

Muddling Words and Music: Intermediality and *Anders-streben* in Literary Modernism

by

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*Certificate of Approval*

This is to certify that the accompanying thesis by Joshua J. Tacke has been accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for graduation with Honors in English.

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## Table of Contents

Acknowledgements.....	iv
Abstract.....	v
Introduction: Between “Music that Reminds” and “Music Itself”: Two Ways of Reading Music in Literary Modernism.....	1
I. Music, Language and <i>Anders-streben</i> in Nietzsche’s <i>The Birth of Tragedy</i> .....	11
II. Joyce & Wagner: “joco-serious” and “lugugugubrious” Musical Expressionisms	30
Wagner’s New Path .....	31
Joyce’s Shakespeherian Rag: Musical Prose and Leitmotiv in “Scylla and Charybdis” .....	37
The Ineluctable Modality of the Audible: Joyce, Noise, and Resistance .....	47
III. Recoiling from “Something Rich and Strange”: <i>The Waste Land</i> ’s Modern Musicality .....	54
The Popular, the Horror!: Eliot’s Melancholic Gramophone .....	64
The Genealogy of Joyce’s Popular, Musical Body-Language.....	69
Conclusion: Louis Armstrong’s Double Perspective on the Relationship between Music and Language.....	76
Bibliography .....	85

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## Abstract

This paper uses the concept of *Anders-streben*, or “other-striving” to explore the intermedial relations between music and language in literary modernism: how literary artists engage with, reject, or express ambivalence towards the musical “other.” The introduction examines the works of E. M. Forster, Joseph Conrad, Katherine Mansfield, and Wallace Stevens, delineating two different ways in which literary modernists interpret the discourse on music handed down to them by German Romanticism. The first chapter focuses on Friedrich Nietzsche’s *The Birth of Tragedy Out of the Spirit of Music* in addition to his other early writings, and finds in his Apollonian-Dionysian duality a model for a productive interaction between music and language. The second chapter positions James Joyce’s *Ulysses* in relation to the music of Richard Wagner, tracing the resemblances and differences between their respective modes of musical expressionism, before concluding with a meditation on Joyce’s use of noise in relation to the work of John Cage. The third chapter is comprised of a reading of T. S. Eliot’s *The Waste Land*, and details his refusal to engage with both high and low music, before demonstrating how his text’s melancholia is a function of Eliot’s attitude towards the musical “other.” Joyce’s engagement with popular music is subsequently contrasted with Eliot, and positioned in relation to the tradition of *Anders-streben* which stretches back from Nietzsche to Wagner. The thesis concludes with an analysis of Louis Armstrong, arguing that he is both a literary and a musical modernist.



## **Introduction: Between “Music that Reminds” and “Music Itself”: Two Ways of Reading Music in Literary Modernism**

The title of E. M. Forster’s essay “Not Listening to Music” ironically implies a point of tension between the high literary modernist and the medium of music. Within the context of the essay, the phrase “Not Listening to Music” literally refers to distraction, or “inattention” on the part of the author as concert hall goer: in short, the author’s bad listening habits. Forster thus writes under the pretense of sociological observation, taking his own listening experience as a test case in his study of the concert hall, eventually deriving two different “sorts” of music from the kind of effects it imparts on the listener. Yet the text begins on a note of exasperation, expressing frustration in regard to the process it sets out to describe: “Listening to music is such a muddle that one scarcely knows how to start describing it” (Forster, 136). The subject of music-listening provokes Forster’s language, putting it in a state of tension which threatens to undermine the text’s affected objectivity; this tension in turn provokes a retroactive re-reading of the title as a defensive gesture. Language must “not listen” when faced with the musical “other,” lest it devolve into an ambiguous “muddle.”

Foregrounding the text’s ambivalent relation to its musical subject calls the two categories of music which Forster delineates into question: ““music that reminds me of something”” and ““music itself”” (136). Rather than offering a taxonomic account of musical “types,” this distinction reveals two contrasting poles in literary modernism in regard to intermedial relations between language and music. These two ways of describing music are, specifically, from the vantage point of *a literary modernist*, rather than a music historian.

By “music that reminds,” Forster means music endowed with semiotic weight: music which acts as a signifier, referring to things outside of itself. He holds Wagner to be representative of the latter, especially in reference to the composer’s leitmotiv system, a method of composition which links a recurring musical phrase to a particular dramatic element in the opera: “...[Wagner] ordained that one phrase should recall the ring, another the sword, another the blameless fool and so on...When music reminded me of something which was not music, I supposed it was getting me somewhere...I translated sounds into colours, saw the piccolo as apple-green and the trumpets as scarlet. The arts were to be enriched by taking in one another’s washing” (137). This passage reveals two major components of “music that reminds.” First, Wagnerian music is intermedial: it “translates,” or transports sound into the condition of literature and the visual arts. In regard to ethics, a willingness to enter into intermedial relations implies both a capacity for sympathy with the artistic “other,” and a respect for difference: “music that reminds” engages with, rather than recoils from, extra-musical art forms. In this sense, intermediality is an example of *Anders-streben*, or “other striving.” Walter Pater offers a useful definition of this concept in “The School of Giorgione”: “Each art may be observed to pass into the condition of some other art by...a partial alienation from its own limitations, by which the arts are able, not indeed to supply the place of the other, but reciprocally lend each other new forces” (*Selected Writings*, 54). *Anders-streben* signifies “reciprocity” between art forms, rather than subordination to one or the other; a productive, rather than restrictive relation between two initially incongruous elements, where difference works as a “force” driving aesthetic experimentation.

As Forster's association of Wagner with "music that reminds" suggests, this theorization of intermedial relations as *Anders-streben* has its roots in 19<sup>th</sup> century German Romanticism. Friedrich Nietzsche, an admirer and friend of Wagner as a young adult, offers one of the more widely disseminated models of *Anders-streben* in his first book, *The Birth of Tragedy*, published in 1872: the Apollonian-Dionysian duality. Nietzsche associates the Dionysian drive with music and sensuality, and the Apollonian drive with aesthetic semblance before collapsing the distinction between the two, turning the binary into a model of reciprocal intensification, where "Dionysus speaks the language of Apollo, but finally it is Apollo who speaks that of Dionysus" (*BT*, 21, 104). Due to its explicit engagement with Wagner, *The Birth* anticipates the philosophical climate overhanging the literary modernist's stance towards music. Nietzsche's concept of the Apollonian-Dionysian models a productive interaction between music and language, standing as a crucial reference point for writers such as James Joyce, who persistently and enthusiastically bears witness to an unacknowledged potential for sympathy between music and language in his novel *Ulysses*—his text rejoices in the newfound possibility of musicalized prose.

Following the logic of *Anders-streben* to its fullest extent leads to the second component of Forster's "music that reminds." Despite its lyrical beauty, the last sentence in the passage quoted from "Not Listening to Music" evinces an enthusiasm for impurity: "The arts were to be enriched by taking in one another's washing." That which is normatively considered to be disgusting—dirty bathwater—is a resource for aesthetic "enrichment": the arts do not "wash" each other clean, but bathe in each other's waste. In this particular sense, Forster's "music that reminds" is scatological,

reflexively trans-valuating excremental waste into rich manure. *Anders-streben* inevitably results in contamination, though it also entails an affirmation of the strange products which arise out of intermedial experimentation.

Conversely, wholly rejecting the “impure” experimental offspring which result from the reciprocal intensification of different art forms signals an endorsement of pure form. Forster says as much when he remarks that “Only a purist would condemn all visual parallels, all emotional labeling, all programmes [suggested by ‘music that reminds’]” (Forster, 137). Margaret, the protagonist of Forster’s novel *Howards End*, speaks from the perspective of a “purist” in a passage which echoes the concerns and language of “Not Listening to Music”:

But, of course, the real villain is Wagner. He has done more than any man in the nineteenth century towards the muddling of the arts....Every now and then in history there do come these terrible geniuses, like Wagner, who stir up all the wells of thought at once. For a moment it’s splendid. Such a splash as never was. But afterward—such a lot of mud; and the wells—as it were, they communicate with each other too easily now, and not one of them will run quite clear. That’s what Wagner’s done.  
*(Howards End, 30).*

Here, the two poles of Forster’s musical “sorts” are brought into sharp relief. The purist views the “muddied,” blurred lines engendered by Wagnerian *Anders-streben* as a regrettable occurrence in the history of art. Wagner is a “villain” because he has

permanently distorted the boundaries lines demarcating the arts; his deliberate engagement with “impure” experimentation violates the proprieties of classical form. Forster himself links impurity with deviancy, and even danger: “Yet there is a danger. Music that reminds does open the door to that imp of the concert-hall, inattention” (“Not Listening to Music,” 137). The semiotic explosion resulting from *Anders-streben*—the mixing of different semiotic systems and the new possibilities of expression this creates—is too distracting, too unwieldy in its effects and radical in its ethics for the prudent Forster to fully endorse. Thus, he agrees with his character Margaret, though he does so hesitantly, taking a more moderate stance: he acknowledges the merits of “music that reminds,” but concludes that “music which is untrammelled and untainted by reference is obviously the best sort of music to listen to; we get nearer the centre of reality.” (138).

Forster’s logic has both a pragmatic and a metaphysical aspect. On the one hand, the idea of an “absolute music”—music itself—“consists of the conviction that instrumental music purely and clearly expresses the true nature of music by its lack of concept, object, or purpose...Instrumental music as pure ‘structure’ represents itself. Detached from the affections and feelings of the real world, it forms a ‘separate world in itself’” (Carl Dahlhaus, 7). Music *sans* referent or extra-musical accompaniment is more “absolutely” music, thus making it easier to appreciate for the music listener. The notion that “pure” instrumental music affords the listener a closer proximity to the “centre of reality,” however, suggests that “the absolute manifests itself” in “absolute music”: a “religious idea that reveals itself as art” (Dalhaus, 102). At its most extreme, “music itself” leads to suicidal solipsism, a position vividly thematized by T. S. Eliot in

*The Waste Land*. In contrast to Joyce in *Ulysses*, Eliot's text recoils from an *Anders-streben* with music. His language loathes its impure, fallen state, and nostalgically yearns for the pure music of the past. Eliot subscribes to the notion of "absolute music" so seriously that his poem stands as "a separate world in itself"; his eventual inability to achieve salvation, to make manifest the absolute, leads him to compulsively negate his own text.

