Shakespeare and the "Two Masters" In and Around Joyce

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Abstract

In the first chapter of *Ulysses*, Stephen Dedalus makes the claim that he is "a servant of two masters . . . an English and an Italian." These masters are further defined by Stephen as "The imperial British state . . . and the holy Roman catholic and apostolic church" (17). But another master casts a shadow over the works of Joyce: Master William Shakespeare. Shakespeare, as this essay will attempt to prove, is present even when he is ostensibly absent from Joyce's work, with Joyce going so far as to recreate autobiographical events in order to erase Shakespeare's name from them. Just as Joyce's attempt at flying by and overcoming the nets of his masters led him to be an exile in life, so too is his *oeuvre* an attempt to come to terms with Shakespeare, so as to understand his own place in the canon of English literature. Shakespeare's literary achievements, combined with the way his works are appropriated by a literary over-class of "masters," synthesize and crystallize the oppression felt by both Stephen and Joyce. Master Will comes to represent many of the pressures which shaped Joyce's art—pressures which act as a mold for the smithy of the soul in which Joyce was attempting to create the undiscovered conscience of his race.
Shakespeare and the "Two Masters" In and Around Joyce

by

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SHAKESPEARE AND THE "TWO MASTERS" IN AND AROUND JOYCE

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Introduction

In the first chapter of *Ulysses*, Stephen Dedalus makes the claim that he is "a servant of two masters . . . an English and an Italian." These masters are further defined by Stephen as "The imperial British state . . . and the holy Roman catholic and apostolic church" (17). But another master casts a shadow over the works of Joyce: Master Will. Shakespeare, as this essay will attempt to prove, is present even when he is ostensibly absent from Joyce's work, with Joyce going so far as to recreate autobiographical events in order to erase Shakespeare's name from them. Laura Pelaschiar, in her introduction to an edited collection of essays on this subject (*Joyce/Shakespeare*) writes, "Shakespeare's existence in Joyce is tentacular and functions on many different levels . . . in comparison to any other literary bond, Homer included, the Shakespearean one is for Joyce much more complex, extends more widely, and 'feels' less 'controllable'" (vii). In *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, Stephen refers to the nets flung at the soul: "When the soul of a man is born in this country there are nets flung at it to hold it back from flight. You talk to me of nationality, language, religion. I shall try to fly by those nets" (180). The attempt to fly by these nets is precisely what Joyce would document in his work, and just as Joyce's attempt at flying by and overcoming the nets of his masters led him to be an exile in life, so too is his *oeuvre* an attempt to come to terms with Shakespeare, so as to understand his own place in the canon of English literature.

As Vincent Cheng points out, Joyce was "in the habit of equating himself—and comparing himself—with Shakespeare as fellow artist-creators and playwrights who write the folios of their worlds" (History 140). But Joyce's world had already been shaped, at least in part, by Shakespeare's literary achievements and the body of criticism
which the Bard's work continued to elicit. The "Great Shapeshere," as Joyce would refer to him in *Finnegans Wake*, proves to be a locus for all the masters and nets which Joyce claims are thrown at the soul of an Irishman, a personification of these institutions. In fact Joyce would recreate Shakespeare to conflate the English and Italian masters, referring to the Bard as "an Italianized Englishman" (McCourt 78), and giving Master Will God-like qualities in *Ulysses*. Pelaschiar posits that "the forging of the uncreated conscience of his race which Joyce's alter ego, Stephen, indentifies as his spiritual, cultural, and artistic mission at the end of *Portrait* turned out also to have been Shakespeare's own achievement or accomplishment for England, even if he did not seek to realize it in such a programmatic and explicit manner" (ix). Shakespeare's literary achievements, combined with the way his works are appropriated by a literary over-class of "masters," synthesize and crystallize the oppression felt by both Stephen and Joyce. Master Will comes to represent many of the pressures which shaped Joyce's art—pressures which act as a mold for the smithy of the soul in which Joyce was attempting to create the undiscovered conscience of his race.
Portrait: A Palimpsest of Shakespeare

In *The Anxiety of Influence*, Harold Bloom presents poetic creation in terms of parentage, wherein authors find their voices through a re- or mis- interpretation—what he refers to as a "misprision,"—of (presumably greater) historical authors. These canonized authors become de facto father figures to the more current authors. Bloom suggests that "true poetic history is the story of how poets as poets have suffered other poets, just as any true biography is the story of how anyone suffered his own family—or his own displacement of family into lovers and friends" (94). Joyce, an anti-Freudian, would not have found this conception of artistic creation to his liking; moreover, this is not the place that Shakespeare occupies within Joyce's work. Joyce, in *Portrait*, has headed this possibility off at the pass, showing his biological father to be the initial and ubiquitous paternal influence on his writing. Following John Joyce's death, James wrote of his father: "Hundreds of pages and scores of characters in my books came from him ... I got from him his portraits, a waistcoat, a good tenor voice, and an extravagant licentious disposition (out of which, however, the greater part of any talent I may have springs)" (quoted in *JJ* 643). While Harold Bloom's theory posits that all authors are pursuing other, earlier authors to act *in loco parentis*, Joyce, from the outset of *Portrait*, demonstrates his biological father's overwhelming influence on his literature.

*Portrait* opens on a very young Stephen, as his father, Simon Dedalus, tells him a story. This story begins, "Once upon a time and a very good time it was" (3). This opening serves several purposes, locating the progenitor of Stephen's storytelling ability by providing his introduction to storytelling through his father, while also showing Simon Dedalus's own creative tendencies, as he puts a spin on the clichéd "Once upon a time"
fairy-tale opening. It also points to Simon as the fountain from which Stephen's artistic ambitions spring, since the beginning of Simon's story is also the beginning of Stephen's *Portrait*. That Joyce felt similarly about his father's influence on his own work is suggested by Richard Ellmann, who writes of John Joyce, "This reckless, talented man, convinced that he was the victim of circumstances, never at a loss for a retort, fearfully sentimental and acid by turns, drinking, spending, talking, singing, became identified in his son James's mind with something like the life-force itself. His expressions . . . echo in James's books" (22). Further, Ellmann points out that "When John Joyce died in 1931, James told Louis Gilet, 'He never said anything about my books, but he couldn't deny me. The humor of *Ulysses* is his; its people are his friends. The book is his spittin' image'" (22). Indeed, Joyce would return to this theme of paternity in art or the search for a father figure for one's artistic predilections in *Ulysses*. *Portrait* suggests that Stephen's (and Joyce's) creative use of language and storytelling stems from his Irish roots, although his study at school would attempt to refine this humble beginning out of existence.

In *Portrait*, Shakespeare comes to represent not the influence of a father-figure, but the oppression of the English language, a language which Joyce never felt completely comfortable using. To the polyglot Joyce, English was the best language in existence, and yet his Irish heritage also cements his position as a British colonial subject. Richard Ellmann writes that Joyce remarked to a friend, "I'd like a language which is above all languages, a language to which all will do service. I cannot express myself in English without enclosing myself in a tradition" (397). Joyce here reveals his feeling of the oppression of the English language and how English is yet another net detaining him, enclosing him in a tradition. As Ellmann has it, "at a time when others were questioning
the liberties he took with English, Joyce was conscious only of its restraints upon him" (397). Yet Joyce also claimed English as "the most wonderful language in the world" (Ellmann 382). This results in a sort of love/hate relationship with the English language that is similar to Joyce's feelings about Shakespeare. We see Joyce combining language and nationality in this equation, and Shakespeare becomes the site of this conflation.

In the second section of Portrait, we see Stephen turning to the written word in his moments of uncertainty. After an ego-deflating experience with a girl he likes, Stephen sits down to write a poem about his experience; in characteristic Joycean style, this short passage condenses almost all of the themes of A Portrait. Before starting this artistic creation, Stephen writes "A.M.D.G." (73) atop the page, which is translated as, "Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam ('For the Greater Glory of God')" (292). Whether by intention or rote, Stephen begins his creation with religion in mind. Then, while awaiting inspiration, he recalls, "sitting at his table in Bray the morning after the discussion at the Christmas dinnertable, trying to write a poem about Parnell on the back of one of his father's second moiety notices" (73). Stephen remembers that some of his earliest poetic writing occurred after the heated political argument at the dinner table, simultaneously revealing the effect upheaval in Ireland has had on his upbringing, his memory, and his writing. And the residue of political strife surrounding Stephen's memory continues, as he recalls that he was attempting to write a poem about Parnell. Similarly, a poem on Parnell's death was Joyce's first printed piece. Joyce's father felt the death of Parnell, and his presumed betrayal by Timothy Healy keenly, and, as Richard Ellmann points out, "not long after Parnell's death on October 6, 1891, the nine-year-old James Joyce, feeling as angry as his father, wrote a poem denouncing Healy under the title 'Et tu, Healy.' John
Joyce was so pleased with it that he had it printed and distributed it to his friends" (33). Not only is this Joyce's first written work to be printed, it is also, as Ellmann writes, "Joyce's first use of an antique prototype for a modern instance" (33). While it is true that the title of this poem equates Healy and Brutus, it is also worth pointing out that the nine-year-old Joyce is using Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* to set the historical precedent, and that Joyce's first published work used a repurposed Shakespeare quote for its title. We might assume that, having just written the title of this poem, Stephen is recalling the title of this first public work, but Joyce stymies this line of inquiry by having Stephen remember that, while attempting to write about Parnell, "his brain had then refused to grapple with the theme and, desisting, he had covered the page with the names and addresses of certain of his classmates" (73). It appears Stephen is thinking about a failed attempt to write this poem, and so Joyce has buried an allusion to "Et tu, Healy" in *Portrait* under the names and addresses of his classmates.

