest mock Pie [π] ...up your end” – the “tew tricklesome points” (295.30) – mean what I think they do, Anna Liffey is lying prone, her head upstream and her feet toward “my salt troublin bay and the race of the saywint up me ambushure” (201.19). Beside her on the north, supine HCE lies head to foot – exactly as Leopold Bloom lies head to foot next to Molly, prone in her bed, at the end of *Ulysses*. The unchanging natural features of Dublin’s landscape re-enact forever in *Finnegans Wake* the secret idiosyncrasies of Leopold and Molly, cosmologized almost but not quite beyond recognition.12

Bloom’s name echoes in the twins description of the task when they sit down to construct the diagram: “Problem ye first, construct ann aquillitor dryankle Probe loom” (*FW* 286.19; emphasis KB), where “Probe loom” sounds as “probloom” – as if they were doing it “in place of Bloom” or “instead of Bloom” or as if they proceeded with Bloom’s investigations. Having completed their exercise, they discover the same triangle Bloom saw before them when he lifted Molly’s nightgown.

Equilateral triangles have a geodesic aspect to them, too. They are used for measuring the area of large tracts of country, the exact position of geographical points, and the curvature, shape, and dimensions of the earth. It is natural that the twins set out to represent the body of their “geomater” using triangulation, one of the oldest methods for determining distances and land surveying. They finish the task by drawing a map of the curvature of ALP’s body “isoplural in its sixuous parts” by determining an isopleth – a line that would join all the points of the same numerical value of geographical measurements. Though the narrator wonders if they have

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“measured [their] earth anyway?,” it seems that they have learnt their lesson of arithmetic, geometry, geography and geodesy by the end of the chapter. They finish their “imaginable itinerary through the particular universal” (FW 260.R3), concluding that “[t]o book alone belongs the lobe” (FW 305.31).

The Book as the World
In the beginning of the “Nightlesson” ALP is invoked as “Brook of Life” (FW 264.06), both the river and the book of life. Flowing “figuratleavely” (FW 296.31) through the pages, she holds the key to various secrets of Finnegans Wake as she is in possession of “Daleth, mahomahouma, who oped it closeth thereof the. Dor” (FW 20.17; daleth is the Hebrew letter resembling a triangle and meaning “door”). The “triv and quad,” expounded with the help of her body, embrace not only traditional geometry and geodetic triangulation, but also gematria, a cabbalistic method of Biblical exegesis consisting in reading letters as numbers, computing numerical values of words and analysing their algebraic relations. Hebrew, like many ancient languages, did not use separate characters to denote numbers; particular letters served in their stead. What is more, both Hebrew sefer (or sepher, the book) and safor (saphor, to count) come from the same root “SPR” (“SFR”), thereby mystically confirming a metaphysical identity of writing and computation. Cabbalists, remembering that God created the world through word, vested letters and numbers with magical creative potential. This must have appealed to the Irish writer, whose alter ego, an aspiring poet Stephen Dedalus blasphemously set out to express his spirit through writing and “to forge in the smithy of [his] soul the uncreated conscience of [his] race.”

Joyce was well familiarised with various hermetic teachings so much in vogue in Dublin at the turn of the last century. He read about cabbalistic lore in the writings of Mme Blavatsky.

13 The link between narrating and computing is traceable in many European languages; for example, French has compter and conter, English count and account; Spanish and Italian contare (“to count” and “to tell”), come from Latin computare, “to count”; while German has zählen and erzählen, and Dutch tellen and vertellen, which also come from the common root.

14 James Joyce, A Portrait of the Artist, 218.
the authoress of such works as *Isis Unveiled* or *The Secret Doctrine*, and may have come across English translations of Jewish esoteric writings which were brought out as separate publications around the same time.  

15 *Sepher Yetzirah* (*Sefer Jecirah*), or *the Book of Creation*, a mediaeval cabbalistic commentary to the Bible, is one of these texts whose several ideas and echoes can be traced in *Finnegans Wake*.  

16 It describes how God issued the world from his name JH(WH) in the three “SPRs” or *sefarim*. Hebrew, which does not transcribe vowels, allows for a multiple reading of “SPR,” which exegetes explain as: the book i.e. the 1<sup>st</sup> SPR, corresponding to an emanation of the letter J, the word, i.e. the 2<sup>nd</sup> SPR, emanating from H, and number or the 3<sup>rd</sup> SPR, emanating from W. Thus JHWH created the world through the three: the number, or idea; the word, or speech; and writing (of the word), or the book; using to that end ten *sephirot* (denoting the first ten numbers) and the twenty two letters of the Hebrew alphabet. The three letters of God’s name constitute three mother elements, or matrixes whose permutations brought about the six physical dimensions of the material world: height, depth, North, South, East and West. All existing things were issued from the other letters of the alphabet<sup>17</sup> whose motion and activity shaped all phenomena of the material world. God arranged them on a sphere and set them in a rotating, retrograde motion, which generated duality: good and evil, life and death, peace and war, wisdom and ignorance, etc. (a vision not unlike the Platonic World-Soul). Thus, material reality is characterised by the tension of opposites produced by such inverse rotations of letters (reflected in, for example, anagrammatic and palindromic structures), which finds its unity and balance in God as the

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<sup>17</sup> They were issued in 32 signs or so-called paths of wisdom. The number is highly significant: the creation of the world is described in the first 32 verses of the Torah, where God’s name is repeated 32 times, which is equivalent to the numerical value of his secret, unpronounceable name ELOHIM, grammatically the plural number, yet meaning “One.” In *Finnegans Wake*, some of the constantly reiterated numbers are 3 and 2, and 1132.
ultimate union of opposites. As in Vico’s cycle of history, in Sepher Yetzirah the moment of creation is marked by “a flash of lightning” when the ten spherical sephirot spring out of the divine word to “run by His order like a whirlwind and humble themselves before His throne.”