Though Forster eventually prefers the purity of "music itself," his essay is a far-cry from Eliot's hardline position in *The Waste Land*. As a literary modernist, Forster lies somewhere in between the jubilant affirmation of the musical other (music that reminds) and puritanical adherence to a quasi-religious notion of pure form (music itself). His text is hesitant when approaching music, fearing that the act of describing the musical "other" will reduce its language to a Wagner-esque "muddle." In Forster's essay, a literary engagement with music results in a loss of precision: however, this does not lead to a linguistic epistemological crisis—he views clarity, as opposed to "muddiness," as a legitimate aesthetic goal. Words, more or less, correspond to their referents. Indeed, Forster never goes so far as to idolize music as the "art of arts," as Joseph Conrad does in his famous "Preface" to *The Nigger of the Narcissus* ("Preface," 22). In contrast with Forster, Conrad views language as a "tyrannical epistemological system" ("Conrad and Nietzsche," 72) wholly incapable of making universal truth-claims: his writing repeatedly grapples with the idea that "truth" cannot be objectively rendered or communicated through the medium of language. Conrad attempts to resolve the modern literary artist's epistemological crisis by locating an aesthetic space between naturalism and romantic subjectivity, between the material universe and the

interpretive mind. This space can be accessed through the evocation of *impressions*: as Jesse Matz explains, “This in-betweenness is essential. An impression is never simply a feeling, a thought, or a sensation. It partakes, rather, of a mode of experience that is neither sensuous nor rational, neither felt nor thought, but somewhere in between” (*Literary Impressionism and Modernist Aesthetics*, 16). Truth conveyed through impressions is necessarily hazy, lacking borders and definition—it is always already “muddled.” For Conrad, then, the literary artist must “strenuously aspire” to the “magic suggestiveness of music” (“Preface,” 146), the art-form *par excellence*. Conrad sees music, with its capacity for impressionistic suggestiveness, as a balm capable of soothing literature’s anxiety about objective representation and truth claims. Such overt reverence for music places him closer to the pole of “music itself.”

The difference between Forster and Conrad, then, is the former’s less skeptical attitude toward language as a legitimate mode of artistic representation: the palpable ambivalence towards music evident in Forster’s essay demonstrates his text’s desire to compete with, rather than capitulate to, the musical “other.” Indeed, his notoriously unpredictable narrator in *Howards End* opens Chapter V with a mock-magisterial, critical interrogation of Conrad’s infatuation with the “art of arts”: “It will be generally admitted that Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony is the most sublime noise that ever penetrated into the ear of man” (Forster, 23). The narrator’s irony is so pervasive in the text that it almost evades detection: does his hyperbolic rhetoric strive to match Beethoven’s “sublime noise,” or bring it down to size? What exacerbates this interpretative difficulty further is the narrator’s insistence on grounding his language in sociological observation, not unlike Forster himself in “Not Listening to Music”: “All

sorts of types and conditions are satisfied by [listening to Beethoven's music]...in any case, the passion of your life becomes more vivid, and you are bound to admit that such a noise is cheap at two shillings" (23). Turning to the *OED*'s definition of "cheap" further illustrates the narrator's impenetrable, ironic ambivalence towards music: "cheap" signifies both "sublime" accessibility-universality or that which involves "little trouble and hence [is] of little worth; worthless, paltry." (*OED*. adj, def. 4a). That Forster's language is supple enough to leaves this question open—that it qualifies Conrad's musical reverence, while acknowledging music's "general" appeal—demonstrates his faith in literature's ability to critically interpret and communicate the complexities of the modern world. Like his character Margaret, who is of German descent, Forster's stance toward music is caught between the influence of 19<sup>th</sup> century German Romanticism and 20<sup>th</sup> century modernist skepticism.

Katherine Mansfield distances herself even farther from Conrad's attitude toward music in her story "The Modern Soul." Her narrator repeatedly exposes a farcical lack in musical artist's performance and practice, thus emphasizing the text's firm adherence to Forster's negative definition of musical "cheapness." Mansfield prefers overt parody to Forster's coy, elusive irony, an aesthetic choice evident from the story's opening paragraph: "'Good Evening,' said the Herr Professor, squeezing my hand; 'wonderful weather! I returned from a party in the wood. I have been making music for them on my trombone. You know, these pine-trees provide most suitable accompaniment for a trombone! They are a sighing delicacy against sustained strength, as I remarked once in a lecture on wind instruments in Frankfort'" ("The Modern Soul," 13). Unaware of the ambiguity of language, the Professor's speech unwittingly

details an auto-erotic “trombone party” in the woods. That this musical expert specializes in “wind instruments” is entirely appropriate: from a literary perspective, his masturbatory “music making” amounts to little more than hot air, deflating the Romantic grandeur inflecting his rhetoric. In reality, the Professor’s musical opulence is hilariously “cheap.” Mansfield’s irreverent, skillful parody of the Professor’s Germanic, Romantic music suggests a reversal of Conrad. In persuasively arguing that literature, rather than music, is the art of arts, she places herself outside the debate between “music that reminds” and “music itself.” Of all the literary modernists considered within the scope of this paper, Mansfield’s virtuosic dismissal of music as either an engine for linguistic experimentation, or a superior, semi-divine aesthetic mode is markedly unusual. To her, the influence of German Romanticism sounds like cheap noise, an emblem for the absurd, paradoxical condition of the European “modern soul,” who blindly performs the irrelevant musical values of the past.

As a poet more rooted in the American continent than his globe-trotting, cosmopolitan peers, Wallace Stevens expresses a similar feeling of estrangement from the Germanic musical tradition. Tellingly, he feels compelled to confront “The truth that there comes a time / When we can mourn no more over music / That is so much motionless sound. / There comes a time when the waltz / Is no longer a mode of desire, a mode / Of revealing desire and is empty of shadows” (“Sad Strains of a Gay Waltz,” lines 1-6). “No longer” does the “waltz,” a dance-musical form originating in Austria and southern Germany, adequately “reveal” or represent the “desires” of the twentieth century. Modernity requires a new “strain” of musical expression. Stevens goes on to deploy the trope of “skeptical music” to signify the possibility of an alternative music,

one which departs from the traditional waltz: “Too many waltzes—The epic of disbelief / Blares oftener and soon, will soon be constant. / Some harmonious skeptic soon in a skeptical music / Will unite these figures of men and their shapes / Will glisten again with motion, the music / Will be motion and full of shadows” (lines 31-36). In what is likely a riposte to Eliot’s *The Waste Land*, Stevens posits the “harmonious skeptic” as an alternative to the contemporary poet who constantly “blares” the nihilistic “epic of disbelief.” Like Mansfield, Stevens insists that a “skeptical” eye is required to confront the hard “truth” that the literary modernist can no longer rely on traditional methods of representation. However, his desire to engage with a new music “harmonious” with contemporary culture suggests that poetry can meet the challenges of the present through a productive, affirmative engagement with the re-imagined musical “other.”

## I. Music, Language and *Anders-streben* in Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy*

Friedrich Nietzsche revisited *The Birth of Tragedy* fourteen years after its original publication, declaring in his "Attempt at Self-Criticism" that he finds it "an impossible book today" (5). Part of the text's "impossibility" lies in its generic hybridity; in a letter dating to 1871, he describes his text-in-progress as a "centaur": "Scholarship, art, and philosophy are growing together inside me to such an extent that one day I'm bound to give birth to centaurs..." (*Nietzsche: A Self-Portrait from his Letters*, 10). *The Birth's* tangled, "centauric" quality demonstrates Nietzsche's enthusiasm for mixture, which seeps into the Apollonian-Dionysian bi-polarity, where "Dionysos speaks the language of Apollo, but finally it is Apollo who speaks that of Dionysos" (*BT*, 21, 104). Such energetic interdisciplinary engagement also makes the task of the critic more difficult; the text endows the Apollonian-Dionysian concept with an unwieldy, vertiginous range of signification.

Taking the text's "centauric" impulse as an instance of the specifically aesthetic concept *Anders-streben* demonstrates that Nietzsche's Apollonian-Dionysian concept is not dialectical in the Hegelian sense, and helps contextualize a reading of *The Birth* as an example of a productive relation between music and language. Walter Pater's definition of *Anders-streben*, or "other-striving," bears repeating: "Each art may be observed to pass into the condition of some other art by... a partial alienation from its own limitations, by which the arts are able, not indeed to supply the place of the other, but reciprocally lend each other new forces" (*Selected Writings*, 54). This process results not in aesthetic purity, or a Hegelian synthesis, but contamination: intense

engagement with the “other” leads to “new,” “partial” modes of expression. Kiene Wurth elaborates on this process, noting that when “medium *x* absorbs the ‘method’ or semiotic system of medium *y*...medium *x* turns into something (slightly) other than its own, no longer its familiar or traditional self, but not (yet) quite the medium it mimics either. Thus, it falls in-between *x* and *y*, between traditionally demarcated medial categories” (“Sounds like Now,” 14). In contradistinction to the Hegelian dialectic, *Anders-streben* produces an “in-between,” categorically unstable mode of expression, rather than an identifiable whole. Language is not the “antithesis” of music; the synthesis is constantly held in suspension. Though Nietzsche sees the Apollonian and Dionysian drives to be antagonistic to each other, he collapses the distinction between the two, turning the binary into a model of reciprocal intensification: a collaboration between music and language which stimulates the production of improper, previously repressed modes of representation.

Outlining *The Birth* in this way demonstrates that while the text may at times indicate a greater preference for music, Nietzsche does not espouse a logo-melocentric concept where music is *fundamental* to language<sup>1</sup>. Nietzsche’s early theorizations on language, which also resist the logocentric philosophical tradition, can thus enrich a reading of the Apollonian-Dionysian bi-polarity as an example of *Anders-streben* and bring out Nietzsche’s early thought as a crucial philosophical anticipation of various impulses in musical and literary modernism.