This is not an isolated incident; Joyce buried other Shakespeare references throughout the novel, giving the lie to Harold Bloom's idea that "the largest truth of literary influence is that it is an irresistible anxiety: Shakespeare will not allow you to bury him, or escape him, or replace him" (*Anxiety* xviii). But Shakespeare will be brought to the foreground from the outset of *Ulysses*, so perhaps Bloom's statement does hold true. *Portrait*, the novel that examines the creation of a young artist, is unable to simultaneously examine the possible shortcomings of the very medium (the English language) in which the artist works, so Joyce must remove Shakespeare for fear the narrative will turn, Ouroboros-like, upon itself. Joyce seems to successfully escape from Shakespeare within the text of *Portrait*, but there are several occasions where Master
Will is (perhaps subconsciously) invoked. In most of these instances it appears that Joyce has allowed other authors to usurp the position of Shakespeare, in order to avoid dealing directly with the overwhelming presence of the Bard. Perhaps Joyce was suffering from the same issue which Bloom pointed out in his preface to the 1997 edition of *Anxiety*, where he attempts to explain the lack of Shakespeare references in the original, 1973 edition: "I excluded Shakespeare from *The Anxiety of Influence* and its immediate sequels because I was not ready to meditate upon Shakespeare and originality" (xiii). Joyce is not yet ready to meditate upon Shakespeare and his own originality either, and so he escapes Shakespeare by either burying or replacing him. In this particular, formative moment, where Joyce shows us his young artist in the act of creation, he has done both.

Stephen claims to title the poem "to E—C—" because "he had seen similar titles in the collected poems of Lord Byron" (63). And in order to further recreate himself in the image of the debonair Byron, Stephen rewrites a moment of defeat as a moment of triumph. Now, "the kiss, which had been withheld by one, was given by both" (74). He then completes his work by writing "L.D.S." (74), which translates as "*Laus Deo Semper* ('Praise to God Always')" (292). In this short moment of artistic creation, sandwiched between religious maxims, against the background of political strife and his family's financial situation, the adolescent Stephen writes a love poem to the object of his desire, and Joyce sums up many of the factors shaping the creation of his art. And just as Joyce shows Stephen using his art to rewrite his experience, so has Joyce rewritten his own story to exclude "Et tu, Healy" by burying it within a redacted memory of *Portrait's* protagonist. The author that Stephen credits with inspiring the title of his current poem is Byron, but the title of Joyce's first poem had come from Shakespeare. It seems that, for
Joyce, Byron is acceptable ground for *Portrait* to cover, while Master Will remains the Unnamed One. Of course, although Byron is a large figure in the canon, he does not represent the English language in the overwhelming way that Shakespeare does for Joyce, making Byron a safer target for his adolescent argument.

Shakespeare's prominent place in the classroom (especially in Joyce's Ireland) almost necessitates that a book focused on the creation of an artist in this period would at least mention the name in passing. But Shakespeare's name is pointedly left out of *Portrait*. In fact, as evidenced above, some of the fictional parts of this "fictional autobiography" feature the removal of seemingly innocuous references to Shakespeare. Maud Ellmann writes that "Joyce's rivalry with Shakespeare goes back at least as far as his schooldays at Belvedere College. Here a brawny classmate, Albrecht Connolly, tried to bully the frail, myopic Joyce into admitting that Shakespeare was the greatest poet. When Joyce refused, Connolly tried to force a concession by twisting his arm and frogmarching him along the footpath" (12). Joyce lifts this incident directly from his life into *Portrait*, but the names have been changed to protect the not-so-innocent: when asked who is the best poet, Stephen replies "Byron, of course" after which "Nash pinioned his arms behind while Boland seized a long cabbage stump which was lying in the gutter . . . [and] Stephen was borne back against a barbed wire fence" with the demand that he "admit that Byron was no good," but Stephen refuses to remit his position (86). Instead of having Stephen suffer abuse due to his denial of Shakespeare, Joyce has inserted a defense of Byron in the retelling. Maud Ellmann posits that "Through this alteration, Joyce portraits his boyhood self as the brave defender of the libertine, rather than the arrogant opponent of the Bard" (12). Whichever conclusions can be drawn from
this double rejection of Shakespeare (first in the actual denial of him by the young Joyce, and then in the mis-retelling of the autobiographical tale) one ought not to forget that James Joyce did deny Shakespeare to the point of tears, but never gave in. We can assume that this early denial had at least some impact on his life. How large that impact was may be impossible to ascertain, but this memory was certainly powerful enough to make its way into Portrait, even if, as with the memory of "Et tu, Healy" it has been altered to erase any Shakespearean references.

Joyce's lack of references to Shakespeare in Portrait may be just like his refusal to rescind his rejection of Shakespeare as a child. It does seem that Joyce goes to painful lengths to keep Shakespeare's name out of Portrait. Perhaps Joyce's substitution of Byron is an attempt to awake from the nightmare of British imperialism and revolt against his own subjugation in some small way. Instead of leaving in a reference to his denial of the most highly-regarded British author in the English canon, Joyce substitutes a defense of Byron, still an English poet, but one with more European sensibilities. Byron is better traveled and less canonical, more liberated and lascivious, and has the added attribute of being born to a Scottish mother. Perhaps Joyce also wanted to avoid an argument of semantics, as one might point out that the biographical information provided by Ellmann requires Joyce to admit that "Shakespeare was the greatest poet," which is not a claim about Shakespeare's skill as a playwright, just as the retelling in Portrait starts with a question of who is the greatest prose writer before moving on to poets. While young Joyce did not give in, Gordon Bowker suggests that perhaps his position on Shakespeare's skill as a poet changed later in life. Bowker writes that when Joyce was
introduced to Ferruccio Busoni, "the composer was unimpressed when Joyce praised Shakespeare as a poet but dismissed him as a dramatist" (252).

Although Joyce never mentions Shakespeare's name, there are two direct quotations from his plays within Portrait. Tellingly, Joyce puts the first one of these quotations in the mouth of the abusive prefect of studies, Father Dolan: "Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow, said the prefect of studies. Make up your minds for that. Every day Father Dolan. Write away. You, boy, who are you?" (50). The boy, of course, is Stephen, whom Dolan now falsely accuses of prevarication. Dolan believes Stephen created a story of how he broke his glasses with the goal of escaping his schoolwork: "Lazy idle little loafer! cried the prefect of studies. Broke my glasses! An old schoolboy trick! Out with your hand this moment!" (51). Stephen complies, and soon after, "a hot burning stinging tingling blow like the loud crack of a broken stick made his trembling hand crumple together like a leaf in the fire: and at the sound and the pain scalding tears were driven into his eyes. . . . But though the tears scalded his eyes and his limbs quivered with pain and fright he held back the hot tears and the cry that scalded his throat" (51). We see the same stubborn resistance which Stephen applies to his defense of Byron, and which Joyce applied to his denial of Shakespeare. And here again we see Shakespeare associated with resistance and physical pain, but, in this instance, Shakespeare's voice has not been totally removed. Father Dolan's "tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow" is a direct quote from Macbeth: "Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow / Creeps in this petty pace from day to day / To the last syllable of recorded time" (5.5.17-20). This quote comes late in the play, following Lady Macbeth's death, and just before Macbeth's own, and is representative of the fact that Macbeth's
understanding of ordinal time has lost specificity. Presumably without recognizing this, the abusive Father Dolan uses this line as a threat of imminent physical abuse. Moreover, the Father Dolan episode from Portrait represents a formative moment of Stephen's childhood where Shakespeare is used by a physically and mentally abusive oppressor whom he tries to resist. The presence of Shakespeare in Portrait—whether latent or blatant—is concomitant with pain and denial for Stephen, and one may assume by extension, Joyce. It appears that Shakespeare and Shakespeare's use of the English language, has become something that Stephen and Joyce must painfully resist.