Joyce uses similar motifs with a characteristic, humorous twist. Finnegans Wake opens with a thunder word and the text whirls around to swallow its own tail. The major characters are in fact emanations of the letters: H, C, E and A, L, P. The world of the book is “brewed by arclight ... to be seen ringsome on the aquaface” (that is, in the circular form of a rainbow reflected in the primeval waters at the moment when God separated light from darkness and the land from the sea) by “Jhem or Shen” (FW 3.13-14), which rings of the Biblical “I am who I am”. “Shen” is Chinese for God, or spirit, and a symbol of Osiris, but could be read as Shin or ש as well. As we have noted, this Hebrew letter resembles HCE’s ideogram ו, and signifies activity of the tongue, a scale of guilt, the fire, the sky, and the head – all strongly associated with the Wakean hero. So the reference in FW 3.13-14 may anticipate the appearance of the siglum “ו” in FW 6.32. Further we read that “the man, Humme the Cheapner, Esc, overseen as we thought him, yet worthy of the naym, [comes] at this timecoloured place...” as “ee” (FW 29.18, 34). In the world of Wakean fuzzy identities the hero seems to merge or transform into the actual letter E. So this is not even the case when “the word is made flesh”, but the “letter” becomes the hero in Joyce’s book, as the author seems to play on the ambiguity of the word “character.” Further, HCE seems to be an emanation of the Sephiroth as: “Eset fibble it to the zephiroth and Artsa zoom it round her heavens for ever” (FW 29.13), and his coming is announced by the end of I.1 in “sherif Toragh” and inscribed in “Mapqiq makes” (FW 29.17). The latter combines geography and calligraphy, merging “mappiq,” a Hebrew diacritic put over the letter HE, with a map. A similar image reappears at the end of the Wake, in the beginning of book IV, where “[a] hand from the cloud emerges, holding a chart expanded” (FW 593.19). So the hero, whose names are expansion of the acrostical grid HCE, appears as the divine Letter “ו,” as if a sign or message from heaven, or divine "SPQueaRking" (FW 455.29). He and his story are inscribed in the book through the word (puns), the letter (his reiterated acrostical name and ALP’s letter,) and number (3 and 2, or 32,

18 Sepher Yetzirah, I.5.
Ascribing numerical values to letters was also known to ancient Greeks. They, in turn, invented so-called isopsephic writing in which the sum of the numerical values of letters in each line was identical. Such correspondences were used to code dates and other significant numbers associated with the verbal message of a given text. A subscript under the diagram on page 293 contains such a device: “Vieus Von DVbLIn” adds to 566, sending us backwards to page 14, which contains the following records in the Wakean chronicle:

566 A.D. On Baalfire’s night of this year after deluge a crone that hadde a wickered Kish for to hale dead tunes from the bog look-it under the blay of her Kish as she ran for to sothisfeige her cowrieosity and be me sawl but she found hersell sackvulle of swart goody quickenshoon ant small illigant brogues, so rich in sweat. Blurry works at Hurdlesford. (Silent.)

566 A.D. At this time it fell out that a brazenlockt damsel grieved (sobralasolas!) because that Puppette her minion was ravisht of her by the ogre Puropeus Pious. Bloody wars in Ballybaughacleaghbally. (FW 13.36-14.10)

The “views from historical Dublin” relate bloody brotherly wars that took place in that year. But graphically, the passage constitutes an iconic anticipation of the crossed arms of the World-Soul diagram, and reminds one of an hour-glass or a vertically posed infinity sign ∞, also represented in the diagram on page 293.

A cabbalistic or “geomatric” reading can be also fruitfully applied to work out the value of the triangles in ALP’s diagram. Its letters have the following numerical values: Alef and α = 1, Lamed and λ = 30, P = 80, whereas π = 80 or 3.14 when used as a mathematical symbol. Read “gematrically,” the value of each triangle: ALP and αλπ, equals 111, i.e. Anna Livia’s symbolic number constantly featuring in several passages

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about her. This, for example, is a signature found on the claybook in the Museyroom:

Axe on thwacks on thracks, axenwise. One by one place one be three dittoh and one before. Two nursus one make a plausible free and idim behind. [...] And a hundreadfilled unleavenweight of liberorumqueue to con an we can till allhorors eve. What a meanderthalltale to unfurl and with what an end in view of squattor and antantisquattor and postproneauntisquattor. To say too us to be every tim, nick and larry of us, sons of the sod, sons, littlesons... (FW 19.20-29)

“One by one place one” represents three strokes which look like III (or 111), or else it is a sum of: $1 + 1 + 1$ which makes 3 (the number of ALP’s children). This is also a description of constructing the triangle, in which two angles are placed opposite the third one. When the drawing is duplicated (ditto), an identical triangle is obtained (idem: behind or below) as in the diagram on 293. Both triangles have “a hundreadfilled unleavenweight,” that is, one hundred and eleven, which is the weight of the book containing a “meanderthalltale.”

Playing with the numbers, the twins can trick the mother to let them investigate her (bodily) secrets. But the numbers can also help the narrative unfurl on the leaves of the book (liber) arranged sequentially (as in a queue). Interestingly, when we reach page 111 while leafing through Finnegans Wake, we come across ALP’s letter just dug out of a dung heap by Belinda of the Dorans, “the original hen” (FW 110.21; hen in Greek means one), the winner of “Terziis prize with Serni medal, Chepalizzy’s Hane Exposition” (FW 111.05-07). This discovery constitutes one of the turning points of the major Wakean narrative: a story of writing, delivering and reading the Letter. Since the three-fingered bird (“Cheepalizzy” sounds almost as Polish trzypalcy, i.e. three-fingered) scratched it out (incidentally, such a scratch would resemble 111) and “looked at [this] literature,” “letters have never been quite their old selves again” (FW 112.24). They opalesce as numbers, movable figures, icons and symbols, and acquire a life of their own.

If, in turn, one added up the values of all the angles of both triangles, taking 3.14 as the value of π, the computed number
would be 114.14. “Geometrically,” it could correspond to page 114, line 14, which reads: “[It is] seriously believed by some that the intention may have been [geodetic].” The line comes from one of the earliest sketches of *Finnegans Wake* drafted as early as in autumn of 1923 that finally found its place in I.5, the analysis of the “untitled mammesta.” The passage, containing an extensive comment on ALP’s letter, was drafted as a longer chunk of continuous text, with only one modification. Namely, Joyce changed “geographical” to “geodetic.” The following is a transcript of the manuscript; the word was crossed out and a line was drawn from it to the margin where Joyce wrote “geodetic” (here the alteration is given in bold type after the deletion):

…let us now consider or any after all met with misfortune see all thereabout half. One cannot help noticing that some of the lines run from E to W, others from N to S. Such crossing is antechristian though the explanation may be geographical quite as easily as domestic economic. Then, in addition to the original sand pounce or soft rag, it has acquired accretions of terricious matter while loitering in the past. The teastain is a study in itself and its importance in establishing the identity of the writer complex (for if the hand was one the minds were more than so) will be appreciated by remembering that after in the time before and after the battle of the Boyne it was the custom not to sign any letters always. For why sign when every word, letter, penstroke, space, is a perfect signature in its own way.