Written shortly after the publication of *The Birth*, Nietzsche’s essay “On Truth and Lying in a Non-Moral Sense” (1873) and university lecture “Description of Ancient Rhetoric” expound the epistemological limits of language by demolishing the

notion of a literal, “proper” language which ensures a direct relation between signifier and signified. An excerpt from “Description of Ancient Rhetoric” puts this succinctly: “The full essence of things will never be grasped...instead of the thing, the sensation takes in only a *sign*. That is the *first* aspect: *language is rhetoric*, because it desires to convey only a *doxa* [opinion], not an *episteme* [knowledge]” (*Friedrich Nietzsche on Rhetoric and Language*, 23; emphasis his). Here, Nietzsche focuses his attention on what language cannot do: grasp the “essence of things.” Taking “essence” both in its spiritual-Platonic connotation as a supersensible eternal truth and as empirical scientific knowledge, Nietzsche seems to be positing an unbridgeable gap between subject and object. The subject is ensconced in language, through which she has access only to “signs”—or as he says in “On Truth and Lying,” the play of dissimulation: “[Humanity is] deeply immersed in illusions and dream images; their eyes merely glide across the surface of things and see ‘forms’; nowhere does their perception lead into truth” (“On Truth,” 142). Our “perception” is always mediated by reflective “linguistic” surfaces; language leads the subject *away* from “truth.”

While working from a similar theoretical position, “On Truth and Lying” takes a more radical stance than Nietzsche’s lecture in that he critiques the concept of “essence” itself and the subject-object binary logic which upholds it. Early on in the first part of the essay he argues that what we consider to be truth in the Platonic sense is merely a function of grammar. He traces the concept of “truth” back to the birth of social-communities and the need to establish a “peace treaty,” i.e. a set of agreed upon normative values to which all community members may be held accountable, the notion of a proper language: “For that which is to count as ‘truth’ from this point

onwards now becomes fixed, i.e. a way of designating things is invented which has the same validity and force everywhere, and the legislation of language also produces the first laws of truth” (143). Nietzsche posits “truth” as an arbitrary “invention” of the “legislation of language”—for the human subject, *language* makes and designates law. Further, language designates what is “true” according to the needs of the community, and “fixes” that truth in place: it creates the distinction between proper and improper ways of speaking, of the difference between truth and lying.

This early passage contains the seeds for what Nietzsche will later theorize as “master” and “slave” morality. On the one hand, slave morality determines what is proper or truthful according to fear and social utility. As he explains in *Beyond Good and Evil*, “How much or how little that is dangerous to the community, dangerous to equality, resides in an opinion, in a condition or emotion, in a will, in a talent, that is now the moral perspective: here again fear is the mother of morality” (*BGE*. 201.123). In regard to master morality however, proper language reflects the values of those who possess political superiority, in particular the “noble” aristocracy: “...the judgment ‘good’ did *not* originate with those whom ‘goodness’ was shown! Rather it was ‘the good’ themselves, that is to say, the noble, powerful, high-stationed and high-minded, who felt and established themselves and their actions as good, that is, of the first rank, in contradistinction to all the low, low-minded, common and plebian” (*GM*.I.2). In both cases “truth” is firmly perspectival; it refers *only* to a particular human response to the world. There is no *a priori* meta-linguistic artifice to which proper language refers. Truth in a “non-moral” sense boils down to an expression of particular, subjective, all too human conditions rather than transcendental ideals. Nietzsche hammers this home

with a flurry of rhetorical questions: “And, besides, what is the status of those conventions of language? Are they perhaps products of knowledge, of the sense of truth? Is there a perfect match between things and their designations? Is language the full and adequate expression of all realities?” (“On Truth and Lying,” 143). The answer, of course, is no: Nietzsche’s overt reliance on *rhetoric* here circles back to his claim in “Description of Ancient Rhetoric” that language conveys an “opinion” rather than “knowledge.” Language is inherently rhetorical and therefore built to *persuade*; language always lies because it attempts to convince us that it is *true*, that “it is constitutive, not constantive” (J. Hillis Miller, 173). As Nietzsche eloquently puts it, “The ‘thing-in-itself’ (which would be, precisely, pure truth, truth without consequences) is impossible for even the creator of language to grasp...He designates only the relations of things to human beings, and in order to express them he avails himself of the boldest metaphors” (144). The subject-object binary breaks down under the scrutiny of Nietzsche’s analysis, because for the human subject there is strictly speaking nothing outside of language. It follows that the motive force for Enlightenment values—the quest for knowledge by way of scientific progress—is crippled from the start: “At all events, things do not proceed logically when language comes into being, and the entire material in and with which the man of truth, the researcher, the philosopher, works and builds, stems, if not from cloud-cuckoo land, then certainly not from the essence of things” (145). In reality the “man of truth” is also the man “in *and* with” language—he is, unwittingly, the “man of lies.” Basing an ethical, philosophical, or scientific framework on the assumption that there is a proper, objectively truthful language through which one can access “pure” unconditional

knowledge is thus delusional—straight out of “cloud-cuckoo” land.

That last improper, self-consciously hyperbolic phrase emphasizes Nietzsche’s tendency to use *rhetoric* to demonstrate his claim that language is rhetorical in nature, and calls attention to the means by which language persuades. In a frequently cited passage, he equates truth with “A mobile army of metaphors, metonymies, anthropomorphisms, in short a sum of human relations which have been subjected to poetic and rhetorical translation and intensification, translation, and decoration... truths are illusions of which we have forgotten that they are illusions, metaphors which have become worn by frequent use and lost all sensuous vigor” (146). In the quotation’s latter half Nietzsche points out the cost of believing the lie of “truth,” of forgetting language’s rhetorical, deceptive nature. “Truth” drains the “sensuous vigor”—the aesthetic power resulting from play in dissimulation—out of language; it disarms the “mobile army” of figures and tropes, neutralizing their ability to pierce, shock, and persuade one of a particular subjective impression. Nietzsche uses another figure to illustrate the state of linguistic de-militarization at the hands of truth: they are “coins which, having lost their stamp, are now regarded as metal and no longer coins” (146). As the figurative shift to the economic suggests, language used solely for the purpose of social utility—of establishing a “peace treaty” or proper language—ironically becomes *useless*, bankrupt, because it willfully forgets its subjective, persuasive origin. Words lose their “sensuous vigor,” their semiotic potency, the closer they drift towards the generality of concepts, to the proprieties of “literal” language.

Nietzsche proceeds to take the improper, provisional, arbitrary nature of linguistic truth fully into account in the second part of the essay. The currency of

language can be rejuvenated by “the man of intuition,” he who lives in “the immediacy of deception” (153). Unlike the “man of truth,” who unknowingly disarms language of its rhetorical force in order to purchase metaphysical comfort in the notion that language conveys pure knowledge, the “man of intuition” does not rely on the edifice of proper language to sanction the legitimacy of his discourse. Instead, he views proper language for what it is: “a mere climbing frame and play-thing on which to perform...reckless tricks”—an infinitely expanding resource with which one can devise new “forbidden metaphors and unheard-of combinations of concepts” (152). Here, in its expressive exuberance, the text presages Zarathustra’s edict “Write with blood, and thou wilt find that blood is spirit” (*TSZ.VII. 56*). By “intuition,” Nietzsche does not mean “intuition” in the general sense of casual, instinctive apprehension; this suggests that one can apprehend linguistic expression directly. Rather, living in “the immediacy of deception” signifies a mode of informed, critically engaged intuition, where one knowingly acknowledges the arbitrary, provisional nature of linguistic truth. Dispensing with the notion of truth, and a proper language in which this truth can be found, turns the epistemological of limits of language into an abundant, creative resource—one which speaks dangerously and persuasively, with the “blood” of the subjective impression running hot in its veins.

Language’s ability to “vigorously” communicate subjective impressions thus hinges on embracing its improper, deceptive, rhetorical function. It is to recognize language’s illusory nature, and that the human subject thus “must bow to rigid necessity and can never get beyond representations” (“On Music and Words, 108”). Despite its undeniable potency, the militarized, “intuitive,” full-blooded language

which Nietzsche champions in “On Truth and Lying” in no way corresponds to the any kind of “inmost essence” in the world. Indeed, as Nietzsche carefully remarks in a fragment written concomitantly with *The Birth of Tragedy*:

Even the whole realm of drives, the interplay of feelings, sensations, emotions, and acts of will, is known to us when we examine ourselves most closely—as I must interpose against Schopenhauer—only as representation and not according to its essence. We may add that even Schopenhauer’s “will” is nothing but the most general manifestation of something that is otherwise totally indecipherable for us. (Nietzsche, 108).

This passage resonates with a moment in Nietzsche’s later “Attempt at Self-Criticism,” when he bemoans his younger self for attempting “to express strange and new evaluations in Schopenhauerian and Kantian formulas, things which fundamentally ran counter to both the spirit and taste of Kant and Schopenhauer” (“An Attempt,” 10). Even at this early point in his career, Nietzsche is using Schopenhauer’s “will” as a sign, a general representation for the unknown, that which “is otherwise totally indecipherable.” This crucial nuance refutes Paul de Man’s charge that “The main theoretical speculations on language and art that originated at the time of *The Birth of Tragedy* have not been included in the final version” (“Genesis and Genealogy,” 88). Drawing a hard divide between Nietzsche’s early language theory and his work on the relation between words and music in *The Birth* precludes a reading of the Apollonian-Dionysian bi-polarity as an instance of *Anders-streben*; it assumes that *The Birth*

projects a logo-melocentric ontology wherein music can be made to fully body the kernel, or “essence” of the world. Seeing that this is not the case, Nietzsche’s early speculations on language can help bring the subtleties of the Apollonian-Dionysian bipolarity into sharp relief.

The fragment “On Music and Words” (1871) plainly states what Nietzsche takes for granted in *The Birth*, particularly in section 5: that the phenomenon of ancient lyric poetry points to a duality in the structure of language that is prefigured by two major types of representations. The first type “reveals itself as sensations of pleasure and displeasure that accompany all other representations as a never-failing figured bass. This most general manifestation which is our only clue to all becoming and willing and which we will continue to call ‘will’ has its own symbolic sphere in language, too” (108). This first kind of representation is related to the “will,” the symbol for that which is totally indecipherable and unknowable for us. It signifies the sensation of “pleasure and displeasure,” and serves as the *only* clue to *all* “becoming and willing.” Nietzsche’s figure of the “never-failing figured bass” emphasizes that this representation of primeval “pleasure and displeasure” is constant—never failing—and harmonically foundational to all other representations; it sits lower on the staff, beneath the other notes, occupying frequencies that are more difficult to hear. The duality is thus the difference between the “*tone of the speaker*,” which represents “all degrees of pleasure and displeasure,” and “*gesture symbolism*,” of which “the whole realm of consonants and vowels may be included. . . consonants and vowels are, without the crucial fundamental tone, nothing but *positions* of the language organs” (108; Nietzsche’s emphasis). Here, the *tone-gesture* duality speaks to the difference between

the affective and semiotic components of language. Nietzsche's claim that the *tonal* aspect of linguistic representation serves as the grounding for the formation of words helps contextualize his concept of "intuitive" language in "On Truth and Lying." Wild, improper, exuberant semiotic *gestures* exert tremendous pressure back on the *tonal-affective* grounding, enhancing the speech-act's ability to represent the unknown and incomprehensible ("will"); "intuitive" language de-reifies words by pulling them away from the bland proprieties of "truthful" speech and into the strange, *tonal* ground of representation. The importance of language's *tonal* component here provides an insight into how music can be a possible and powerful resource for the literary artist.