Shakespeare also plays a role in the scene that is most telling of Stephen's discomfort with confronting the English language. Stephen's discussion of the nature of artistic creation with the Dean of studies of Belvedere College centers on Stephen's theory of esthetics, which Stephen sidesteps by pointing out the difficulty of knowing "whether words are being used according to the literary tradition or according to the tradition of the marketplace. I remember a sentence of Newman's in which he says of the Blessed Virgin that she was detained in the full company of the saints. The use of the word in the marketplace is quite different. I hope I am not detaining you" (203). As Michael Tratner writes, "In Portrait, Stephen says that avoiding literary prostitution involves using language according to the 'literary tradition' rather than the 'tradition of the marketplace.' But the distinction of the two traditions is presented in the text in terms of two meanings of 'detained' that get confused" (66). He goes on to posit that "This question is equally a question about Stephen: can he use language so as to remain in the company of the saints, preserving a literary virginity, in any way except restraining his speech? Joyce did not think so, and showed Stephen trying to avoid becoming a literary
prostitute by simply holding back his 'divine afflatus,' his inspiration, his breath, which eventually results in his being unable to speak his literature at all" (66). This search for a literary definition of the word "detain," and its implication for the legitimacy of Stephen's writing, quickly turns into a moment where Stephen himself is "detained" by his use of the English language.

This is an instance where Stephen is reminded that the English language is not his own, regardless of marketplace or literary traditions. When Stephen uses the word tundish instead of funnel, the English dean inquires, "what is a tundish?" (204). Stephen explains that it is another word for funnel: "Is that called a tundish in Ireland? asked the dean. I never heard the word in my life." With this comment, the dean, "a humble follower in the wake of clamorous conversions, a poor Englishman in Ireland," has struck at the heart of Stephen's issues with the use of the English language: "the little word seemed to have turned a rapier point of his [Stephen's] sensitiveness against this courteous and vigilant foe. He felt with a smart of dejection that the man to whom he was speaking was a countryman of Ben Jonson" (204-5). When reaching for a literary figure to represent the dean's British countryman as well as the influence of the English language on Stephen, Joyce points to Ben Jonson. But Shakespeare may not be as absent from this scene as his lack of being named would suggest. Maud Ellmann speculates that "Joyce may have known that the word tundish appears, with an obscene innuendo, in Shakespeare's Measure for Measure, where Lucio jokes that Claudio has been condemned to death 'For filling a bottle with a tun-dish'" (14). And yet Joyce shows Stephen associating Ben Jonson with the "tundish" that detains him and his esthetic theory. But one can almost see the palimpsest, the erased name of Shakespeare still
pressed into the paper beneath Ben Jonson's. This is another case in Portrait where it seems Shakespeare has been usurped and replaced by another writer.

This exchange with the dean, which Stephen feels is an affront to his understanding of the English language, is punctuated by the war imagery that frequently accompanies imperialism. So the word "tundish" becomes a weapon, a "rapier point" and the dean of students becomes an enemy, "a courteous and vigilant foe." This is the war waged by the artist as a young man, a struggle to re-appropriate the English language in order to be able to create his own art with it. Similarly, Joyce uses the terms of conflict, detainment, restraint, and enclosure to describe his own use of the English language. Richard Ellmann writes that, when asked if there were enough words in the English language for him, Joyce replied, "there are enough, but they aren't the right ones. . . . For example, take the word battlefield. A battlefield is a field where the battle is raging. When the battle is over and the field is covered with blood, it is no longer a battlefield, but a bloodfield" (397). Joyce's example of "battlefield" may point to his assault on the boundaries of the English language (which would reach its apex in Finnegans Wake), much as the "rapier point" of tundish imposes those same boundaries upon Stephen.

Stephen's use of the word "tundish," coming as it does during a discussion of the creation of art, reveals that Stephen is sensitive to the fact that he wants to work within a language that is not his own. He thinks about his exclusion from English while still speaking with the dean: "The language in which we are speaking is his before it is mine. How different are the words home, Christ, ale, master, on his lips and on mine! I cannot speak or write these words without unrest of spirit. His language, so familiar and so foreign, will always be for me an acquired speech. I have not made or accepted its words.
My voice holds them at bay. My soul frets in the shadow of his language" (205). With the previous allusion to the tundish, this whole situation, even though it is stripped of Shakespeare's name, may very well be a veiled reference to him. In this way, the "he" here of "his language" could be taken to refer to Shakespeare, the man who remains refined out of existence from the discussion of the rapier-pointed tundish, paring his fingernails. The words which Stephen chooses to compare with the English language of the dean are significant as the British masters and the Roman Catholic Church of Christ are what prove to have such a profound influence on Stephen's home and his art.

It is clear that the issue of the word tundish, or rather the subjugation and oppression of Stephen by the English language which his use of this word comes to represent, remains in Stephen's head. In the final section of Portrait, Stephen writes in his journal: "That tundish has been on my mind for a long time. I looked it up and find it English and good old blunt English too. Damn the dean of studies and his funnel! What did he come here for to teach us his own language or to learn it from us? Damn him one way or the other!" (274). Since Stephen claims to have looked it up, I felt it necessary to do so myself. The Oxford English Dictionary (OED) defines tundish as "A wooden dish or shallow vessel with a tube at the bottom fitting into the bung-hole of a tun or cask, forming a kind of funnel used in brewing (now local)" ("tundish"). The third entry on the OED quotation list is, in fact, from Shakespeare's Measure for Measure, dated 1616, but the OED provides a more recent use of the word, occurring in Joyce's own lifetime. In W.W. Greener's 1892 work, The Breech-loader, and How to Use It, Greener writes, "The shot must be poured in through a tundish, and preferably counted with the 'Greener Shot Counter', or weighted to measure" ("tundish"). It is interesting that the OED quotes this
word in Joyce's time as coming from a manual on how to use a gun properly, written by the co-owner of the W.W. Greener Company, a shotgun and rifle manufacturer in England that is still in existence today. This is another connection between the English word "tundish" and weaponry, just as the episode in Portrait connects the word to vigilant foes and rapier points. Joyce's sense of the militant use of the English language might have also caused Joyce to rely on the example of battlefields and bloodfields (above) to illustrate what he feels are the inadequacies of the language. There is a similar connection in Ulysses, where Stephen again associates Shakespeare's writing with British military action. As an example of this, John Gordon points to Stephen's remark that "this ['k]haki' Hamlet does not 'hesitate to shoot,'" saying, "On the contrary. The point in comparing Hamlet to Kipling's British soldiers of the Boer War is that those soldiers were, especially when doubtful, notoriously all too ready to shoot first and ask questions later" (514-5). The tundish, or funnel, also may forecast the prolonged discussion of Shakespeare in Ulysses, as the titular "Charybdis" of the "Scylla and Charybdis" chapter is indeed a whirlpool—a large, swirling funnel of water. One would think that with its prolonged discussion of the word "tundish," Portrait would also be included in OED's list of quotations, although the nature of Stephen's discussion may not be conducive to dictionary use.

That Joyce (and Stephen) are working within the English language but never quite feel at home while doing so is continuously illustrated in Portrait. When his nationalist friend Davin asks, "Why don't you learn Irish? Why did you drop out of the league class after the first lesson?" Stephen replies: "My ancestors threw off their language and took another . . . They allowed a handful of foreigners to subject them. Do you fancy I am
going to pay in my own life and person debts they made? What for?" Maud Ellman writes of this exchange, "For Stephen, English will always be an 'acquired speech', and every word he speaks or writes entails his exile from the home-grown tongue of Ireland. (13). The fact that Joyce is working with a speech acquired from the imperialist British, a language whose leading representative is Shakespeare, is always lingering in the background of Portrait. Maud Ellmann goes on to suggest a link between Stephen's refusal to learn the Irish language and Joyce's own refusal to participate in the resurgence of the language: "Joyce himself briefly attended Irish language classes, taught by no lesser nationalist than Padraic Pearse." But Joyce walked out "when Pearse claimed that the Irish word for thunder was superior to the English; thunder happened to be Joyce's favorite word, as well as his most flaunted phobia. Asked in Paris why he was afraid of thunder when his children were not, Joyce replied, 'Ah, they have no religion'" (13-14). Here we see an episode from Joyce's life that features a conflation—one of many—of British oppression, language, religion, and fear.