R These ruled lines along which the traced words can run, march, walk, stumble in comparative safety seem to have been first of all drawn in a pretty checker with by using lampblack + a blackhorn.

The sentence marked by “R,” which specifies that the arrangement and behaviour of words on the page are subject to the geodetic dimension of writing, was added in the next stage of revision, still in the early phase of the book’s composition. After that, the passage was put aside until 1938,

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20 *JJA*, 46, 299. See also *Finnegans Wake* drafts, mostly autograph, corrected typescript and proofs; 1923-1939 (Add 47471 – 47489) 47471-40b. London: British Library Manuscripts Collection). Materials from this collection will be further identified with the letters *MS* and the catalogue number.
when the final modification was inserted to the third set of galley proofs.\textsuperscript{21} It specified geographical coordinates, by adding: “in the Nemezes and Bukaharast directions,” “in search for Maliziies with Bulgarade” and “tiny tot though it looks when schtschtnupnistling alongside other incunabula, it has its cardinal points for all that.” It seems significant that the text of the passage, though considerably expanded in revisions, contains only one modification, while in general its wording remained unchanged, unlike other early passages whose words were heavily transformed. Finally, the passage appeared in the book in the following form:

... Still. One cannot help noticing that rather more than half of the lines run north-south in the Nemezes and Bukarahast directions while the others go west-east in search from Maliziies with Bulgarad for, tiny tot though it looks when schtschupnistling alongside other incunabula, it has its cardinal points for all that. These ruled barriers along which the traced words, run, march, halt, walk, stumble at doubtful points, stumble up again in comparative safety seem to have been drawn first of all in a pretty checker with lampblack and blackthorn. Such crossing is antechristian of course, but the use of the homeborn shillelagh as an aid to calligraphy shows a distinct advance from savagery to barbarism. It is seriously believed by some that the intention may have been geodetic, or, in the view of the cannier, domestic economical. But by writing thithawes end to end and turning, turning and end to end hithawes writing and with lines of litters slittering up and louds of latters slettering down, the old semetomyplace and jupetbackagain from tham Let Rise till Hum Lit.

\textit{(FW 114.02-19)}

While such modifications provide no definite proofs, they can enhance our understanding of the text and, arguably, support or refute some interpretations. Joyce claimed that he was able to account for every single pun in \textit{Finnegans Wake}.\textsuperscript{22} Thus, it seems justifiable to say that every alteration was, more or less, consequential and an explanation of its nature would throw some light on the meaning of his work. Walton A. Litz, who first studied \textit{Finnegans Wake} drafts, recognised the importance

\textsuperscript{21} \textit{JJA 50.}

\textsuperscript{22} Ellmann, \textit{James Joyce}, 546.
of such genetic evidence in supporting or challenging particular readings:

Time after time in *Finnegans Wake* consultation of an earlier draft will suggest a nuance or extension of meaning which, once recognized, is obviously there in the finished work. Of course, it would be a mistake to attach great authority to these early drafts. The evidence of an early version is essentially *historical* [...]: it shows that which is possible or probable, and stands in no absolute relationship to the finished work. But given Joyce's particular methods of work-synthesis and accumulated associations, the degree of probability in the relationship is quite high.23

**The Book as the Globe**

What kind of nuance would be entailed in the switch from “geographic” to “geodesic”? Geography is a science dealing with the description of the areal differentiation on the earth, including topographical features, climate, vegetation, population, and land use. Considered etymologically, the word suggests the process of representing the earth in some form of drawing or writing. Geodesy, in turn, shifts the focus from graphical to mathematical operations, since it is a branch of applied mathematics dealing with measurements of the shape and size of the earth and determining the exact positions of geographical points. The shift may imply a deliberate distribution of geographic signposts according to mathematically verifiable principles. Interestingly, several other late additions, such as the above mentioned remark by ALP (“Once done, dealt and delivered, tattat, you’re on the map” *FW* 623.34-624.01) also hint that *Finnegans Wake* can be read geographically as: “a chart expanded” (*FW* 593.19) and “a socially organic entity of a millenary military maritory monetary morphological circumformation in a more or less settled state of equonomic ecolube equalobe equilabe equilibbrium” (*FW* 599.15-18). Hence, if “the intention may have been geodetic” indeed, it should be possible to use Wakean “specious aristmystic” (*FW* 293.18) to mathematically

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determine (or at least approximate) the position of the “cardinal points” of Joyce’s equilibristic liber-globe.

If *Finnegans Wake* is a “circumformation,” or “the book of Doublends Jined” (double ends joined or blended ends joined; *FW* 20.15), we can visualise it as a book opened in such a way that its covers are joined while its radially extending pages seen from above form a circle, as in Fig. 18 below. The identity of the beginning and ending was implied not only by the notorious broken sentences, but also stressed by the book’s bibliographic code, as the jacket bore identical lettering on both the front and back covers (when the book is closed, it may be difficult to tell them apart; cf. Fig. 19).

Fig. 18. “Our whistlebell millwheeling vicociclometer, a tetraromational gazebocroticon (the “Mamma Lujah” known to every schoolboy scallander...)” (*FW* 614.27-8)
The circumference of this circle equals 628 (pages), a number which does not seem accidental, if we consider that the formula for the perimeter of the circle is \( \pi \) multiplied by its diameter (or 2 \( r \)'s, where \( r \) is the length of the radius). This can be summed up in a simple equation:

\[
2\pi r = 628 \\
3.14 \times 2r = 628 \\
r = 100
\]

Is this simply a happy coincidence, or is it Joyce’s silent engineering to construct a “wheel with no spokes” which is “a perfect square,”\(^{25}\) or the result of his “specious aristmystic unsaid” (\(FW\) 293.19)? The only evidence that may suggest such an intention of a deliberate design consists in three sample pages of proofs in different typeface, each bearing a note referring to the number of pages, reproduced in \(JJA\) 61: 658, 661, and 664. The first sheet contains a handwritten annotation: “Specimen F, MacLehose, 528 pages” and the date “August 12, 1931,” the second notes “660 pages, September 14,” and the third “454 pages, September 21” respectively. If, how and when could Joyce hit upon the idea of stretching the size of the \(Work in Progress\) to 628 pages remains in the sphere of conjecture. However, as the design of his booklets discussed above testifies, he was involved in similar numerological games.