Later in the essay Nietzsche goes on to claim that music, of all the arts, best symbolizes this primary representation of pleasure and displeasure. Unlike language, music does not have a dual structure, consisting entirely as the first mode of representation: "the 'will'...gains an ever more adequate symbolical expression in the development of music," with the provision that "*the will is the subject of music but not its origin...the origin of music lies beyond all individuation*" (110-111; Nietzsche's emphasis). Music takes "the will" as its subject without the mediation of gesture symbolism. Originating from beyond the bounds of "individuation"—which is constantly subject to the normalizing pressures of proper language—it can more "adequately" represent our collective feelings of pleasure and displeasure: that which is unknown, or "incomprehensible" to us. Adorno refines this idea in "Music, Language, and Composition," remarking that what music "says in a proposition is at once distinct and concealed...Time and again it points to the fact that it signals something, something definite. Only the intention is always veiled" (402). Returning to Nietzsche

through Adorno, music signals something distinct and concealed because it distinctly represents the “will,” the sign for that which is incomprehensible. While music does not require the mediation of *gesture* symbolism to articulate itself, this is not to say that it has immediate access to something absolute beyond representations; music requires the mediation of the listening subject, who is located in a particular concrete socio-economic context. Adorno goes on to discuss the difference between music and language in a way which refines this last point, noting that “Music shows its similarity to language once more in that, like signifying language, it is sent, failing, on a wandering journey of endless mediation to bring home the impossible. Except that its mediation unfolds according to a different law from that of signifying language, not in meanings that refer to each other, but in their mortal absorption into a context that preserves meaning even as it moves beyond that meaning with every motion” (404). Musical meaning “mortally absorbs” itself in the dialectical relation between the particular listening subject and her “context”; however, it simultaneously exceeds the confines of that meaning at every passing instant, because it does not strictly *speak to* a particular signifying field. It transgresses the limits of intelligibility. For the literary artist, engaging with a “musical” model of representation can liberate the semiotic instruments of language from adhering to a strictly intelligible, literal language. In striving to name the unnamable, *gesture symbolism* mobilizes itself to intensify the *tonal-affective* component of language. Performing a representation of the “incomprehensible” necessitates the formation of new, equally “incomprehensible” gestures. A musical model provides the literary artist with an engine for aesthetic experimentation.

This analysis of the dual structure of language in relation to music works to sharpen a discussion of his Apollonian-Dionysian bi-duality by providing the concept with a definite theoretical framework: the Dionysian and Apollonian drives roughly correspond to the two different modes of representation which Nietzsche outlines in “On Music and Words.” In *The Birth* Nietzsche locates the Apollonian-Dionysian bi-polarity within three concrete aesthetic contexts: attic tragedy, ancient lyric poetry, and the Wagnerian music-drama. In all three, he associates the Dionysian drive with music and the Apollonian drive with words before detailing the mechanics of their “reciprocal intensification” (*BT.* 4. 28), their *Anders-Streben*, where each strives to speak the language of the other. However, throughout the text the Apollonian and Dionysian drives work as abstractions which carry a dizzying array of additional associations; they do not exclusively signify “words” and “music.” The general characteristics of each art drive are implicit in these aesthetic contexts, and thus must be unpacked prior to a reading of the Apollonian-Dionysian bi-polarity as an instance of an *Anders-streben* between language and music.

Nietzsche first introduces the Apollonian and Dionysian drives with a physiological metaphor which evokes the title of the book. He argues that the evolution of art is bound up with the historical antagonism of both drives: “These two very different drives (*Triebe*) exist side by side, mostly in open conflict, stimulating and provoking (*reizen*) one another to give birth to ever-new, more vigorous offspring in whom they perpetuate the conflict inherent in the opposition between them (*BT.* 1. 14). Classifying the Apollonian and Dionysian as “drives” which “erupt from nature itself, *without the mediation of any human artist*” (*BT.* 2. 19; Nietzsche’s emphasis) signals

the text's imperative to "birth" an aesthetic philosophy which differs from the Platonic tradition. First, artworks have their genesis in two different "natural" modes of *representation*; they are not mimetic copies of an immutable supersensible (extra-natural) Ideal Form. Nietzsche gives the concept of dissimulation—of surfaces, illusions, representations—primacy here. The text refuses to de-value representations by characterizing them as lesser manifestations of a greater "truth," insisting instead that they are a natural and thus acceptable fact of existence: if being in the world necessarily entails that "one can never get beyond representations," philosophy should follow suit and develop an aesthetics which accommodates this fact. Already Nietzsche's concept demonstrates the text's sympathy with the world of becoming and the vicissitudes resulting from unstinting, "vigorous," conflict—with incompleteness, rather than closure. *The Birth's* figurative stress on physiology throws Platonic stability and wholeness out with the bathwater. It also emphasizes the ethics implicit in the relation between both drives by exploding classical aesthetic hierarchies: this "natural" model encourages rigorous, querulous engagement with the other, rather than subordination. The Dionysian drive does not bow in deferral to the Apollonian; the Apollonian does not bow in deferral to the Dionysian; neither bows in deferral to something greater "outside" the natural world.

The text's opening emphasis on the body leads to an important quality associated with the Dionysian drive: intoxication. The analogy of intoxication best describes how the feelings of "horror" and "blissful ecstasy" jointly arise when people "suddenly become confused and lose faith in the cognitive forms of the phenomenal world" (*BT*. 1. 17). Here, Nietzsche classifies the Dionysian drive as the first species of

representation, associating it with the “will”: that which is formless and incomprehensible, lying outside the “cognitive forms of the “phenomenal world.” The concomitant feeling of erotic pleasure (“ecstasy”) and pain (“horror”) accompanies this transgression of cognitive and social boundaries. As Nietzsche explains, there is a “strange mixture and duality in the affects of the Dionysiac enthusiasts, that phenomenon whereby pain awakens pleasure while rejoicing wrings cries of agony from the breast” (*BT*. 2. 21). In isolation, such extreme pleasure and pain is non-normative—the “strange” particularly Dionysian “mixture” of the two even more so. Dionysian intoxication thus signifies excess: an unrestricted superabundance of expression which subsumes normatively contradictory feelings, and collapses the Aristotelian division between the comic and the tragic. Peter Rampley notes that Nietzsche’s decision to choose the “absurdly comic figure of the satyr as the archetypal Dionysian symbol” serves “as an indication of the double aspect of the Dionysian” (*Nietzsche, Aesthetics, and Modernity*, 104)—the satyr’s wild, unrestrained laughter on the tragic stage is emblematic of the Dionysian notion that “despite all changing appearances, life is indestructibly mighty and pleasurable” (*BT*. 7. 39). Nietzsche’s ribald, exuberant tragic satyr emphatically deflates the stock Aristotelian notion that tragedy results in moral edification. Despite the text’s tangible enthusiasm for the Dionysiac, which is made manifest in its compulsion to resist classical aesthetic conventions, the Dionysian drive does not exist in isolation. Recalling Nietzsche in “On Music and Words,” the Dionysian drive serves as the bass-grounding for the second, *gestural* mode of representation, which he associates with the Apollonian drive.

As its association with dreams and the Greek god of light implies, the Apollonian drive is linked with image-making: with delineating beautiful, intelligible forms. This stands in contrast to the Dionysiac, which constantly transgress the boundaries of form in striving to represent the formless “will.” What drives the Apollonian dream-image is the “instinct (*Triebe*) for beauty” (*BT*. 3. 23): Nietzsche remarks that “we take pleasure in dreaming, understanding its figures without mediation; all forms speak to us; nothing is indifferent or unnecessary” (*BT*. 1. 15). The Apollonian dream-image “speaks” intelligibly to our “understanding,” working to resolve contradictory elements so that nothing appears “indifferent” or “unnecessary”; Apolline beauty rests on the pleasure derived from *recognition*. Having the will to discriminate, to represent only what is necessary illustrates the Apollonian drive’s ethical demand for measure and limitation, which Nietzsche associates with a deification of “the limits of the individual” (*BT*. 4. 27). This is to say that the Apollonian drive prescribes to a degree of normativity in order to clearly communicate its dream-images—an audience, a sense of community, and a common signifying field of gestures.

Crucially, however, the limitations which the Apolline imposes on experience are not arbitrary, or superficially moral in their origin. The Apollonian drive creates beautiful forms after fully recognizing and experiencing “the terrors and horrors of existence” (“The Dionysiac Worldview,” 124); its dream-images represent an attempt to affirm the fact of suffering by drawing from the “the inner world of fantasy” (*BT*. 1. 16). Hardly the expression of innocence or naivety, Apolline art is intimately acquainted with both the harsh nature of reality, and the darker aspects of inner psychic

life: its materials are knowingly derived from, and a response to these sources.

Whereas Dionysiac representation fuses form and content by attempting to perform that which is overwhelmingly incomprehensible, Apollonian dream-images find intelligible gestures to illuminate that which is obscured in “darkness.”