Shakespeare comes to represent many of these nets, as his presence in British consciousness informs nationality, and later, in Ulysses, Stephen's conflation makes Shakespeare a stand-in for the creator-God of religion: "the playwright who wrote the folio of the world" (U 175). But here in Portrait, we see Joyce's refusal to address Shakespeare directly, and I believe this is because the canvas of Portrait is not large enough to contain both Stephen and Shakespeare simultaneously. Harold Bloom points to the difficulty of avoiding the net of Shakespeare, using the same language of enclosure that Joyce invoked in his complaint about the English language, stating that Joyce: "acknowledge[s] the contingency that Shakespeare imposes upon us, which is that we are
so influenced by him that we cannot get outside of him. Criticism necessarily fails when it deludes itself into the smugness of not seeing that we remain enclosed by Shakespeare. The only instruments by which we can examine him were either invented or perfected by Shakespeare himself" (Anxiety xxvii). The issue here is similar to Audre Lorde's famous maxim, "the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house" (113). Joyce wishes to avoid this impossibility in Portrait, as the young artist does not yet have the tools to get outside of Shakespeare. Perhaps this is why Joyce puts a well-known paradox in the final section, where it will be directly associated with the only instance of Stephen's directly quoting Shakespeare in the whole of Portrait.

This paradox is presented second-hand, and through the meta-narration of Stephen's own diary: "30 March: This evening Cranly was . . . proposing a problem . . . A mother let her child fall into the Nile. Still harping on the mother. A crocodile seized the child. Mother asked it back. Crocodile said all right if she told him what he was going to do with the child, eat it or not eat it. This mentality, Lepidus would say, is indeed bred out of your mud by the operation of your sun. And mine? Is it not too? Then into Nilemud with it" (272). Cranly is playing with the paradox known as the "crocodile dilemma," but Stephen ignores the philosophical argument and relates the well-known paradox back to Shakespeare before it has even begun. Stephen's aside of "Still harping on the mother" recalls Polonius, also in an aside: "How say you by that? Still harping on my daughter" (2.2.187). The end of the paradox is again associated with Shakespeare by Stephen. Lepidus, in Antony and Cleopatra, says, "Your serpent of Egypt is bred now of your mud by the operation of your sun. So is your crocodile" (2.7.25-26). The only thing that seems notable about these particular quotes is how esoteric they are, thereby
suggesting Stephen's ingrained knowledge of Shakespeare. This is not surprising; we have seen Stephen's references to voracious reading and his fantastic memory in action throughout the novel; what is more notable is that Joyce places them within Cranly's paradox. Joyce is aware that, in order to deal with Shakespeare, Stephen needs sufficient time to digest the bard and ruminate, hence the repeated return of his Shakespeare theory in *Ulysses*. This direct invocation of Shakespeare seems to take a lot out of the young artist. Stephen's March 30 entry is followed by a day with no entry at all, and then a single sentence entry which rescinds the previous one: "1 April: Disapprove of this last phrase." (272). Perhaps the last entry's reference to the words of Shakespeare have caused Stephen to again doubt his ability with the English language, as the tundish episode had previously, but either way his writing has been detained. The next two entries are still harping on Lepidus's crocodile: "2 April: Saw her . . . Cranly was invited there by brother. Did he bring his crocodile?" and "3 April: Met Davin . . . Just then my father came up . . . Wants me to read law. Says I was cut out for that. More mud, more crocodiles" (272-3). So Stephen has spent at least five days thinking about his direct invocation of Shakespeare. This Shakespearean frame of mind continues in *Ulysses*, where Stephen and Joyce present a theory of Shakespeare that repurposes the master's tools for their own needs.
Ulysses: Enter the Theory

By the outset of Ulysses, Joyce is ready to take on Shakespeare. In the opening scene atop the tower, after holding the mirror up to nature, Mulligan calls Stephen a "dreadful bard" and suggests he possesses "the rage of Caliban," presumably at "not seeing his own face in a glass" (Wilde 1), before continuing his mock Roman Catholic Mass (6). These Shakespearean allusions directly follow the first few pages of Ulysses, which concern themselves almost exclusively with Mulligan's mock Mass. It is as if Joyce has decided to tackle the struggle for Stephen's identity on these very first pages. That Mulligan, who will later be seen speaking of Edward Dowden's theories, is insisting on Stephen's being Caliban is significant for another reason. Mulligan is presumably aware of the claims Dowden has made concerning Caliban's role in The Tempest, which also conflate religion, Irish national identity, and Shakespeare's God-like creation of drama. Dowden's interpretation of the play serves as an example of how Shakespeare can be leveraged by critics to reinforce long-standing Irish stereotypes that have been perpetrated by the colonizing British forces. Nathan Wallace writes of Dowden's theory of The Tempest, "Dowden transfers the sacramental authority of reconciliation to Prospero/Shakespeare, an artist god in the world of his own artwork. Through this transfer of Prospero's, imperial domination becomes divinely authoritative, and Caliban's colonial resistance, which goes unforgiven, becomes a Satanic rebellion—the chaos of Irish Nationalism" (805-6). While Mulligan is aware that Stephen does not fit in with either the nationalists or the unionists, he also knows that Stephen's theory of Hamlet goes against Dowden's biography of Shakespeare, a biography that "generations of students were taught from . . . which has influenced the narrative arc followed by
Shakespeare anthologies even to the present time" (Wallace 802). In fact, Stephen's very existence as an "Irish bard" goes against Dowden's opinion that "I can't . . . believe that Ireland will produce such a thing or anything but long-earred asses" (quoted in Maud Ellman 28). While it can be tempting to pin these sentiments on a rogue, self-loathing Dowden, Wallace goes on to point out that Dowden "was not alone in his interpretation of Caliban as Irish, as Republican, or as anticolonial. The Victorian Caliban was frequently associated in political caricature with the Irish Nationalist, and both of these types were in turn associated with African slaves and revolutionary Republicans" (807).

While Mulligan's reference to Stephen as Caliban certainly calls up echoes of Dowden's conception of the status of Irish intellectuals and poets, it is inaccurate in its portrayal of Stephen as a member of any movement. Stephen will remain an exile throughout Ulysses, as exemplified by the dialogue in the National Library scene of "Scylla and Charybdis," where Stephen will be summarily dismissed by his literary compatriots.

Much as he had in Portrait, in Ulysses, Joyce shows that the position that the Irish people occupy almost necessitates choosing a side in an attempt to define one's self and Irish culture in general. Stephen continues to attempt to fly by all of these nets, but his declaration, in Portrait, of "Non serviam: I will not serve" (103) is tested from the very outset of the novel. Unlike Portrait, wherein Stephen's declarative non serviam results in his self-imposed exile from Ireland, in Ulysses Joyce is ready to make his semi-autobiographical protagonist confront his masters while he is still in Ireland. Joyce is finally ready to allow Master Will's presence into his work in a direct way, but, much as in Shakespeare's first appearance in Portrait, Joyce places his first Shakespearean references in the mouth of repugnant characters. It is Buck Mulligan who holds the
mirror up to nature (although it is Stephen who wears the nighted color). Allowing Mulligan to introduce Shakespeare to the novel is a tactical decision for Joyce, one that shows Shakespeare being used by his Irish countrymen (like Dowden) to betray themselves and their fellow citizens. So Shakespeare is introduced by Mulligan, whom Joyce depicts as a schemer, a "gay betrayer," "a usurper"—less like Hamlet and more like Claudius. And Mulligan's dialogue following his Caliban reference reveals his Claudius-like nature: "And what is death, he asked, your mother's or yours or my own? You saw only your mother die. I see them pop off every day in the Mater and Richmond and cut up into tripes in the dissectingroom. It's a beastly thing and nothing else. It simply doesn't matter" (7). This recalls Claudius' speech in Hamlet, where he tells his nephew that it is commendable "To give these mourning duties to your father; / But you must know your father lost a father; / That father lost, lost his" (1.2.88-90). Mulligan goes on to ape Claudius's question on the validity of mourning, "Why should we in our peevish opposition / Take it to heart?" (1.2.100-01), stating that the death of Stephen's mother "simply doesn't matter." Of course Stephen, like Hamlet, will not cast his nighted color off—he will continue to mourn. This parallel between Mulligan and Claudius comes to a head at the end of chapter one, where Stephen labels Mulligan a "usurper," just as Claudius is a usurper in Hamlet.