\(^{24}\) The scan by courtesy of Finn Fordham and the Bodleian Library in Oxford.  
\(^{25}\) Joyce, \(Letters I\), 251.
And 100 features conspicuously on the opening page of the *Wake* as it is the number of letters in the first of the ten thunderwords, which marks the beginning of the Viconian cycle of human history, or in accordance with the cabbalistic reading, the beginning of the creative process in which the world was formed. The first of the ten words of “perfect language” (*FW* 424.23-24), as Shaun calls them, is an agent of creation through letter and number. The last of them, in fact counting 101 characters, falls in a conversation of the four old men (the Mamalujo) with Shaun when he criticises Shem’s “libber” (*FW* 424.11) as “schistematic robblemint” (*FW* 424.36) and possibly accuses him also of “cooking the books” (“Your pudding [made of liver-libber] is cooked”; *FW* 424.12). The overall number of letters in all ten thunderwords equals 1001, implicating “one thousand and one stories all told of the same” in the circular book of the night, or as Shaun calls it “the last word in stolentelling” (*FW* 424.35).

This needs a brief explanation. Shem, “this hambone dogpoet” (*FW* 177.21) is supposed to have acted as ALP’s scribe, but he may be guilty of impersonating the actual author of the Letter*26* – his mother. For example, at the end of I.5 where the letter is analysed in detail, he appears as “that odious and still today insufficiently malestimated notesnatcher” (*FW* 125.21). Elsewhere, he is reported to study various styles of writing in preparation for a gross forgery, including writing on his own body with ink made of his own excrement (in chapter I.7 of *FW* 187-8). Talking to the Mamalujo Shaun implies that Shem is a sham author and a sham creator (he writes crap) and boasts that he would be able to write much better:

...I am extremely ingenuous at the clerking even with my badily left and, arrah go braz, I’d pinsel it with immenuensoes as easy as I’d perorate a chickerow of beans for the price of two maricles and my trifolium librotto, the authordux Book of Lief, would, if given to daylight, (I hold a most incredible faith about it) far exceed what that bogus bolshy of a shame, my soamheis brother, Gaoy Fecks, is conversant with in audible

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*26* The Letter is identified with *Finnegans Wake* itself, and, indeed, on one, autobiographical, level Shem corresponds to James Joyce, while Shaun is an embodiment of his brother Stanislaus.
But Shaun does not realise that he is in fact Shem’s “Siamese” (“so am I he is”) brother. One cannot be separated from the other as they constitute a polarity; hence, their writings meeting at the extremities may not differ much from one another. Shaun’s book would be as corporeal and visual as Shem’s: “badily” stands for “bodily” (but the body is bad in Shaun’s view), and “go braz” hints at Polish obraż – a picture or painting, painted with a Pinsel, (German for “paintbrush”). Shaun promises to “take potlood and introvent it Paatryk,” i.e. to take a pencil and invent it in print (“potlood” and “paa tryk” are Dutch for “pencil” and “in print”), thereby creating “a spaciament spaciosum and a hundred and eleven other things” (FW 425.28, 32). Yet his “handsome model” (specimen speciosum) will be the same “spatial creation” represented in the “geometrical” diagram on page 293 as ALP’s-Shem’s scripture, since Shem and Shaun are, in fact, two sides of the same leaf.

Shem and Shaun embody the coincidentia oppositorum principle, which, translated into geographical or physical terms, symbolically associates them with the poles of Joyce’s book. Apart from representing contradictory ideas: writer and (mail) carrier, time and space, (message and medium?), darkness and lightness, Satan and Christ, Shem is also James (Joyce, or “jojce,” meaning “egg,” as the writer’s Slavonic friends used to read it) and Shaun is Stanislaus (that is, a Pole). As Clive Hart observed, the brothers travel around the earth, their trajectories tracing the conceptual figure of the globe (cf. Fig. 14 above) whose poles are in Dublin and Australia. But he does not link them with the points of Shem-Shaun.

convergence, that is the places where they symbolically “cross” as the strands of the World-Soul – “at the coincident,” as Hart notes, in the central chapter II.3 and at the beginning and the end of the book. However, read “geometrically,” the book extends itself like the earthly orb forming a figure shown in Fig. 20 below. When measured with the “vicociclometer” (FW 614.27), its poles fall exactly on pages 628 and 3, as well as on 314-15, in the arithmetical middle of the text.

Curiously, the central pages of the book, mainly between pages 312 and 333, contain a host of both Polish (and

28 Hart, Structure, 130.
Slavonic) sounding words as well as numerous allusions to polar regions and expeditions. Here is a list of geographic references to be found there:

- explorers: Ernest Henry Shackleton (1874-22), an Antarctic explorer of Irish origin – FW 317.16; Roald Amundsen (1872–1928), a Norwegian polar explorer, the first man who reached the South Pole in 1911, he sailed to the Antarctic on board of *Fram*, and flew over the North Pole in a zeppelin *Norge* – FW 325.22; Nansen (1861–1930), a Norwegian polar explorer – FW 326.21;

- polar vessels: Nansen’s above mentioned *Fram* used in both North and South polar expeditions – FW 312.7, 313.27, 315.30 (?), 317.9, the *Pourquoi Pas* and *Le France* – FW 315.34-6, Charcot’s vessels on which he explored Antarctica, the *Belgica*, a Belgian vessel on which Captain le Gerlache sailed to the Antarctic (among the crew were Amundsen and a Pole, Arctowski); the ship blocked by frozen ice was released after a year; for seventy days of the Arctic winter the sun did not rise – FW 316.15-9;


It is striking that the geographical and linguistic meanings of “Pole” echo throughout the centre of the book, as if the author were trying to draw the reader’s attention to this particular word. What is more, among the polar explorers appearing here are two “Norwegian captains”: “Nansense” and “Aestmand Addmundson”; the latter being the first man in the world to reach the South Pole. Interestingly enough, Joyce first wrote “Estmand Edmanson” and later changed it into a more explicit “Aestmand Addmundson” as if he wanted the reader not to miss or misunderstand the clue. In the same stage of revisions he added “Farety days and fearty nights” after

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30 Transcript for *transitions* revised for the printer of *Finnegans Wake* (dated winter 1936/7), JJA 54, p. 209, 243 MS 47479-128, 47479-150.
“...fram Franz José Land til Cabo Thormendoso, evenstarde and risingsoon” (cf. FW 312.07-10). McHugh notes that it refers to the biblical flood but it may also mean half of the journey around the world, especially that “a foully fallen dissentant from the peripulator” (FW 313.32-3; McHugh explains “periplus” as circumnavigation) is mentioned a few paragraphs below. Thus, the accumulation of these elements makes me read this part of the book as the South Polar area, with pages 314-315 representing the Pole. Yet another, possibly accidental, feature links this area with the other pole. The text on page 315 breaks off at “through the medium of gallic” (FW 315.36) without any punctuation mark, which reminds one of the final, conspicuously unfinished sentence. Browsing James Joyce Archives reveals that the missing mark is a colon. Whether it was removed deliberately or accidentally is impossible to establish, but its lack enhances a similarity between the middle and the end of the text.