According to Nietzsche, it is on the stage of attic tragedy that the Dionysian and Apollonian drives appear in equal measure, and eventually pass into the condition of the other. Here the Dionysian and Apollonian drives primarily signify music and language, respectively; however, he notes that an early intimation of this *Andersstreben* occurs in ancient lyric poetry, and first introduces the mechanics of their reciprocal intensification with the example of Archilochus. In the case of the ancient lyric poet, who is also a musician, a “*musical mood*” (BT. 5. 29; Nietzsche’s emphasis) must precede the act of linguistic composition: Archilochus thus begins as a “Dionysiac artist” who has “become one with the primordial unity, with its pain and contradiction,” producing “a copy of this primordial unity as music” (BT. 5. 30). This passage is unfortunately encumbered with Platonic language. More accurately—according to Nietzsche’s own theoretical framework—the lyric poet attempts to *represent* the “will,” which he experiences through a formless “musical mood,” through music; his music is not a mere “copy” of the “primordial unity.” Nietzsche’s apparently off-hand remark that Archilochus sings “the entire *chromatic scale* of his passions and desires” (BT. 5. 29; my emphasis) implies that he has Wagnerian dissonance in mind when he speaks of Dionysian music. The lyric poet’s feelings burst through the rigid structure of conventional tonality; they are incomprehensible, a strange, contradictory brew of pleasure and pain which can only be adequately

represented by musical expression. As it stands, Archilochus' intoxicated, chromatic outbursts verge on incoherence. His ecstatic, heightened musical mood requires a translator, the mediation of Apollo: "...under the influence of Apolline dream, this music in turn becomes visible to him as in a *symbolic dream image*. The image-less and concept-less reflection of the original pain in music, with its release and redemption in semblance, now generates a second reflection, as a single symbolic likeness (*Gleichnis*) or *exemplum*" (BT. 5. 30; Nietzsche's emphasis). Apollo engages with the darkness, the horror and bliss which non-normative Dionysian music evokes, bringing the *tonal* grounding into clarity with beautiful linguistic gestures. Strangely, from here Nietzsche awkwardly concludes his account of ancient lyric poetry by attempting de-value the mediation of Apollonian light, making a series of unqualified absolute conditions: "The whole discussion firmly maintains that, whereas lyric poetry depends utterly on the spirit of music, music itself, in its absolute sovereignty has no *need* of images and concepts but merely *tolerates* them as an accompaniment" (BT. 6. 36; Nietzsche's emphasis). This passage evinces both the early Nietzsche's vestigial loyalty to Wagnerian-Schopenhauerian melocentric ideology and a lack of refinement in his argument—despite these obvious flaws, this initial concrete discussion of the relationship between music and language helps make the *Anders-streben* in attic tragedy more clear, a context where the importance of Apollonian language is not foreclosed.

Whereas Dionysian music in lyric poetry is certainly dissonant, it reaches cataclysmic levels of ugliness and disharmony in tragedy, when it represents the horrific destruction of the individual at the hands of fate. Retrieving Dionysian music

from the abyss of attic tragedy is no mean task: Apollonian representation must “convince us that even the ugly and disharmonious is an artistic game which the Will, in the eternal fullness of its delight, plays with itself” (BT. 24. 114),” to find “delight” in qualities and things normatively considered taboo, improper, or forbidden. It redraws the boundaries of individuation to accommodate Dionysian representations, which would otherwise pose as a threat to individual experience. As Nietzsche explains, “With enormous force of image, concept, ethical doctrine and sympathetic excitement, the Apolline wrenches man out of his orgiastic self-destruction...and induces in him the delusion he is seeing a single image of the world” (BT. 21. 102). The phrase “sympathetic excitement” begins to speak to the first phase in this *Andersstreben*, where Apollo’s ability to *feel with* Dionysus, to register the affects of Dionysian pleasure and pain, excites in him the ability to communicate the other with new-found gestures inflected with what is strange, and unknown. Apollonian linguistic gestures “[shield] us from music... [they] also grants music its supreme freedom for the first time” (BT. 21. 100) in that through Apolline mediation, formless Dionysian representations of the “will” can divest themselves with presumably unrestricted freedom into newly-created conditions for gestural representation. Conversely, Dionysian music endows Apollonian dream-images with a degree of unintelligibility—a degree of strangeness which passes over the strictures of a particular signifying field. By passing into the condition of Dionysian music, language can take advantage of previously repressed modes of representation to *perform* what it describes. Dionysus intensifies the *tonal* aspect of language so that it intermittently disrupts the conventions of speech, giving words an intimation of the unknown. Under the influence of the

Apollonian-Dionysian bi-polarity, the *tonal* and *gestural* components of language mutually reinforce one another.

### **Notes for Chapter I**

<sup>1</sup> The phrase “logo-melocentrism” is my own.

## II. Joyce & Wagner: “joco-serious” and “lugugugubrious” Musical Expressionisms

Nietzsche’s staging of the *Anders-streben* between music and language speaks to a larger trend in late Romanticism and early modernism, which Edmund Wilson acutely summarizes in *Axel’s Castle*: “At the time when Romantic music had come closest to literature, literature was attracted to music” (Wilson, 19). In many ways, Richard Wagner’s music-dramas are emblematic of this phenomenon<sup>1</sup>: in the sentence preceding this passage Wilson briefly notes Richard Wagner’s influence on the French symbolists; Nietzsche himself knew Wagner personally and dedicated *The Birth of Tragedy* to him; Jacques Aubert makes note of the fact “that in Ireland, at the time Joyce was leaving Belvedere College, Wagner’s influence was greater than ever among writers” (*The Aesthetics of James Joyce*, 25). While the Apollonian-Dionysian bipolarity represents Nietzsche’s attempt to demonstrate the reciprocal intensification of music and language, he does not theorize in concrete terms how language, specifically, can be a resource for music. Yes, the light emanating from Apollonian language makes the radical dissonance of the tragic chorus’ music intelligible on the stage. However, Nietzsche’s narrow reading of the concept of “absolute music,” best demonstrated in his claim that “music itself, in its absolute sovereignty has no *need* of images and concepts but merely *tolerates* them as an accompaniment” (*BT*. 6. 36; Nietzsche’s emphasis), prevents him from realizing that composers do not always merely “tolerate” the influence of language and literature. Wagner’s music theory, which Schoenberg tellingly likens to “musical prose,” provides an excellent example of a musician *welcoming* the influence of language (it must be noted that the musical concepts

mentioned here have been attributed *to* Wagner by music critics and historians). Examining the dynamics of Wagner's "prosaic" music theory along with his expressionist aesthetics provides a distinct hermeneutical vista from which to view James Joyce's radical use of literary allusions in *Ulysses*, particularly in the chapter "Scylla and Charybdis": his literary allusions form something like a poly-thematic fabric, operating according to a Wagnerian logic of profuse expression<sup>2</sup>. This aspect of *Ulysses* thus reads as second wave *Anders-streben*; Wagner's initial engagement with language crosses back over into Joyce's use of musical allusion.

### **Wagner's New Path**

Thomas Grey situates Wagner's aesthetic project in relation to Beethoven's claim, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, that his music was taking an entirely "new path." Grey argues that an important, if not the most important aspect of Wagner's "new path" is the leitmotif ("Leitmotif, temporality, and musical design in the *Ring*," 87)—however, he does not entirely elucidate *what* makes Wagner's take on motivic composition new, i.e. he does not discuss the leitmotif in relation to the "old" path from which Wagner deviates. Placing too much emphasis on the leitmotif also obscures its important link with two other important Wagnerian compositional principles: "endless melody" and "musical prose."

Wagner's cycle of four epic operas, *Der Ring des Nibelungen* (The Ring of the Nibelung), marks a critical turning point in his work: where he decisively breaks forward onto his "new path." As Carl Dahlhaus notes, in *Lohengrin*, the opera composed previous to the *Ring* cycle, "the regular periodic phrase-structure that

Wagner [later] scorned as ‘compositional foursquareness’ reigns virtually supreme. Deviations from this syntactical rule can be viewed as exceptions... In contrast, from *Das Rheingold* on, the four-measure group, however frequent, no longer functions as a pattern and frame of reference for the musical syntax... ‘Foursquareness’ tends to dissolve into ‘musical prose.’” (*Nineteenth Century Music*, 199). The “four-square” or quadratic mode of musical syntax corresponds to a decidedly “classical,” or traditional notion of musical form grounded on the relation of proposition and response. The proposition-response structure is *architectural*, in that it emphasizes “the balance of complementary parts” (*Between Romanticism and Modernism*, 59). Dahlhaus helpfully explains that the proposition-response structure manifests itself in multiple ways, including rhythm and thematic development: “...the relationship between upbeats and downbeats to the answering of an antecedent clause by a consequent, from the relationship between exposition and development within one subject group to the contrast between subject groups as a whole” (59). Structural balance necessarily implies harmonic tonality, where tension (the proposition) stems from the melody’s changing relation to a firmly established tonic, and is resolved via a formal cadence back to the tonic (the response). The melody does not “wander”: its movements are carefully plotted to ensure that it always returns “home” to the I chord. Traditional melodic form is formulaic, a primarily technical, or compositional factor.

Wagner’s concept of “endless melody,” predicated on the rejection of formulaic proposition-response structure in exchange for a principle of expression, branches off from traditional musical syntax to establish a “musical prose”—a discursive sonic language supple enough to express musical ideas. Quadratic syntax lacked aesthetic

integrity in that it was “open to the charge of creating opportunities for empty rhetoric or interpolations which express little or nothing” (*Between Romanticism and Modernism*, 54). The “endless” aspect of “endless melody” does not designate aimlessness, but rather *limitless* expression. It signals Wagner’s insistence that “every note has meaning, that the melody is language and not empty sound. The technical characteristic [of endless melody], the absence of formal cadences, is merely a consequence of the aesthetic factor: cadences are regarded as formulas, syntactic but not semantic components” (56). Wagner thus views each melodic “note” like a linguistic sign, endowed with semantic potential: melody is equivalent to meaning. Shifting from a strictly diatonic harmony to one which embraces chromaticism works to expand the possibilities of musical meaning, accommodating a wider range of significations—it is this aspect of Wagnerian harmony which energizes Nietzsche’s theorization of the Dionysian drive. However, this rigorous principle of expression, which entails the radical dismantling of classical structure, posed a compositional problem for Wagner: his musical ideas shrank from the empty excesses of quadratic syntax concomitantly with his desire to compose monumental, long-form pieces (the entirety of the *Ring* cycle runs nearly fifteen hours long). If every melodic note carries meaning in itself, and the piece eschews a formal architectonics determining the relation of melodic parts to compositional whole from without, then a new form must be devised to accommodate both the aesthetic integrity of the melody while still establishing some form of coherence over the music-drama’s entirety.