It is this same Shakespeare-introducing usurper who introduces Stephen's theory of Hamlet. In keeping with his character, he only mentions this theory to Haines as a means to an end. Back inside the Martello tower, Stephen tells Mulligan that "the problem is to get money. From whom? From the milkwoman or from him [Haines]? It's a toss up, I think" (14). The milkwoman has come to represent Ireland in Stephen's
thoughts, "Silk of the kine and poor old woman, names given to her in old times. A wandering crone, lowly form of an immortal serving her conqueror and her gay betrayer" (12), and Haines represents England, "her conqueror," leaving Mulligan as "her gay betrayer." Stephen feels that neither the English nor the Irish will accept or support his thoughts and writings. This all occurs in the context of their breakfast, three fried eggs which Mulligan cuts up for the three of them. Joyce writes, "He hacked through the fry on the dish and slapped it out on three plates, saying: --In nomine Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti" (11). Thus continuing his mock mass of the first few pages, Mulligan now dissects this trinity of eggs and serves it out amongst his roommates. While Haines is there to study all of these various influences on Irish culture, and Mulligan is able to make a mockery of all of the nets Stephen feels have been cast at him, it is Stephen who is left in isolation. He alone feels the oppressive encroachment of these various forces upon him.

As in many passages in Joyce, below the surface of the action in the opening of *Ulysses* is the presence of the three largest nets which are cast at Stephen's (and Joyce's) soul—the Irish nationalist movement, British imperialism, and the Roman Catholic Church. This is Joyce making use of the forces he feels shaping his life and his literature. Joyce seems to recognize that if he leaves these forces out, it would lead to the same latent presence I have suggested Shakespeare has in *Portrait*. Stephen's question of which master will pay him leads Mulligan to answer, "Why don't you play them as I do" (14). Possibly this is the advice Joyce ultimately follows, as neither Ireland nor England received *Ulysses* as they should have, and it was published only in France. The "them" that should be played, for Mulligan, includes even Stephen himself, as we see by the end
of this chapter. And Mulligan takes his own advice a short while later, as he tells Haines that the rent is twelve quid, which Don Gifford, in *Ulysses Annotated*, points out was really only eight. This way, if Haines pays what he believes to be half of the rent, he would actually be paying three-quarters. Being Ireland's gay betrayer appears to be quite profitable business indeed. Mulligan is going to take Stephen's key and Stephen won't be returning to the tower, and Mulligan will now only have to pay one-quarter of the rent, even after losing a fellow tenant. Later, when Haines admits his curiosity about Stephen's theory, Mulligan tries to charge him a few pints before he can hear it from Stephen. It seems it is the gay betrayer, the usurper, who can actually make a profit from Stephen's ideas, while Stephen himself ends up furthering Mulligan's means by leaving him the key to the tower, providing him with a historical Irish home base from which he can continue to profitably play them.

Because Mulligan has piqued Haines' curiosity, he advertises Stephen's theory further with the seemingly outrageous claim that "He proves by algebra that Hamlet's grandson is Shakespeare's grandfather and that he himself is the ghost of his own father" (15). There is some logic to this statement, but mostly it seems that Mulligan is playing Haines by using the overblown rhetoric commonly reserved for advertisements and book abstracts. Here, in Mulligan's explanation, pronoun signifiers seem to slip a bit. Later in the book, Joyce explains unclear identifiers parenthetically—e.g. "He (Bloom)," (571)—and other times, during Molly's soliloquy in the "Penelope" episode for example, he abandons them entirely. Thus it is safe to assume that Joyce purposely chooses to leave Mulligan's statement vague, and why not? It is more enticing that way. It requires of Mulligan's listener a bit of the detective work which is required of the reader of *Ulysses*. 

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When asked why he wrote *Ulysses* the way he did, Joyce's answer was "To keep the critics busy for three hundred years" (quoted in *JJ* 703). That Mulligan's claim needs clarification is evidenced by Haines' reaction, as he points to Stephen and inquires, "What? He himself?" (15) jokingly implying that Stephen's theory might actually be foolish and that Stephen, the Irish poet, might be self-aggrandizing to the point of considering himself as the figurehead of one of Shakespeare's greatest tragedies.

Mulligan's claim that Stephen "proves [it] by algebra" also implies some method and certainty to Stephen's theory, which, while certainly methodical, is in actuality based on the notoriously hypothetical biographical information available on Shakespeare. This scene speaks to the ability of this gay betrayer to profitably "play them," that is, both the English Haines and the Irish Stephen, while he also chuckles at the doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church. With this Joyce would seem to suggest an alternate path to flying by the nets cast at the soul: betrayal. Simultaneously, he shows that it takes a character possessed of no conscience to commit to this position of betrayal, and indeed, Joyce's goal is to create a conscience for his race. Just as Joyce's first work, "Et tu, Healy," had been about Parnell's betrayal, Joyce's later writing remains somewhat obsessive in its attacks on just such gay betrayers.

Haines, taking all this in, is not even sure he can quote *Hamlet* correctly. He tells Stephen that "this tower and these cliffs here remind me somehow of Elsinore. *That beetles o'er his base into the sea,* is it?" (15). It is; it is also interesting that the Irish Stephen knows *Hamlet* better than Shakespeare's own countryman. His knowledge of Shakespeare aside, Haines does, even from Mulligan's faulty summation of Stephen's theory, glean the underlying issue: "I read a theological interpretation of it somewhere, he
said bemused. The Father and Son idea. The Son striving to be atoned with the Father” (16). Now the pronouns have become proper, and it is obvious that Haines has changed even this short summation of Stephen’s theory to suit his own sensibilities. Stephen’s search for a resolution to the problem stated at the outset ("to get money. From whom?") has led to his theory of Shakespeare being hyperbolically advertised by the gay betrayer in order to profit from it himself, and now the theory is being reformed by Haines, the Englishman who is not even sure he can quote Shakespeare correctly. The fact that Haines feels he can sum up Stephen’s point without even actually hearing the theory from Stephen himself speaks to the power that the English feel they have over Irish intellectuals. He takes Stephen’s idea and brings it more in line with something he has read somewhere. And here again is the conflation and comingling of Stephen’s "two masters," as the English Haines points out the theological overtones in Stephen’s theory of "Saxon Shakespeare's Hamlet."

This combining of Shakespeare and the Roman Catholic Church becomes explicit in *Ulysses* when Stephen refers to "the playwright who wrote the folio of this world and wrote it badly" (175). In his book *The Western Canon*, Harold Bloom sums up how this passage represents another conflation of Stephen’s two masters. Bloom writes that "There are two playwrights, the Catholic God and Shakespeare, both of them gods; but Shakespeare's prophet, Hamlet, foretells Joyce's vision of 'glorified man, an androgynous angel, being a wife unto himself,' a vision incarnated in both Shakespeare and poor poldy [Leopold Bloom]" (421). This begins to showcase the layers of Joyce's use of Shakespeare, who Harold Bloom claims is the "Holy Ghost" behind *Ulysses*, and this conflation of characters is a Shakespearean convention in itself, i.e. as Bloom can
represent part of Joyce's own personality and also part of Shakespeare's, so Hamlet Sr.'s Ghost is at once Hamlet's father and "Denmark." Joyce makes use of these layers; as evidenced in Stephen's conflation of God the father and Shakespeare and also Bloom the father and Shakespeare. Stuart Gilbert writes of Stephen's theory of Hamlet, "The mystery of paternity, in its application to the First and Second persons of the Trinity, to King Hamlet and the Prince, and, by implication, to the curious symbiosis of Stephen and Mr Bloom, is ever in the background of Stephen's Shakespearian exegesis. . . . God (Father and Son)—Shakespeare—Stephen Dedalus: all are vehicles of a like energy. And the artist himself, creator of the sage of Dublin, the Viking city, is by a subtle cross-allusion drawn into the net" (221). I would further assert that this focus on paternity is another way to represent the effect of the two masters upon Stephen and, by implication, on Joyce's literary work. From this point of view, Gilbert's use of the "drawn into the net" metaphor is salient. Paternity, for Stephen, is another net, and Shakespeare, in Ulysses, comes to represent all of the nets which Stephen lists in Portrait. Master Will is not only the most respected creator of language; he is also, through his very creation, conflated with God and with British national identity, which in turn, through colonialism (and Ireland's resistance of the same) defines Irish identity. Thus Shakespeare becomes a locus for the nets flung at the soul as well as providing another aspect of the paternity question of being founded "upon the void." When Stephen's theory is unveiled, Shakespeare, in Haines's estimation, becomes a stand-in for the paternal creator God as well as the creator of the literature which best represents the height of English culture.