The textual area covered by pages 628-3 contains another series of geographical polar references: Lonely Island 627.34, 628.15; Bering Sea and/or Bearing Strait, Bear Island (?), Archangelsk 628.10, Murmansk 628.6, Thaddeus Islands 628.8, North America 003.5, Prince Patrick Island 003.10, Prince George Land 003.8, St. Lawrence Island (on the Bering Sea), 003.8, Ellef and Amund Ringnes Land and/or Ringnes Island 003.14, Bell Sound and Horn Sound on Spitsbergen 004.7-8. “Camibalistic” (004.5) might allude to Greely’s tragic expedition in 1882-83 (the International Polar Year) whose survivors were accused of cannibalism, but absolved by the general public since it was the only way they could survive in such extreme conditions (“Arms apeal with larms appaling. ... What bidimelves sinduced by what tegoteabsolvers!” 004.7-9). The white expanse of page 628 and blank pages 1 and 2, which we should consider as belonging to the book if we want to close the circular continuation of pages, would iconically reflect the vast

31 McHugh, Annotations, 312.
32 JJA, 54, pages 17, 65, 107.
33 Admittedly, there are two more similar cases on the following pages 317.23 and 324.13, as if to underline an abrupt intrusion of another speaker in the dialogues, which in fact inclines one to think that the first omission may not have been accidental.
expanse of the Arctic Ocean, “cold mad feary father” (628.1-2). It would be appropriate that the Wakean North Pole should be located here. The geographical one cannot be permanently pinpointed with a flag or a pole since there is no land in the Arctic, just as there is no text stretching between 628 and 3.

Apart from the poles, the equator is one of the signposts which are marked as a prominent feature of the map of the earthly globe. Its position in the book would be easily determinable as it must lie exactly half way between the poles; thus, in terms of page numbers on pages 157-8 and 471-2. Indeed, the text contains a few of references to geographical names that can be found on and in the proximity of the equator: “Maraia” (FW 158.18) – Marajo (an island in the mouth of the Amazon), “she was a Black” (FW 158.26) – the Rio Negro, “borne of bjoerne” (FW 471.30) – Borneo (?). “The ver grosse O arundo of a long one in midias reeds…” seems to describe the equator quite accurately: after all, it is “der größte” (the greatest, biggest) circle around the earth running around its middle. While “that place where the day begins” (FW 472.3), and “a slip of the time between a date and a ghostmark” (FW 473.08-9) may refer to the point of crossing of the equator and the dateline.

However, the further one wanders on this globe, the more obscure everything gets. Geographical allusions become more and more diluted, the further one moves away from the geographical nodes of the text. If we calculate the position of the tropics, a possible area stretches over pages 115-7 and 511-3 for the Tropic of Cancer, and 197-9 and 429-31 for the Tropic of Capricorn. In the case of the former, apart from one last minute insertion: “It is told in sounds in utter that, in signs so adds to, in universal, in polygluttural, in each auxiliary neutral idiom, sordomutics, florilingua, sheltafocal, flayflutter, a con’s cubane, a pro’s tutute, strassarab, ereperse and anythongue athall” (FW 117.15), which may describe the Tropic of Cancer running through Cuba, the Arabian Peninsula, and just below ancient Persia, pages 115-17 apparently do not contain any references to the tropical territories. But the very same phrases also suggest a prostitute displaying her private

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34 JJA, 49, 158-159; MS 47476a-69v-70, 1st set of galley proofs dated by the printer 12 March 1937.
parts while “deliberatively summersaulting off her bisexycle” \((FW\ 115.15-16)\). This anticipates ALP’s genitals represented in the bi-circular diagram on 293, while the whole addition concerns a variety of languages in which “this oldworld epistola” \((FW\ 177.27)\) is told. If Joyce indeed coordinated the textual map to such a detailed extent, this addition could mark the latitude of the tropic. What is more, the crucial “geodetic passage” on page 114 precedes the potential “tropical area” of the text. And the respective pages on the other tropical side of the book contain a conversation concerning the voyage around the world in which several well-known explorers are mentioned: Ferdinand Magellan \((FW\ 512.5)\), Christopher Columbus \((FW\ 512.7/513.16)\), Vasco Da Gama \((FW\ 512.15)\), John Cabot \((FW\ 512.18)\), and Ernest H. Shackleton \((FW\ 512.18)\).

Locating the Tropic of Capricorn is more problematic. Admittedly, the first set of arithmetically determined pages 197-9 falls in the beginning of I.8, i.e. “Anna Livia Plurabelle,” the most “geographic” chapter of the book, saturated with hundreds of river names. But no specific references to the territories lying along the tropic can be identified here. It seems, however, that the respective pages on the other side of the book bear several significant clues. First of all, one of the latest additions on page 428\(^{35}\) mentions “our people in Samoanesia” \((FW\ 428.02)\), Samoa being the island on the southern Pacific lying in close proximity to the Tropic of Capricorn and the dateline. Their elders are “luking and marking the jornies, chalkin up drizzle in drizzle out on the four bare mats” \((FW\ 428.03)\). They are checking up and tracing routes of journeys on a map with the help of the four cardinals (cardinal points): Luke, Mark, John and Mathew, consistently identified with North, South, East and West throughout the \textit{Wake}.\(^{36}\) The addition continues: “How you would be thinking in your thoughts how the deepings did it all begin and how you would be scrimmaging through your scruples to collar a hold of an imperfection being committled” \((FW\ 428.01-7)\). This is Shem responding to Shaun’s above mentioned criticism of his

\(^{35}\) \textit{JJA}, 62, 278-9; MS 47487-154v, dated by the printer 22 April/31 May 1937.