The importance of the leitmotif centers on the fact that it provided Wagner with a way out of this impasse. Chapell White offers a quick working definition of the

leitmotif: “it is a musical idea that is associated with some element in the drama” (*Introduction to the Life and works of Richard Wagner*, 73). The significance of this idea is two-fold. On the one hand, as Dahlhaus notes, “Leitmotiv technique...is formally constitutive...Irregular groupings of measures which no longer bends to the law of ‘foursquareness’ tends towards syntactic conjunction, or *parataxis*, where passages of melody are loosely juxtaposed instead of being bracketed by the subordinating principle of ‘rhythm in the large’” (*Nineteenth Century Music*, 200). Parataxis is a grammatical term denoting “the placing of propositions or clauses one after another, without indicating by connecting words the relation (of coordination or subordination) between them” (*OED*. def. 1. noun). In this context, it signifies the removal of “unmelodic” coordinating or subordinating conjunctions (meaningless, technical aspects of traditional melody); internal cohesion is “constituted” in the “loose” associations between musical ideas—suggestively. Leitmotiv technique puts metrically incongruous melodic parts together according to a relational internal logic, rejecting an exterior absolute “subordinating principle.” On the other hand, however, the “articulateness” of this melodic discourse “is linked to the dramaturgical function which it serves in the music drama...the motives become elements of a musical language by virtue of their meaning, a *meaning that accrues to them from the overriding plot* and from the contextual system which they establish among themselves...The fact that the Valhalla motive in the first *Rheingold* interlude derives from the Ring motive is part of its semantic essence.” (200; my emphasis). Wagner uses leitmotifs to knit his relational “musical prose”—which pushes toward the potentially infinite play of signification—together with the dramatic elements of the

opera. They endow melodic parts with a linguistic function which gestures towards the particular signifying field of the drama, allowing music to float between free expressive play and the overdetermination of plot. His form resembles a poly-thematic web, or a fabric, rather than an architectural structure.

Wagner's *Anders-streben* here recalls Nietzsche's Apollonian-Dionysian bipolarity. While Nietzsche locates the Wagnerian music-drama as a "modern" locus for the reciprocal intensification of both drives, he fails to identify the leitmotif as the mixed, categorically unstable product of their interaction. Indeed, Nietzsche's focus is decidedly not on the *Ring* cycle—wherein Wagner first broke unto his new compositional path—but on *Tristan und Isolde*, which he alludes to several times in the text, and is the only one of Wagner's operas which he names outright (*BT*, 21). *Tristan* still proves to be a suitable model for Nietzsche's project, despite the "tired cliché" that in "*Tristan und Isolde* music reigns supreme over poetry" ("*Tristan und Isolde: essence and appearance*," 118). John Daverio refutes this conventional assumption, persuasively arguing that, although Wagner composed much of the *Tristan* music in isolation from text, the "'music without text' (or music straddling a number of texts) may nonetheless be firmly rooted in a poetic idea feeling or conceit" (120). This brings him to the conclusion that in *Tristan*, it is "more sensible to argue for a reciprocal relationship between the textual and musical elements...one element aspiring to the condition of the others...while *music* of incredible immediacy and power determines the 'appearance' of *Tristan*, its fundamental tone is *poetic* through and through. Neither aspect is conceivable without the other" (121). Both *Tristan* and the *Ring* enthusiastically perform an *Anders-streben* between words and music, although the

terms of this relation can be read in different ways. Nietzsche's interpretation of *Anders-streben* bears a closer resemblance to Daverio's reading of *Tristan*, while Wagner's reliance on leitmotiv technique to structure the *Ring* cycle resonates more with Joyce's allusive technique in "Scylla and Charybdis."

In his study *Joyce and Wagner*, Timothy Martin exhaustively details not only Joyce's extensive knowledge of Wagner, which covers both Joyce's reception of pan-European literary Wagnerism and his experience as a frequent audience member at productions of Wagner's music-dramas, but also his own professional-level musical ability, including his proficiency at reading scores. However, reading Wagner as Joyce's primary musical influence risks falling into the musical history narrative which posits a hard split in 19<sup>th</sup> century opera between the two poles of Wagner (German) and Verdi (Italian): his works and biographical evidence demonstrate an intimate knowledge of both traditions, and it would be erroneous to say that Joyce preferred German at the exclusion of Italian opera. Despite this, Martin convincingly argues that "Joyce's work takes up a [distinctly] Wagnerian gauntlet. Both artists created epic, even monumental work; went to extreme limits to portray interior life; made sexual relations a thematic focus; extended the limits of musical and linguistic syntax; exploited the resources of myth." (168). Here Martin fails to note the crucial differences between Joyce and Wagner, particularly in regard to their politics. Wagner's deep investment in German nationalism inflects his theorization of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* (total art-work) and his engagement with Nordic mythology, which he persistently uses to uphold conventional notions of heroism. This stands in stark contrast to Joyce's cosmopolitanism, whose well-documented criticism of the Irish

Literary Movement demonstrates his resistance to nationalist politics. Martin's first point in reference to the "monumentally" of their respective works is perceptive, however: "Wagner's greatest legacy to Joyce may have been the simple fact of his existence, which challenged the ambitious young writer to aspire to a certain stature – that of 'a great modern artist' who could create 'great' works of art" (168). This repeated emphasis on scale helps sharpen a Wagnerian reading of Joyce's use of allusion in "Scylla and Charybdis." Wagner's structural impasse in composing the *Ring* cycle between the expressive melodic part and the sprawling dramatic whole in addition to his leitmotiv solution provides a theoretical framework especially sensitive to the dynamics of Joyce's *Ulysses*, which rivals Wagner's music-dramas both in terms of proliferation of detail and epic scope.

### **Joyce's Shakespearean Rag: Musical Prose and Leitmotiv in "Scylla and Charybdis"**

In his 1923 review of *Ulysses*, T. S. Eliot praises Joyce for his invention of the so-called "mythic method": Eliot reads the text's allusions to Homer as a newfound subordinating principle fit to accomplish the formidable task of ordering the modern world. He explains his definition of the "mythic method" toward the end of the review: "It is simply a way of controlling, of ordering, of giving shape and a significance to the immense panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history" ("Ulysses, Order, and Myth," 177). Eliot's notion of "order" here bears a remarkable resemblance to the classical musical syntax from which Wagner deviates. It assumes that Joyce's text neatly fits into a Homeric architectonics, wherein each allusion (proposition)

corresponds directly to a mythical referent (response). Ironically, Eliot's notion of a "new" order subscribes to a classical concept of aesthetic form, where a pre-existing structural principle wholly determines the relation of parts to whole from the outside; his obvious contempt for "contemporary history" telegraphs his thinly-disguised classicism, which leads him to misread Joyce's use of literary allusions, and their relation to structure. Rather than an architectural model predicated on proposition and response, Joyce's literary allusions work similarly to Wagnerian "musical prose," in that they strive for limitless expression. Each allusion has melodic-expressive weight in itself, which in turn redoubles as the allusive melody progresses via an associative, rather than "symmetrical" logic. Despite the semiotic excess which Joyce's allusive technique generates, his allusions work like Wagner's leitmotifs in that they form a web-like contextual system in relation to the novel's plot. Joyce thus trans-values Eliot's classical conception of "order" in a Wagnerian manner, making both the modern world possible for art, and art possible for the modern world.

The text aggressively pursues this "musical" allusive technique in the chapter "Scylla and Charybdis," which fittingly takes place in the Irish National Library. The chapter is saturated with literary allusions, particularly to Shakespeare's plays, and sustains its endless allusive melody over the course of the entire chapter. Despite the chapter's vast allusive scope, an analysis detailing the mechanics of Joyce's leitmotiv technique only requires a close examination of a small number of allusions, which in this case are limited to the chapter's opening pages.

"Scylla" opens with a barrage of allusions to at least five major figures in the Western literary canon: Goethe, Shakespeare, Blake, Milton, and Dante. Contrary to

classical harmony, each melodic allusion constitutes an independent musical idea, sparking an endless, rather than delimited amount of signification when read in relation to one another—the chapter’s first page dances an allusive “cinque-pace” to the tune of a fluid “musical prose” which resists harmonic resolution in favor of suggestive resonance. Lyster, “the Quaker librarian,” “plays” the chapter’s first melodic phrase: “—And we have, have we not, those priceless pages of *Wilhelm Meister*? A great poet on a great brother poet. A hesitating soul taking arms against a sea of troubles, torn by conflicting doubts, as one sees in real life” (*Ulysses*, 184). Don Gifford notes that the “priceless pages” of Goethe’s text to which Lyster refers comprises the passages where “Wilhelm translates and revises (remolds) *Hamlet* and participates in a production of his version of the play. Lyster and his contemporaries assumed that Goethe’s ‘priceless pages’ . . . are [his] thinly disguised personal commentary on and response to Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*” (*Ulysses Annotated*, 193). Lyster’s remark that these pages portray “a great poet on a great brother poet” thus refers to Goethe dramatizing the process of “translating” Shakespeare in the theater of his own artwork; Wilhelm’s reading of *Hamlet* works as a metonym for Goethe’s own reading of *Hamlet*. In its verb form, the word “translate” originally denotes: “To bear, convey, or remove from one person, place or condition to another; to transfer, transport” (*OED*. def. 1a. verb). Taking the nuances of this word into consideration reveals the full implication of Lyster’s last sentence: as Hamlet’s “hesitating,” “conflicted” affectation transfers over to Wilhelm in the act of interpretation, so Wilhelm’s Hamletic affectation transfers over to Goethe “in real life.” In this Goethean melodic phrase, re-making the literary past leads to a transportation of the self, blurring the lines between begetter and

begotten: does Goethe rewrite *Hamlet*, or *Hamlet* rewrite Goethe?

The text immediately juxtaposes this passage with a bizarre allusion to Shakespeare. Lyster's scholarly, reverent remark is humorously offset by a description of his movements: "He came a step a sinkapace forward on neatsleather creaking and a step backward a sinkapace on the solemn floor." (*Ulysses*, 184). The word "Sinkapace" is derived from the French *cinque-pace*, meaning five-step dance, and culled from *Twelfth Night*, when Belch advises Sir Andrew Aguecheek on the manner of a fop; "neatsleather" refers to a speech made by a cobbler in *Julius Caesar* (*Ulysses Annotated*, 193). At face value, this allusion ironically undermines the "solemnity" embedded in the previous allusion; the text pulls at its syntactical puppet-strings, making a mockery out of the foppish Lyster by having him dance a silly "sinkapace" in shoes cobbled together from a Shakespeare play. Tonally, this melodic allusion strays outside the key established by the first phrase. Its farcical allusive humor could be straight out of an *opera buffa*, a far cry from Goethe's heavy Teutonic overtones. Despite the obvious dissonance between these two passages—heightened by their paratactic juxtaposition—there is an internal logic at play which makes this second allusive phrase more than a comic cancellation of the first. Here, Joyce's text effectively performs an inter-textual operation similar to Wilhem's translation and (re-)production of *Hamlet*: like Goethe's novel, *Ulysses* "transports" cobbled together bits of Shakespeare into an entirely different context and makes that intertextual mongrel mixture perform on its stage—this humorous allusion poses the question as to whether Joyce's text rewrites Shakespeare, or whether Shakespeare rewrites Joyce in response to the question implicit in Lyster's remark.