Haines's position as an Englishman visiting Ireland to study Irish culture gives his opinion of the state of affairs in Ireland (what language they should speak, interest in
their presumably quaint theories of one of the leading representatives of the English literary canon) a certain hue. Haines believes he is speaking for the Irish people, a people whose voice has been lost through oppression/suppression by his own British countrymen. Haines's desire to speak for these Irish Others is similar to Emer Nolan's issue with any attempt to speak for a voiceless subaltern population, even Joyce for the Irish: "If Ulysses accords with the paradigm of subaltern history, it already illustrates the irony of such a history—in announcing that articulation has been denied to some, we necessarily articulate their case on their behalf. This is the difference between writing about subalternity (criticism) and being subaltern" (90). Haines's position in Ulysses allows him to play both of these roles; he can move within the circles of the subaltern without relinquishing his superiority. He has an affinity for the Irish, pointing out that he can "quite understand" Stephen's feeling of subjugation, and is rather apologetic about the whole matter. He then takes it upon himself to speak for the whole of his homeland, claiming, "We feel in England that we have treated you rather unfairly. It seems history is to blame" (17); but history, for Stephen, "is a nightmare from which I am trying to awake" (28). Haines thus becomes a kind of Guildenstern to Stephen's Hamlet, misunderstanding that Ireland is as much a prison to Stephen as Denmark was to Hamlet. And indeed, it is the nightmare of history that makes it so, just as Hamlet claims to Guildenstern, "I could be bounded in a nutshell and count myself a king of infinite space, were it not that I have bad dreams" (2.2.248-50).

"Shakespeare is the happy huntingground of all minds that have lost their balance." This is Haines's response when Mulligan tells him he "missed Dedalus on Hamlet" (204). Haines, the Englishman in Ireland to study Irish culture, is at least
ostensibly interested in hearing Stephen's theory of one of the most influential British literary figures to ever work with the English language. This scene opens with Buck Mulligan pointing out John Howard Parnell to Haines: "Parnell's brother. There in the corner," and their discussion of Stephen's Shakespeare theory takes place in the same room where he sits, playing chess: "John Howard Parnell translated a white bishop quietly and his grey claw went up again to his forehead whereat it rested" (204). Joyce opens this scene with a depiction of the brother of Parnell considering strategies, and moving the most religiously symbolic piece on the chess board. This is no accident, as Mulligan and Haines's discussion of Stephen will revolve around these two issues.

Mulligan points out that the Jesuits "drove his [Stephen's] wits astray . . . by visions of hell" and Haines responds that Stephen "can find no trace of hell in ancient Irish myth . . . amid the cheerful cups. The moral idea seems lacking, the sense of destiny, of retribution" (204). The British brought Hamlet; the church brought hell. Neither of these are Irish traditions or writings, but Stephen has spent a lot of time and energy theorizing about both.

Haines occupies the center of this scene that is bookended by symbols of both the Irish nationalist movement and religion; and, in this way, he is a stand-in for the influence of the colonizing British forces. Furthermore, Haines represents the reception that Stephen's Shakespeare theory (and, by extension, his writings, critical or creative) will elicit in Britain. As Vincent Cheng writes, "As a tourist coming from the center of empire, Haines in Ulysses reflects one discourse—that of the colonizer—that fashions Irish character and identity as one of 'otherness'—in that process of racialized 'othering' so familiar now to scholars of colonial and imperial discourses. The Irish were depicted
as ineradicably 'other' from the English, defined through their difference, their very alterity" (Authenticity 242). Joyce gives Haines the final words of this short scene. As the "The lord lieutenant general and general governor of Ireland" rides through the streets outside, and "Elijah, skiff, light crumpled throwaway, sailed eastward by flanks of ships and trawlers," Haines (un)ironically wonders whether he is getting the authentic Irish experience: "He tasted a spoonful from the creamy cone of his cup. -This is real Irish cream I take it, he said with forbearance. I don't want to be imposed on" (203-4). Haines is forbearing the possibility that the Irish are trying to fake their culture in his presence. Haines expects the real Irish experience, and this is in line with the non sequitur from the middle of this scene, where "the onelegged sailor growled at the area of 14 Nelson street: -England expects" (204). Part of what England expects from the Irish is a sort of provincial hominess that does not allow a place for intelligent criticism or artistic creation.

The repeated return to the idée fixe of Stephen's Shakespeare theory suggests that, for both Stephen and Joyce, part of awaking from history is dealing with the canonized position of Shakespeare. In the "Scylla and Charybdis" chapter of Ulysses, John Eglinton points out that the "young Irish bards" are not on the same level as "Saxon Shakespeare" (152), and although this is a completely subjective opinion, the respectability of Eglinton and the other Irish revivalists assembled at the National Library make this remark quite cutting to Stephen. But here we begin to see evidence of Stephen's struggle to theorize and attempt to circumnavigate Shakespeare's enormous stature in the field of literature. Stephen is finally able to give voice to his Hamlet theory. John Gordon writes of Stephen's creative use of Shakespeare to form this theory: "These are acts not just of
quoting or alluding but of appropriation. As such, they typify Stephen's overall performance, whose annexations occur on multiple levels" (506). Stephen appropriates the language of Shakespeare in an attempt to take back what has been lost to world literature through generations of British oppression. Through Joyce's presentation of Stephen's struggle, we are able to perceive some of his own issues with the overshadowing nature of Shakespeare's presence in the English canon. In this way, the presence or absence of Shakespeare within Joyce's work seems to speak volumes. Although these thoughts have been gathering for quite some time in Stephen's (and Joyce's) mind, Shakespeare only gets mentioned in passing in *Dubliners*, is conspicuously absent from *Portrait*, and is finally given a prominent place in *Ulysses*, where he comes to represent both of the "two masters" which Stephen claims to serve.

Later in *Ulysses*, Shakespeare is connected with Stephen and Leopold Bloom in the mirror of the brothel with cuckold horns on his head. Gilbert writes that "it is significant, in view of the 'confusion of persons' hinted at in the episode of *Scylla and Charybdis*, that Stephen and Bloom, looking together into the glass, should see the face of Shakespeare there" (337). This "confusion of persons" also occurs in the shifting pronouns of Mulligan's first pronouncement of Stephen's *Hamlet* theory, and takes the form of a Shakespeare/Bloom connection throughout *Ulysses*. Maud Ellmann writes about the similarities between Bloom and Shakespeare: "both were seduced *en plein air* by savvy temptresses, Bloom by Molly on the Hill of Howth, and Shakespeare by Ann in a cornfield (or a ryefield). Ann betrayed Shakespeare with his brothers [in Stephen's theory], while Molly betrays Bloom with the virile Blazes Boylan, as well as with dozens of imagined lovers" (29). Thus Shakespeare comes to occupy a paternal position for
Stephen through Bloom, as Bloom is a sort of stand-in father who is conflated with Shakespeare. The connection to Shakespeare through cuckoldling is also significant. Ellmann writes that "Joyce sought to be betrayed in order to jumpstart his genius." She goes on to point out that Joyce's wife "told Frank Budgen in 1918, 'Jim wants me to go with other men so that he will have something to write about'"(30); and that Joyce "repeatedly conjures up French triangles, consisting of a passive husband (Bloom/Shakespeare/Gabriel) who competes yet also colludes with a virile rival (Boylan/Richard-Edmund Shakespeare/Michael Furey) for the favors of an amorous woman (Molly/Ann Hathaway/Greta)" (30). This would seem to suggest that Joyce felt that being sexually betrayed was a common trait of literary geniuses.

The theme of the cuckolded husband also plays into the paternity founded "upon the void" theme; having multiple sexual partners can lead to questions of who is the real biological father. Linda Charnes writes of this issue in *Hamlet*: "Hamlet's paternity is a question raised in many ways throughout the play.... It is less interesting to try to make a case for Claudius's paternity than to say that the space created by the doubt is filled with a series of paternity tests in which both the nature and culture of the ties between fathers and sons are strained to the limits of credibility" (199). Much as *Portrait* begins with Simon Dedalus's story, Stephen's theory, as put forth in the "Scylla and Charybdis" episode of *Ulysses*, also begins with paternity. Stephen points out Hamlet Sr.'s reputation as a soldier: "Not for nothing was he a butcher's son, wielding the sledded poleaxe and spitting in his palms. Nine lives are taken off for his father's one. Our father who art in purgatory" (154). Stephen's quote, which begins his theory of *Hamlet*, is notable because it is incorrect. Stephen, whose literary memory seems flawless, claims that "Nine lives
are taken off for his father's one," but only eight people are dead at the end of the play, not nine. Stephen himself, two pages later, points out that "a man of genius makes no mistakes. His errors are volitional and are the portals of discovery" (156). This leaves readers to consider the error made just a few paragraphs earlier, and wonder what portal of discovery may be found therein. Maud Ellmann suggests that "perhaps the ninth life is that of Shakespeare, since the play makes a 'ghost of absence' of its author" (22). I would suggest that this "ghost of absence" is not limited to Shakespeare's presence in *Hamlet.*

As evinced in the examples from *Portrait* above, it can just as easily be applied to Shakespeare's presence—or, more correctly, his absence, from Joyce's work. As Stephen claims in *Portrait,* "The artist, like the God of creation, remains within or behind or beyond or above his handiwork, invisible, refined out of existence, indifferent, paring his fingernails" (191). If one were to replace "The artist" with "Shakespeare" and "his handiwork" with "my handiwork" this quote might elucidate some of the underlying anxiety Joyce felt in having to create a body of literature in the shadow of Shakespeare: Shakespeare, like the God of creation, remains within or behind or beyond or above my handiwork, invisible, refined out of existence. . . In this way, Joyce's prominent presence in *Portrait* may be part of the reason that the novel makes a "ghost of absence" of Shakespeare, leaving him "refined out of existence." It seems that Joyce, while writing *Portrait,* was not ready to confront the overwhelming reputation of Shakespeare or the influence that Master Will's work may have had on his own. Instead, Joyce saves this discussion for *Ulysses,* where significant space is afforded Shakespeare.