book, challenging it and praying for him to grasp in the course of his journey a true understanding of the “dreambookpage” (*FW* 428.16). Then, on the following page 429, the narrator (Shem?) describes Jaunty Jaun (a degenerated incarnation of Shaun) that can be “planemetrically” (*FW* 429.10) seen interred in the landscape, “buried upright like the Osbornes, kozydozy” (*FW* 429.21-22), leaning inebriated on “a monopolised bottle” (*FW* 429.24). He is surrounded by “twentynine hedge daughters [...] learning their antemeridian lesson of life [...] attracted to the rarerust sight of the first human yellowstone landmark” (*FW* 429.21-430.01-6). Initially, a possible link between “kozydozy” 37 and the Tropic of Capricorn (the zodiacal horned Goat) seemed fantastic, but this word was added at the same stage of revisions as “people of Samoanesia,” and Joyce’s notes for *Finnegans Wake* do contain an entry where he noted that (Polish) *koza* 38 means a goat, and (Russian) *kozlik* is a billy-goat. 39 Does Jaun sleep “kozydozy” because he happens to stick upright on the tropical latitude of the Capricorn, like a landmark or the gnomon of a sundial? He preaches an “antemeridian” lesson to the twenty-nine leapyear girls, stressing “[e]conomy of movement, axe why said” (*FW* 432.35). A look at the map explains why his teaching is “antemeridian”: near the Samoa Islands the dateline slants to the west *before* 180° meridian in order to include them in a later time zone. Finally, in his further conversation with the girls, Shaun-Juan mentions to Issy-Isley that one has “seen all sorts of shapes and sizes, marauding about the moppamound” (*FW* 464.24-6), as if implying the meandering meridian 180°.

Besides evident thematic parallelisms, genetically supported by Hayman and Hart in their discussions of the book’s structure, there is another textual detail worth considering. The last minute interpolations in the “tropical” passages, the whole batch of allusions concerning Polar explorers in the centre of the book and famous voyagers on pages 511-13, as well as ALP’s final remark about being on “the map” were all added on the galley and page proofs, at the very last stages of the

37 The word was added at the same stage of revisions as “people of Samoanesia,” cf. *JJA*, 62, 280-81; MS 47487-155v-156.
38 *Kozy* is genitive singular or plural form.
39 *JJA*, 67: 84; notebook VI.B.37-166.
book’s composition. If the author-arranger wished to impose any geographical landmarks on the textual map, he could have done so only when the size and layout of the book were already known. As was mentioned above, the extant proofs reproduced in *James Joyce Archives* contain a set of three page samples in different types and layouts prepared for Joyce by MacLehose, the printer of *Finnegans Wake*, as early as in the autumn of 1931. The samples contain an estimated number of pages. The size of the book was calculated as 528, 600 and 454 pages in the different layouts. We can assume that Joyce could already engineer the geometry of *Ulysses*, and definitely rooted the fictional events in the actual plan of Dublin. Frank Budgen relates how he coordinated the movements of the characters in “Wandering Rocks” with the city map, making sure that the distance covered by them corresponded to the time necessary to do it in real life. Budgen was impressed by the writer’s struggle for precision: “To see Joyce at work on the *Wandering Rocks* was to see an engineer at work with compass and slide-rule, a surveyor with theodolite and measuring chain or, more Ulyssian perhaps, a ship’s officer taking the sun, reading the log and calculating current drift and leeways.” Budgen also remarked that the episode symbolically re-enacts the ways of the two opposite figures: Christ (Father Conmee) and Caesar (General Governor of Ireland). We can assume, too, that Joyce played with numerical symbolism in *Work in Progress* booklets and *Pomes Penyeach*. To push the analogy further, it is worth mentioning that he also carefully chose the colour of *Finnegans Wake* cover. His “Orange Book of Estchapel” (*FW* 374.31 was supposed to be bound in orange or its dark shade, “saffron red” (maroon), possibly playing on its symbolism connected with the colour of the Irish flag, the robes of Buddhists monks, and heraldry, in which it signifies “worthy ambition” (orange; otherwise Tawny or Tene) or “victory through patience” (as dark orange, or maroon, otherwise Sanguine Murray; cf. the first edition with the maroon dust jacket).

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40 *JJA*, 61; 658, 661, 664 respectively.
41 Budgen, *James Joyce and the Making of ULYSSES*, 123
42 From private correspondence with Stacey Herbert, the research assistant at James Joyce Special Collection in SUNY, Buffalo.
So picking up and interweaving all these textual threads, we could represent the Wakean *mappa mundi* corresponding in an “aristmystic” way to the actual map of the globe as in the diagram presented in Fig. 20 above. It seems that combined “geomatry” and genetic research offer us some support for such a geodesic reading of *Finnegans Wake*. The compositional history of *Work in Progress* testifies to a deliberate design or scheme, according to which Joyce was working and his engagement in punning on all possible levels in all possible languages perhaps encourages such cabbalistic interpretations. So it does not seem unlikely that Joyce carefully engineered also his last book, striving to develop further parallels between the linguistic and cartographic representations. 43 On one hand, including a geographic or rather geodesic projection in the book might ensure cohesion of the heterogeneous textual material, and function as an ordering principle for the “chaosmos of Alle” (*FW* 118.21). Or, as was suggested above, the globe could be seen as a fractal-like structure emerging from iterated sets of geographical and numerical motifs. Hence, in the present shape Joyce’s book would appear as an iconic recreation of the Earth. It seems that by fashioning his textual world in the image of God’s creation and after its likeness, the writer blasphemously mockes the original divine gesture, creating his world also through the three: word, book and number.

43 The readers may be familiar with Joyce’s caricature by César Abin, executed according to the model’s instructions, which shows the writer in the form of a question mark hovering over the dot representing the Earthly globe with disproportionately enlarged Ireland. Its title is “Joyce, the Eternal Enigma”.
VI
CODA
WHO IS THE LIBER LORD?

Despite the notorious elusiveness, intrinsic ambiguity, and extreme fuzziness of Joyce’s text, the publishing and, paradoxically, critical practices seem to imply a strange stability of *Finnegans Wake* as a book-object in the potentially meaningful shape and size Joyce managed to give it in the first edition. Although the author’s corrections, a list of which was added to the book in 1945, were introduced into the text of the new 1950 edition, the layout of the book has not really changed since its first publication,¹ hence the standardised form of citation that gives the page and line number, without referring to a particular edition.² For nearly seventy years readers have set down to explore its six hundred and twenty-eight pages, later supported by McHugh’s *Annotations* glossing in a mirror-like way particular words and phrases. The stately, bilingual edition of the Dutch *Finnegans Wake* prepared by Robbert-Jan Henkes and Erik Bindervoet,³ who have done the most extensive genetic research among Joyce’s translators, also preserves the original size as they are inclined to see the work as a kind of “geodetic object.”⁴

The only attempt at modification before 2010 was the “unconventional” edition brought out by Viking in 1959. The

¹ The marginal text of Shem and Shaun’s glosses in II.2 was reset with some layout errors in the forties; this was only corrected in the paperback edition in 1975. Crispi and Slote, *How Joyce Wrote…*, 494.