Joyce's tendency to express dissonance humorously, rather than earnestly, speaks to how his musicality deviates from Wagner's. Daniel Albright claims that Wagner "perhaps deserves the title of the first Expressionist composer, both as practitioner and theoretician...he considered his music a set of momentary seizures of nameless emotions or 'indefinite presentiments—a 'pure organ of feeling [that] speaks out the very thing which words speech in itself cannot speak out...*the unspeakable*" (*Modernism and Music*, 252; Wagner's emphasis). Wagner's "expressionistic" impulse here corresponds to an investment in portraying turbulent, unspeakable, inner psychic states—"heavy" themes in other words, which Leopold Bloom hilariously describes later on in "Sirens": "Chords dark. Lugugugubrious. Low. In a cave of the dark middle earth. Embedded ore. Lumpmusic." (*Ulysses*, 283). Despite their striking similarities, Joycean "expression" tends to manifest itself in a sense of play, and exhibits a taste for ironic distance largely absent in Wagner's "lugugugubrious" "lumpmusic." To be fair, Bloom is "a pure amateur" when it comes to music: while the text expresses sympathy with Bloom's feeling that "Wagnerian music, though confessedly grand in its way, was a bit too heavy...and hard to follow at the first go off" (661), its sophisticated application of Wagnerian musical concepts demonstrates a more complex attitude towards the "first Expressionist composer."

"Scylla's" allusive-melodic discourse plays on, modulating from the comic tenor of Shakespeare to Blake's prophetic sonorities. With "elder's gall," John Eglinton—a member of the Dublin *literati*—asks Stephen if he has "found those six brave medicals...to write *Paradise Lost* at your dictation? *The Sorrows of Satan* he calls it" (184). Gifford notes the immediate reference to Blake's *Milton*, and his

description of the poet brooding on his “Sixfold Emanation” (*Milton*. Book the first. Plate 2. Line 19). Here, Eglinton refers to the material process of *Paradise Lost*’s composition, mocking Stephen’s ambition to rewrite the poem from the perspective of Milton’s Satan: Milton was blind, and by necessity dictated the poem aloud to his daughters. Stephen’s ambition derives from Blake’s famous claim that “Milton wrote in fetters when he wrote of Angels / & God, and at liberty when of Devils & Hell...because he was a true / Poet and of the Devils party without knowing it (*The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, Plate 5). In the immediate context of this allusion, the text aligns Stephen with both Blake and Blake’s Milton. These allusive overtones situate Stephen in relation to the other men in the room. A few lines after the passage cited by Eglinton, Blake wonders “What cause at length mov’d Milton to this unexampled deed / A Bards prophetic Song! For sitting at eternal tables , / Terrific among the Sons of Albion in chorus solemn & loud / A Bard broke forth! All sat attentive to the awful man” (Book the first, plate 2, lines 21-24). Harold Bloom offers a helpful commentary on the dramatic context of the poem, which works to clarify this passage and how it figures into “Scylla”: “...*Milton* centers on the consciousness of the poet himself. The struggle is clearly an internal one...Milton, in the poem, is shown as casting off his own selfhood, and moving toward a visionary emancipation that Blake desires as his own” (“Commentary,” 909). Like Blake’s Milton, Stephen is a “Bard” sitting among a “chorus” of men, the “Sons of [Erin]: Lyster, George A.E. Russell, Richard Best, Eglinton. Eglinton’s jibe effectively places Stephen in a position to “break forth” with a “prophetic song” of his own in rebuttal. However, as Bloom’s note makes clear, Blake’s Milton possesses qualities which he desires as his own. He

remakes Milton into a kind of poetic role-model, the poet he wishes to be, though as Eglinton's biographical reference to Milton suggests, Blake's Milton is clearly a fiction: the actual Milton was crippled—psychologically and physically wounded by his blindness—when he composed his epic. Despite this qualification, Blake's "translation" of Milton resonates with the inter-textual operation at work in the Goethe and Shakespeare allusions. By suggestion, this Blakean phrase has the effect of associating the ongoing melodic-allusive discourse with Stephen.

This late accent on Stephen drives the musical discourse inward: the last two musical allusions on the first page occur in his thoughts: "*Orchestral Satan, weeping many a rood / Tears such as angels weep. / Ed egli avea del cul fatto trombetta.*" (*Ulysses*, 184). At this point, the chapter's opening allusive-melody becomes severely agitated, whipping the text into a whirlpool of limitless signification. First, Eglinton's allusion to Blake's *Milton* moves Stephen to recall two different passages in book 1 of *Paradise Lost*. In many ways this melodic-allusion harmonizes with the one before it. The first allusion to the "weeping" "orchestral" Satan occurs when the narrator offers a detailed description of the Arch-fiend's fallen grandeur, a description which recalls Eglinton's blind biographical Milton, the wounded Bard: "So stretched out huge in length the Arch-Fiend lay / Chained on the burning lake, nor ever thence / Had ris'n or heaved his head..." (*PL*. Book 1. Lines 210-212). Milton's captivity in blindness translates into Satan's dark, hellish imprisonment, and vice versa. Further, Milton-Satan's predicament translates back into Stephen's immediate dramatic situation; this begs the question of *what* is holding Stephen captive, a question which positions the chapter in relation to Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, where a younger

Stephen expresses his desire to “fly by [the] nets” of “nationality, language, religion” (*Portrait*, 220). By flying well past the nets of a classical proposition-response structure, this initial Miltonic allusion harmoniously transitions into the second, where Satan summons all his rhetorical powers, making a call for resistance: “For this infernal pit shall never hold / Celestial sprits in bondage, nor th’ abyss / Long under darkness cover... / For who can think submission? War then, war / Open or understood must be resolved” (*PL*. Book 1. Lines 657-662). Here, Satan attempts to rise above the limits imposed on him by Heaven on the wings of rhetorical eloquence, thus establishing what is at stake in the inter-textual translation outlined at the start of the musical-allusive melody—it paves the way for Stephen to make a Satanic, rhetorical flight in a war against his historical overdetermination.

Before this loaded expressive allusive phrase gets encumbered with lumpen Wagnerian “lugugugubrious-ness,” the text brings Milton’s Satan down to comic earth with an allusion to Dante’s *Inferno*. “*Ed egli avea del cul fatto trombetta*” roughly translates into “And of his arse he made trumpet” (Gifford, 194)—Milton’s “orchestral” Satan bellows his musical resistance out of his “arse-trumpet.” Stephen-Satan’s heroic resistance is immediately ironized, and qualified. This allusive phrase not only demonstrates the text’s skeptical attitude towards conventional notions of heroism, but also emphasizes its own humorous mode of resistance. The “nets” of “nationality, language, religion,” can be challenged by embracing conventionally repressed modes of expression, such as flatulence. By insisting that farting can be read as music, the text breaks through the traditional harmonic strictures outlined by Eliot in Wagnerian fashion, though it goes beyond Wagner by incorporating *comic*

chromaticism into its expressive repertoire. As if to underscore this point, the text's allusion to Dante forms the bass note in an emphatic flatulent chord which resounds over the course of *Ulysses*, a chord not found in any diatonic scale: it reverberates at the end of "Sirens," when Bloom defaces Irish hero Robert Emmet's famous last words with an onomatopoeic "pprrpffrrppff" (*Ulysses*, 291); and also during "Penelope," when Molly's fart fuses with the noise emanating from a passing train: "frseeeeeeeffronnng train somewhere whistling the strength those engines have in them" (754). Wagnerian "heaviness" is relieved throughout *Ulysses* by the text's playful, transgressive melodic discourse. The allusive "cinque-pace" which opens "Scylla" nimbly dances between five canonical authors, in addition to Joyce's previous work, to unleash a torrent of signification that could hardly be deemed "orderly." Rather than answering to an outside literary referent, Joyce's allusions—which occupy very different registers—speak in relation to each other, spawning a potentially endless amount of expressive possibilities.

However, Joyce's wide-ranging melodic discourse hovers suggestively over a poly-thematic contextual system: these allusions work like leitmotifs in that they knit the text's musical prose to the chapter's overriding plot, constituting its structure internally. The action of "Scylla" indeed involves Stephen's attempt to emancipate his intellectual promise by offering an esoteric reading of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. As Sam Slote notes, Stephen's claim that Shakespeare wrote himself into the play as Hamlet's ghost "provides, in effect, a genealogy of the artist and the artwork. In proffering an interpretation of Shakespeare's artistic creations, Stephen presents a rationale for his own conceptualization of himself as an artist" (*Joyce's Nietzschean Ethics*, 52). His

interpretation of *Hamlet* is an attempt to break forth as his own Bard, against the various pressures holding him captive, especially his “Agenbite of inwit: remorse of conscience”: the psychological wound resulting from his mother’s death (*Ulysses*, 206). Stephen answers the question first posed by the text’s allusion to Goethe—does Goethe rewrite Shakespeare, or Shakespeare Goethe?—with a “theologophilological” (205) reading of paternity. Stephen’s theory has it that paternity is a “legal fiction” (207): a metaphysical, rather than empirical reality; a “mystical estate” (207) wherein father and son, creator and creation, are consubstantial. In this respect, the act of literary creation involves a “weav[ing] and unweav[ing]” (194) of the creator: a mutual translation where father is transported into to son, and son is transported into father. The text’s musical prose works leitmotivically in that its own allusive, intertextual weaving and unweaving performs the theory which Stephen articulates over the course of the narrative, demonstrating the notion that authorial “Paternity [can be] reduced to being a name, which can be separated from the bearer and transmitted to an heir” (*James Joyce, Authorized Reader* 70). Stephen’s theory effectively clears way for the son, allowing him to father himself. Before Stephen can claim ultimate victory in self-authorization, he admits that he does not believe his own theory (214). His laborious rhetorical pyrotechnics were for naught. The chapter’s narrative anticlimax has its melodic counterpart in Dante’s bellowing arse-trumpet; it concludes by dodging “heavy” Wagnerian transcendence, stepping lightly to the tune of Joyce’s allusive-melody.