As Stephen continues his theory in "Scylla and Charybdis," he questions, "What is a ghost . . . Who is King Hamlet?" and compares the distance Shakespeare traveled from
Stratford to London with his own trip from "virgin Dublin" to "corrupt Paris" (154). Then, in a scene parallel to Leopold Bloom's earlier stopping to feed bread to seagulls, Stephen paints a scene of Shakespeare as he leaves "the huguenot's house in Silver street and walks by the swanmews along the riverbank. But he does not stay to feed the pen chivying her game of cygnets towards the rushes. The swan of Avon has other thoughts" (154-55). But Bloom, in the earlier scene, does stop to feed the birds, and thinks, "They never expected that. Manna. Live on fish, fishy flesh they have, all seabirds, gulls, seagoose. Swans from Anna Liffey swim down here sometimes to preen themselves. No accounting for tastes. Wonder what kind is swanmeat" (126). This line of thought recalls the quasi-religious maxim "neither fish, nor flesh, nor good red herring" and is possibly a subtle allusion to eating Shakespeare—the swan of Avon—which is the metaphor Maud Ellmann makes use of to expound Joyce's relationship with Shakespeare. She writes that "Joyce's answer is to swallow Shakespeare's life and works into his own omnivorous prose. If you can't beat him, eat him" (10). Joyce also provides us with another parallel between Bloom and Shakespeare. Harold Bloom writes that Leopold Bloom "does seem to be Joyce's version, not of any Shakespearean character, but of the ghostly Shakespeare himself. . . . This, of course, is not Shakespeare the poet but Citizen Shakespeare, wandering about London as Poldy wanders about Dublin" (Canon 420). Leopold Bloom's perambulations also make him, in effect, a "ghost by absence" to his wife's bed, just as Stephen's trip to Paris made him a "ghost by absence" to Dublin, and Shakespeare is a "ghost by absence" to his Stratford home, Hamlet, and Portrait.

In the National Library, Stephen metes out his theory to four people, all of whom, it is safe to assume, have a healthy respect for Shakespeare and English literature in
general, as all of them are part of the Irish *literati*. As referenced above, one of them, John Eglinton, points out that "Our young Irish bards . . . have yet to create a figure which the world will set beside Saxon Shakespeare's Hamlet though I admire him, as old Ben did, on this side idolatry" (152). Then George Russell, another member of the audience for Stephen's theory, reveals himself to be a hypocrite, by pointing out that "The supreme question about a work of art is out of how deep a life does it spring" (152). This seems true enough, especially when one considers how much of criticism focuses on the biographical context in which works of art are created, but as Stephen's theory unfolds and reveals itself to be based on deciphering Shakespeare's life from his works, Russell balks. Once Stephen puts forth the idea of Shakespeare as cuckold, asking of *Hamlet*, "is it possible, I want to know, or probable that he did not draw or foresee the logical conclusion of those premises: you are the disposed son: I am the murdered father: your mother is the guilty queen, Ann Shakespeare, born Hathaway" (155), Russell is no longer comfortable with exploring this subject. As Stephen comes to the crux of his theory, suggesting that the basis of *Hamlet* is Shakespeare's own life experiences (much as *Portrait* and *Ulysses* are based in Joyce's own life experiences), Russell no longer seems interested in examining the depth of the life from which the artwork springs. His reply to Stephen is "But this prying into the family life of a great man . . . interesting only to the parish clerk. I mean, we have the plays. I mean when we have read the poetry of *King Lear* what is it to us how the poet lived . . . the poet's drinking, the poet's debts. We have *King Lear*: and it is immortal" (155). If the "supreme question" is the depth of the artist's life, how can one refrain from wanting to know what influenced that depth? We cannot examine how texts influence other texts without simultaneously investigating how texts
influence the life of their author and, furthermore, how the life of an author might influence another author and therefore influence that author's text. The relation between Joyce and Shakespeare and Stephen as authors with their own particular biographical experiences that influence their art can be seen in the immediate turning of Stephen's mind to his own debts at the mention of "the poet's debts" which culminates in his playing with the mnemonic, "A.E.I.O.U" (156).

The number and frequency of Shakespearean references in "Scylla and Charybdis" increase as Stephen professes his theory. To showcase this, it is worthwhile to point out the multiple allusions to Shakespeare's plays in one small passage, as the narrative of Ulysses is gradually taken over by Shakespearean language. Stephen claims, "But his boywomen are the women of a boy. Their life, thought, speech are lent them by males. He chose badly? He was chosen, it seems to me. If others have their will Ann hath a way. By cock, she was to blame. She put the comether on him, sweet and twentysix. The greyeyed goddess who bends over the boy Adonis, stooping to conquer, as prologue to the swelling act" (157). The term "boywoman" which Stephen uses here, is spoken by Cleopatra in Antony and Cleopatra, when claiming she will not allow her honor to be besmirched by Caesar, who would parade her out as a conquest and have her played by "Some squeaking Cleopatra boy" (5.2.216). So we see the theme of Stephen's emphatic "non serviam" to her masters, as the subjugated Cleopatra refuses to allow the Roman Julius Caesar to use her as imperialist propaganda. This is also a reflexive Shakespearean reference to Elizabethan stage conventions (i.e. boys played all the women in Elizabethan plays), so Cleopatra's refusal to be portrayed by a "Cleopatra boy" would be presented on Shakespeare's stage by a boy playing a woman. As Stephen points out, any woman in
Shakespeare is created by a man and played by a boy. In this way, Joyce suggests that Cleopatra's vehement and laudable refusal to serve Rome only led to her posthumously serving the English.

This is much the same conundrum as Stephen himself is facing: the seeming impossibility of not serving either his English or his Italian masters may very well make him an object of scorn and derision. Stephen's attempt to recover some of his own artistic power through his theory—a re-appropriation of Shakespeare, as Gordon suggests above—is denied by his Irish compatriots, just as it had previously been leveraged by the gay betrayer, Mulligan, and instantly re-interpreted by the visiting imperialist Haines. This sense of being mocked for his most vulnerable beliefs may carry over into the next reference of "By cock, she was to blame" which recalls Ophelia's bawdy song after her father's death has driven her mad: "Alack, and fie for shame! / Young men will do't if they come to't, / By Cock, they are to blame" (4.5.58-60). Both this and the boywomen reference are pulled from the dialogue of female characters shortly before their suicides; both Cleopatra and Ophelia felt the inescapable pressure of the oppressive forces around them, as Stephen does now. "The swelling act," here played as a sexual reference, actually appears in Macbeth as a reference to the action of killing King Duncan (1.3.126-41). Joyce's references to Shakespeare continue until the narrative actually becomes a play: "as if the prose were momentarily ventriloquized by Shakespeare. If Stephen uses criticism to get the better of Shakespeare, this struggle re-enacts itself within the prose where Shakespearean drama often seems to get the better of Joycean narrative" (Maud Ellmann 25). Shakespearean references run throughout this episode, from the opening, where the librarian quotes Hamlet, "taking arms against a sea of troubles," before walking
on the "neatsleater" of the cobbler from the first scene of Julius Caesar (151); to Stephen following Mulligan at the end, musing, "I gall his kibe"(176), which in Hamlet refers to the lower classes treading on the heels of elite. At the beginning and end of the chapter we are given Shakespearean references dealing with shoes and feet, perhaps as a suggestion of Joyce's grounding in Shakespeare, as well as the state of mind of those who have gathered around this happy hunting-ground.