² This may be only necessary when one refers to mislaid marginal notes in the editions published in the 1940s.


text was reset and squeezed onto 540 pages of 41 lines. However, it quickly turned out to be “unreadable” and fell into oblivion so complete that most Joyceans are totally unaware of its existence. Its “unreadability,” as Fritz Senn explained to me in a private conversation during Zurich Workshop in August 2002, consisted in its impracticality as an object of critical reading and analysis. As Senn stated, “nobody was able to find anything in it, so it was useless as a text.” Quoting a word or a passage, all scholars and seasoned readers usually give just the page and line number, locating excerpts in a specific textual space independent of an edition. For years *Finnegans Wake* has remained that 628-page long book in a curious multilingual idiom, perceived as a three-dimensional searchable object by readers who did not consider its possible “aristhmystic” implications. Even “A Webified version of James Joyce’s *Finnegans Wake*”\(^5\) reflects its structure by maintaining the division of the text into books, episodes, pages, and line breaks, abstaining from offering it as a continuous text, and preserving the convention of the printed original. This decision seems more fortunate than the formatting of the electronic text of *Finnegans Wake* available at the University of Adelaide website,\(^6\) which does away with all page breaks withing chapters save II.2,\(^7\) as it gives the readers a better sense of the work’s structure.

As regards the obscure 1959 printed edition, it was doomed “unconventional” because it was incompatible with the shape “known to all men.” But apart from its suggested impracticality, there are some other faults to it. Possibly, beside the length of the book measuring 628 pages, the 36 lines was not an accidental choice, either, as the full rotation of the circle amounts to 360 degrees.\(^8\) So the extension of the


\(^7\) Unfortunately, the text is also misrepresented typographically as the central column of the text is all in block letters, and the Doodles family and the final two scribbles (thecock-a-snook and crossed bones) are missing.

\(^8\) Admittedly, a few pages count 37 verses, which is probably connected with last minute additions. If the compositors had wanted to preserve the regular 36-verses format, they would have had to reset large parts of the book to
page size from 36 to 41 lines and, consequently, reduction of the text to only 540 pages, modified the bibliographic code in such a way that the numerical symbolism of the circle inherent in the standard editions was irreparably lost.⁹ The resetting also resulted in an unfortunate distortion of the iconic image of “the vectorious readyeyes of evertwo circumflicksrent searchlers never film in the elipsities of their gyribouts those flickers which are returnally reproductive of themselves” (FW 298.14-18), alluding to the ALP’s diagram (FW 293) and the figure of the World-Soul (FW 298).

Fig. 21. Reproduction of a fragment of page 257 with a ruined iconic image of the World-Soul figure of Plato’s *Timaeus* in *Finnegans Wake*, New York: Viking, 1959.

incorporate those revisions, and we know they already worked in haste. One of such pages is page 528, coincidentally, exactly 100 pages before the end, the location of others appears purely accidental.

⁹ One could infer some more possibly meaningful computations from these two numbers. 628 divided by 36 equals 17. (4), almost the number of chapters and books in *Finnegans Wake*. In Italy seventeen is considered an unlucky number, associated with death, since XVII is a anagram of VIXI meaning “I lived.” The unfortunate four, in turn, denotes death in Japan. Both numbers are symbolically relevant to Joyce’s “Book of the Dead.”
The interconnection between the verbal content of the passage and its visual message, evidently intended by the author and present in other editions preserving the original format, is lost. Some iconic game is played, but its meaning remains obscure, as the reader cannot see the shape of $\infty$ in the two oddly distinguished words.

That unfortunate experiment makes me cautious about the newly announced *Finnegans Wake* edited by Danis Rose and John O’Hanlon, published in a limited edition by the Houyhnhnm Press. The information given in the prospectus testifies to the editors’ acute sensitivity to bibliographic detail: type, format, weight and colour of paper and binding, “exclusive proprietary fonts” tellingly named “Dante,” technology of printing and binding, and the number of pages (504).¹⁰ This impression is enhanced by a brief paragraph intended to draw our attention to this very aspect of Joyce’s work:

*Finnegans Wake* is the most bookish of all books. John Bishop has described it as “the single most intentionally crafted literary artefact that our culture has produced.” In its original format, however, the book has been beset by numerous imperfections occasioned by the confusion of its seventeen-year composition. Only today, by restoring to our view *the author’s intentions in a physical book* designed, printed and bound to the highest standards of the printers’ art, can the editors reveal in true detail James Joyce’s fourth, and last, masterwork. [my emphasis]

This sounds nearly like a declaration that *Finnegans Wake* belongs to liberature. However, despite the editors’ affirmation about the care they took in the typographic faithfulness to the author’s intentions,¹¹ their decision to modify the original length of the book in fact interferes with the spacial composition of the work and will disable any reading of the kind offered in the present study by, for example, erasing the numerical symbolism potentially inscribed in the pagination and

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¹¹ For example, they restored “&” linking “Howth Castel & Environs,” which features in all the drafts of the opening paragraph and was replaced only by the compositor when the text was set for print. But they exchanged the Fournier font originally accepted by Joyce for Dante, the font of their choice.
changing the distribution of the geographic motifs across the space of the volume. Of course, it is impossible to comment on Rose’s editorial decisions concerning the text itself without comparing his version with the wealth of available material. Moreover, it is generally agreed that the available text of *Finnegans Wake* calls for informed corrections, and we are bound to see some new, revised editions appearing when the copyrights expire. But in Rose’s case one also remembers that the unequivocal textual evidence that Joyce removed all punctuation save the two full stops from the final episode of *Ulysses* did not prevent the editor from fitting “Penelope” with a new, hairpinned coiffure, the decision he ultimately drew away from. Now, he has put *Finnegans* on a slimming diet, squeezing its “axiomatic orerotundity” (*FW* 55.36) from 628 to 504 pages. So we are again reminded of the Einsteinian discovery that the shape of the universe is dependent on the observer’s eye. Though parading the book, the scholar’s and editor’s focus is again only on text. But if Joyce is considered among such “Liber Lords” as Sterne, Blake, Mallarmé, Federman, Johnson, Gass, Danielewski, Fajfer, and the like – all those who feel that their books are “a space in space” – one should perhaps modify one’s editorial habits so as to respect the author’s intention inscribed in the material volume and let the readers see such a work as an organic unity of the text and the book or the space it occupies.
APPENDIX