The listeners present for Stephen's theory represent another net—the master that "wants [Stephen] for odd jobs"—Ireland (Ulysses 17), more specifically, the Irish revivalist literary scene. The reactions of the characters listening to Stephen are representative of how the Irish literati view his position. Throughout the chapter, Stephen is repeatedly snubbed by the established critics and lesser authors around him, and it seems that even Mulligan is better respected among this group than Stephen is. Maud Ellmann points out that "Stephen has never been invited to Dowden's Highfield House, but it seems Mulligan has received this mark of favour," and that when "AE, who has to leave early for an appointment ... stands up, Eglinton asks him whether he is going to George Moore's, presumably for a literary soiree from which Stephen has been pointedly excluded" (28-29). Dowden also casts a long shadow over the whole of the "Scylla and Charybdis" chapter. When Mulligan enters, he cries out, "O, I must tell you what Dowden said!" and Stephen muses, "William Shakespeare and company, limited. The people's William. For terms apply: E. Dowden, Highfield house ..." (168). John McCourt explains that Dowden argued "for the Englishness of the Bard, claiming Shakespeare expresses 'an exultant patriotic pride and an exhilarating consciousness of power' which exudes 'the spirit of Protestantism!'" (79). And Maud Ellmann points out that "the joke
here is that *Ulysses* was published by Sylvia Beach's Parisian press Shakespeare and Co., far from the Shakespeare cottage industry that Dowden conducted from his home at Highfield House, Rathgar, Co. Dublin." (27). And this site of publication works perfectly for Joyce, who "was always anxious to disrupt the kinds of binary opposition the imperialist Dowden sought to establish between Irish and English culture and which many Irish writers simply cemented by responding to in kind. Rather than offer a direct retort . . . [Joyce sought] to distance himself from any narrow or defensive Irish response by seeking refuge in a greater European canonic tradition where even Shakespeare himself was redimensioned" (McCourt 79-80).

In Joyce's portrayal of the literary elite of Ireland we see the author's struggle to free himself from the nets around him—to escape the control of his "two masters" and to forge the uncreated conscience of his race. This forging is an impossibility if his race and his writing are not free from the nets and masters around them. These nets around the soul are like the corrupt metals one must boil out before forging them in the smithy. Dowden's quote about the illegitimacy of Irish authors is a fantastic example of the type of criticism Joyce was contending with, even (or perhaps most especially) from his own Irish compatriots. Not only did Joyce need to deal with the literary influence and skill of Shakespeare, but also with disparaging Shakespearean critics who refused to accept anything less than "Saxon Shakespeare" as true literature and art. Critics like Dowden wielded enormous power over what was acceptable in Shakespeare studies, and indeed, in the study of the English language itself. Nathan Wallace writes that "Dowden was a staunch Irish Unionist organizer, invested in English cultural and military imperialism for the survival of his otherwise endangered class. He therefore envisions the disciplinary
regimen of English Literature as a seminary of cultural authority and an education in colonial governance." He goes on to point out that "As a Shakespearean and a Romanticist, Dowden was a crucial figure in the Victorian development of English Literature as an academic discipline" (801-2).

Running afoul of Dowden certainly contributes to Stephen's continued exile from the Irish literary scene. Wallace writes that "As the recalcitrant colonized subject, Stephen refuses to be conciliated by the Anglo-Irish Revivalists in the National Library. Stephen's Shakespeare theory indicates on one hand that he refuses the Revivalists' colonial ideology of literary genius, and on the other hand that he identifies with Hamlet and Shakespeare as exiles, while he regards the Revivalists as a usurping literary and colonial class" (810). In this way, it is no wonder that the usurper, Mulligan, fits in better with this crowd of Irish Revivalists. Stephen's fight to fly by the nets, his attempt to avoid being held in check by the imperialist British ideas of Shakespeare and English in general, have led to his perpetual exile. That this commitment to his ideals was detrimental to Joyce is further explained by Wallace, who describes how students who remained loyal to Dowden benefited: "Thirty of Dowden's former students went on to become professors of English Literature around the world. Being fit to study Shakespeare also meant being fit to govern Ireland; Shakespearean wisdom was English imperialist in general and Irish Unionist in particular" (803). Stephen does not fit in either of these boxes, and therefore must be rejected by his would-be peers in the Irish literary scene who extol Dowden's theories and join in casting dispersions on the authors of their own country. Moreover, Joyce seems to have biographical reasons to dislike Dowden (aside from Dowden's crushing criticism of Irish authorship in general). Wallace writes that
"Joyce also felt excluded from the Revivalist establishment because he had failed to secure a job at the National Library. He had even turned to Dowden, who was a trustee of the National Library, for a reference towards this end and been denied. Joyce therefore depicts the Revivalists as a petty colonial intellectual culture in league with Dowden, all denying Stephen a place at the table" (812). Joyce was well known to use his writing to attack anyone who had slighted him in such a way.

Stephen's increasing disillusionment with this circle of Irish revivalists is reflected by his increasing references to the lower classes of Shakespeare. Although he knows he is playing Aristotle to a crowd of Platonists, and seemingly thinking circles around them, when he hears that "Mr. Russell, rumor has it, is gathering together a sheaf of our younger poets' verses," another literary situation it seems he has been pointedly left out of, Stephen thinks in the words of the gravediggers in *Hamlet*, who, being lower-class laborers, use "argal" in the place of "ergo." The gravedigger scene of *Hamlet* starts with comedy in the face of tragedy, before turning to Hamlet's questions of reputation and the equalizing power of death, concluding that "Imperial Caesar, dead and turned to clay, / Might stop a hole to keep the wind away" (5.1.196-97). In Joyce's National Library scene, the mighty have indeed fallen, as Stephen, who had come to impart his theory to these men, is left only with one more reminder of his exile from the world of the Irish literary elite, before Mulligan comes in and usurps the conversation.

This removal from the Irish *literati* is shown to be intimately connected with Stephen's refusal to placate to the two masters which they all serve. Shakespeare, as the great cultural representative of British culture, is the epitome of the English imperialism which Stephen hopes to escape. Maud Ellmann writes that "England exported
Shakespeare to the furthest reaches of its fractious empire in a cultural equivalent of 'shock and awe.' She goes on to posit that "As an advertising canvasser, Bloom understands the brainwashing effect of repetition. So did the British by exporting Shakespeare to soothe the savage beast of its rebellious colonies: the academic discipline of English literature, which was established in the same era as the scramble for Africa, helped to ensure British cultural domination by providing 'wisdom while you wait' from Shakespeare" (19). It becomes more and more apparent why Joyce chose to leave Shakespeare out of Portrait. The men who listen to Stephen's Shakespeare theory subscribe to the point of view of Dowden: that Ireland will never produce an author like Shakespeare. Only the "gay betrayer," Mulligan, remains aloof, claiming, "Shakespeare? . . . I seem to know the name" (163). Of course, one must not forget that Mulligan "plays them all."

This leads to a rather ironic twist when viewed in light of the status of Joyce studies in the discipline of English literature today. Pelaschiar sums up the irony succinctly, "nowadays these two imposing figures of world literature [Shakespeare and Joyce] are often associated by critics, almost en passant, as if it had become a cliché, or just normal, to consider them side by side. . . . The colonized Irish subject in exile James Joyce and the master voice of the British Empire William Shakespeare are now oddly united in a colonizing enterprise of non-Western worlds" (xiii). Indeed, Joyce's exalted place in literary criticism is second only to Shakespeare's in terms of volume, with journals that cover Joyce exclusively and innumerable books written about his life and works. Pelaschiar posits that "it is therefore as if Joyce, with his written word and all the words written by others about him, was doing to others, the non-Western Others, what
once had been done to him and his once conscienceless race. One wonders what Joyce would have to say about this ironic twist of hermeneutical efforts" (xiii). I find no indication that Joyce would have taken this seriously. Joyce's final work, *Finnegans Wake*, can hardly be said to proselytize for the English language, full as it is with polyglot puns and portmanteau words. His brother Stanislaus wrote to him of *Finnegans Wake*’s possible effect on English literature: "Gorman's book on you practically proclaims your work as the last word in modern literature. It may be the last word in another sense, the witless wandering of literature before its final extinction. . . . If literature develops along the lines of your latest work it will certainly become, as Shakespeare hinted at centuries ago, much ado about nothing" (*JJ* 577). And when asked of *Finnegans Wake*, "But are there not levels to be explored?" Joyce replied, "it's meant to make you laugh." "I am only an Irish clown, a great joker at the universe,' he told Jacques Mercanton. Of course laughter and levels of meaning were not mutually exclusive, and to someone else, a drinking companion, Joyce corrected *In vino veritas* to *In risu veritas* (*JJ* 703). I believe Joyce would find his pre-eminence in the field of literature quite funny indeed, especially after his years-long struggle to get his works published and recognized. For Joyce to be considered side-by side with Shakespeare, the author that he struggled to reappropriate and forced to conform to his own work, most likely would have pleased him immensely. It certainly would have pleased his wife, Nora, who is quoted as saying, "Ah, there's only one man he's got to get the better of now, and that's that Shakespeare" (McCourt 72).
Works Cited


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