From “Work in Progress” to *Finnegans Wake*: Chronology of Composition Chart
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>book chapter</th>
<th>March 1923</th>
<th>summer 1923</th>
<th>autumn 1923</th>
<th>winter 1923 – 1924</th>
<th>winter – spring 1924</th>
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<td>I.1 3-29</td>
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<tr>
<td>I.2 30-47</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>“Here Comes Everybody” [30 – 34]</td>
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<td></td>
<td>tentative first draft</td>
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<tr>
<td>I.4 75-103</td>
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<td>tentative first draft</td>
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<tr>
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<td>tentative first draft (including draft of the Revered Letter)</td>
<td>proper first draft [104-125]</td>
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</tr>
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<tr>
<td>I.7 169-195</td>
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<td></td>
<td>tentative first draft</td>
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<td>proper first draft [169-195]</td>
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<td>proper first draft [196-210]</td>
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<td>II.2 260-308</td>
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<td>II.3 309-382</td>
<td>“King Roderick O’Connor” [380-2]</td>
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<td>III.1 403-428</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>first sketch of “Shaun the Post” i.e. future III. 1, 2, 3, 4</td>
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<td>III.2 429-473</td>
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<td>III.4 555-590</td>
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<tr>
<td>IV 593-628</td>
<td>St. Kevin [604-606]; Berkeley (“St. Patrick and the Druid”) [611-2]</td>
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<td>the Revered Letter (originated as part of first draft of I.5) [615-619]</td>
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Chart 3. From “Work in Progress” to *Finnegans Wake*: chronology of composition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>book chapter pages</th>
<th>summer 1924 – winter 1925</th>
<th>spring – summer 1925</th>
<th>autumn – winter 1925</th>
<th>spring 1926</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>I.2 30-47</td>
<td>continued work on book I [I.2 – I.8]</td>
<td>revised for publication; published as &quot;From Work in Progress” <em>Contact Collection of Contemporary Writers</em>, May [30-34]</td>
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<tr>
<td>I.3 48-74</td>
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<tr>
<td>I.4 75-103</td>
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<tr>
<td>I.5 104-125</td>
<td>&quot;Fragment of an Unpublished Work,” <em>Criterion</em>, July</td>
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<tr>
<td>I.6 126-168</td>
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<tr>
<td>I.7 169-195</td>
<td>&quot;Extract from Work in Progress”, <em>This Quarter</em>, autumn-winter</td>
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<td>I.8 196-216</td>
<td>&quot;From Work in Progress”, <em>Navire d’Argent</em>, October</td>
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<td>II.1 219-259</td>
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<td>II.2 260-308</td>
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<td>tentative plan for Book II, early drafts of “The Triangle” [middle part of II.2, 282-304]</td>
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<td>II.3 309-382</td>
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<tr>
<td>III.1 403-428</td>
<td>continued work on book III (&quot;Shaun the Post&quot;)</td>
<td>continued work on book III (&quot;Shaun the Post&quot;)</td>
<td>&quot;Shaun” put aside as finished</td>
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<td>IV 593-628</td>
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### Chart 4. From “Work in Progress” to *Finnegans Wake*: chronology of composition

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<td>I.1 3-29</td>
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<td>revised for transitions, published as “Opening Pages of A Work in Progress,” April</td>
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<td>I.2 30-47</td>
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<td>I.3 48-74</td>
<td>revised for publication in transitions: published as Work in Progress, June</td>
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<td>I.4 75-103</td>
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<td>I.6 126-168</td>
<td>summer: first draft of “the Quiz,” revised for publication in transitions published as Work in Progress, (“The Mookse and the Gipes” [152-159] added too late to be included in publication), September</td>
<td></td>
<td>revised “The Mookse and the Gipes” [152-159]</td>
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<tr>
<td>I.7 169-195</td>
<td>revised for publication in transitions published as Work in Progress, October</td>
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<td>revised for publication</td>
<td><em>Anna Livia Plura-belle</em> (New York, Crosby Gaige, Oct.)</td>
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<td>publ. in <em>transitions</em>, February</td>
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## Chart 5. From “Work in Progress” to *Finnegans Wake*: chronology of composition

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<th>summer 1929</th>
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<td>I.6 126-168</td>
<td>“The Mookse and the Gripes” [52-159] revised for <em>Tales Told of Shem and Shaun</em> (published in August, Paris, Black Sun Press)</td>
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<td>“The Muddlest Thick That Was Ever Heard Dump” [282-304] revised for <em>Tales...</em></td>
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<td>revised (1st set)</td>
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## Chart 6. From “Work in Progress” to *Finnegans Wake*: chronology of composition

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<td>The Mime of Mick, Nick and the Maggies (the Hague: Servire Press)</td>
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<td>II.2 260-308</td>
<td>revised for <em>transitions</em></td>
<td>260-275 &amp; 304-308 publ. in <em>transitions</em>, July</td>
<td>Storiella as She is Syung [260-275 &amp; 304-308] (London: Corvinus Press)</td>
<td>revisions of the whole for printers; passages from II.3 revised for <em>transitions</em></td>
<td>first half of II.3 revised for printers; 338-55 publ. in <em>transitions</em> in April-May; drafts of closing passages</td>
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<td>spring-summer: tentative drafts autumn: revised drafts</td>
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2 February Joyce receives the first two copies of *FW* for his birth-day (limited edition)

4 May *FW* trade edition published by Faber (UK) and Viking Press (US)
| III.1 403-428 | revised | revised (2nd and 3rd sets) | late corrections to Book III (3rd set) | revisions (galleys, 1st set) | revisions (galleys, 1st set) | late corrections; galley proofs (2nd set) |
| III.2 429-473 |        |                            |                                      |                            |                            |                                      |
| III.3 474-554 |        |                            |                                      |                            |                            |                                      |
| III.4 555-590 |        |                            |                                      |                            |                            |                                      |
| IV 593-628   |        |                            | tentative drafts                    |                            |                            | revisions for printers; late corrections on galleys |
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