## **The Ineluctable Modality of the Audible: Joyce, Noise, and Resistance**

Daniel Barenboim asserts that there is one “overriding answer” in response to why Wagner marks such a critical juncture in music history: the fact that his music ushered in “the loss of tonality” (*Parallels and Paradoxes*, 133). While Joyce’s “Scylla” chapter demonstrates a literary interpretation of the “loss of tonality” by deploying Wagner’s leitmotivic, paratactic musical syntax, his engagement with music and sound in *Ulysses* is not wholly circumscribed within the province of Wagnerian harmony. In fact, Joyce goes beyond Wagner in that his musical prose incorporates extra-musical sound—noise—into its aesthetic repertoire. This facet of Joyce’s text suggests an affinity with John Cage’s “chance music,” particularly his piece *4’33*, in which “musical performance” transforms into an activity where “the notions of ‘musical composition,’ of ‘performance,’ of ‘communication,’ and of the ‘work of art’ are destroyed or drastically altered;...in which the listener becomes directly involved in an activity where the old distinctions and relationships are meaningless” (*Twentieth Century Music*, 153)<sup>3</sup>. Both Cage and Joyce introduce elements of acoustical indeterminacy in order to directly involve the listener-reader in the processes of meaning making, thus radically disrupting the notion of authorial intention.

Noise, when read in relation to the death of the author, thus acquires a political dimension in *Ulysses*. In his book *Noise: The Political Economy of Music*, Jacques Attali claims that music (authorized organization of sounds) can be a tool used by State power to create a community or totality: “A concern for maintaining tonalism, the primacy of melody, a distrust of new languages, codes, or instruments, a refusal of the abnormal—these characteristics are common to all regimes of that nature...they are a

direct translation of the political importance of cultural repression and noise control” (Attali, 7). Attali’s claim resonates strongly with *Ulysses* when it is read as an anticolonial text: the ruling, British imperial class imposes the primacy of its ideological melody over the possibility of differing, “abnormal interpretations,” effecting a policy of “cultural repression” over the Irish. In “Eumaeus,” Joyce dramatizes an instance of imperial sound when Leopold Bloom remarks to Stephen upon the beauty and musicality of the Italian language: “*Bella Poetria!* It is so melodious and full.” (*Ulysses*, 622). Hardly impressed, Stephen yawns, and informs Bloom that the Italian’s “*Bella Poetria*” is in fact a crass, virulent argument over money. Pressed by Bloom to expand upon the disjunction between the “melodious” sound of the language and its semantic content—a mistake Bloom attributes to Italian’s “southern glamor”—Stephen proffers the following aphorism: “Sounds are impostures” (622). This scene works as a metaphor for the kind of totalizing ideological music Attali describes. The *OED* defines “imposture” as the action or practice of imposing upon others, especially within the context of feigning appearance (*OED*. noun, defs. 1-2). Sound is maliciously deceptive when it uses its immediacy as a weapon to impose itself as an absolute, *authoritative* truth when sound, like any mode of expression, is mediated by a variety of competing codes, each positing a number of differing interpretative possibilities. Imposturous, imperial sound silences the multiplicity of “arguing” signs, refusing to engage and account for particularity and difference.

The kind of “imposturous,” imperial sound which Stephen recognizes poses as what Roland Barthes terms the “Author-God.” According to Roland Barthes, the figure

of the Author-God plays in integral part of the State's imperial-tonality, in that "He" functions as a "totality" formed by State power:

The author is modern figure, a product of our society insofar as, emerging from the Middle ages with English empiricism, French rationalism and the personal faith of the Reformation, it discovered the prestige of the individual...it is thus logical that in literature it should be this positivism, the epitome and culmination of capitalist ideology, which has attached the greatest importance to the 'person' of the author...The image of literature to be found in ordinary culture [governed by a normative, imperial-tonality] is tyrannically centered on the author... ("The Death of the Author," 143).

The "tyranny of the author" works to foreclose interpretation by assigning the "meaning" of a text to a single, identifiable origin. Here, the power of the imperial state takes on a theological aspect in the form of an Author-God, who molds an "image of literature" according to the demands of a "capitalist ideology" enabling the exploitation of the cultural "other." However, Barthes posits the "modern scriptor" as an alternative to the Author: "in complete contrast, the modern scriptor is born simultaneously with the text, is in no way equipped with a being preceding or exceeding the writing, is not the subject with the book as predicate; there is no other time than that of the enunciation and every text is eternally written *here and now*" (145; Barthes' emphasis). As Barthes states, the modern scriptor has a completely different spatio-temporal

relation to the text. He exists in the “here and now,” a “multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and crash” (146). Cage’s 4’33 works as a vivid illustration of Barthes’ point. In “writing” a composition composed entirely of silence, Cage re-imagines the composer as a “modern scriptor,” opening the “multi-dimensional space” of the concert hall to a “variety” of extra-musical acoustical sounds—including those of the audience—which jostle, “blend,” and “crash” together to create a multiplicity of meaning. Indeed, with each particular performance, 4’33 is “eternally [re]-written” in the “here and now.”

In “Proteus,” an early chapter of *Ulysses*, Stephen creates the spatio-temporal conditions of the modern scriptor when he closes his eyes while walking along Sandymount Strand. The passage begins with the peculiar phrase “Shut your eyes and see”: “Stephen closed his eyes to hear his boots crush crackling wrack and shells. You are walking through it howsoever...A very short space of time through very short times of space. Five, six: the *nacheinander*. Exactly: and that is the ineluctable modality of the audible” (*Ulysses*, 37). By “ineluctable modality of the audible,” Stephen refers to Aristotle’s notion that “the ear participates in (and thus can modify) the substance of what it hears (Gifford, 44). Sound’s modality is inescapably intertwined and influenced by the listening subject. Stephen, the aspiring poet, hears the noises emanating from the “crackling wrack and shells” in “A catalectic tetrameter of iambs marching. No, agallop” (*Ulysses*, 37). There can thus be no discreet separation between poetic temporality—*nacheinander*—and pictorial space—*nebeneinander*—as Lessing would have it: when Stephen closes his eyes, sound occupies a “multi-dimensional” “short space of time through short time of space.” The

text uses the figure of the beach to link this “space of time, time of space” with a theory of artistic production that harmonizes with Barthes’ modern scriptor: “These heavy sands are language tide and wind have silted here” (44). Buried within the “heavy sands” lies “a tissue of quotations” silted by history, which Stephen is left to interpret, or “disentangle” in the here and now (Barthes, 146-7)—this in turn provokes his remark that it is “Dead breaths I living breathe, tread dead dust, devour a ruinous offal from all dead” (*Ulysses*, 50). The “living” necessarily “breath” the breaths of the dead textual past because a text has no single, identifiable origin.

In this context, the noise of the beach resists the “regime” of the Author-God, a figure encoded in the melody of the imperial state. Attali notes that noise exists only in relation to the system in which it is inscribed, and is thus an expression of violence against that system: “It disturbs. To make noise is to interrupt a transmission, to disconnect, to kill. It is a simulacrum of murder.” (*Noise*, 27). Viewed in this way—a violent interruption—Joyce’s tendency to embrace acoustical and linguistic noise expresses rage, a fierce attempt to “disconnect” the imposturous, totalizing sound of the imperial power. In “Aelous,” Joyce embraces a panoply of irrational, previously repressed noises, allowing them to “speak” for themselves: “Sllt. The nethermost deck of the first machine jogged forwards its flyboard with sllt the first batch of quirefolded papers. Sllt. Almost human the way it sllt calls to attention. Doing its level best to speak...Everything speaks in its own way. Sllt.” (*Ulysses*, 121). Joyce’s language passes into the condition of lexical noise by using a non-lexical onomatopoeia to perform machine-speak. Derek Attridge defines non-lexical onomatopoeia as the attempt to use the letters and sounds—rather than words—of the language used to

“suggest a more than usually strong link between the sounds of speech and the non-speech sounds (or other physical features of the world) being represented,” though he goes on to claim that Joyce utilizes the device to demonstrate the “complications that prevent direct imitation of sounds in language”—and further, that he exploits these complications for stylistic and comic effects (“Joyce’s Noises”). In this example, the text resembles Nietzsche’s “man of intuition” by knowingly using language as scaffold to play in dissimulation. “Sllt” is a self-consciously poor imitation of the sound of mechanical motion; the eruption of linguistic noise in this sentence is obviously playful and absurd, rather than a straight-faced attempt at mimicry. It interrupts the signal of the Author-God by inviting the reader to participate in creating this textual moment by deforming and reconstituting the oppressor’s language; because “sllt” corresponds to no concrete, empirical referent, the reader is free to open the text to a variety of “abnormal,” improper, imaginative interpretations.

## Notes for Chapter II

<sup>1</sup> See Annegret Fauser, “‘Wagnerism’: responses to Wagner in music and the arts.” The sub-section “Extra-musical Wagnerism” neatly details Wagner’s influence on non-musical artists: “Fascinated by Wagnerian reflections on the materiality and interdependence of the arts in his theoretical writings, writers and visual artists also used Wagnerian notions of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* as a catalyst to explore their own methods of artistic production.” (Fauser, 229).

<sup>2</sup> The distinction between resemblance and identity here is crucial. It leaves room for the difference between both Joyce and Wagner’s methods: I am not arguing that Joyce deliberately arranged his allusions according to Wagner’s music composition principles, but rather, that his technique bears the trace of Wagner’s influence.

<sup>3</sup> See the chapter “Anti-Rationality and Aleatory” in Eric Salzman’s *Twentieth Century Music: An Introduction*, and the chapter “Trajectories of Order and Chance” in Joseph Auner’s *Music in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Centuries* for the significance of Cage’s 4’33.



### III. Recoiling from “Something Rich and Strange”: *The Waste Land’s* Modern Musicality

Unlike Joyce, T. S. Eliot refuses to embrace the musical “other” by productively engaging with the tension between music and language. In T. S. Eliot’s *The Waste Land*, the text holds music as an emblem for lost wholeness rather than as a spur energizing poetic experimentation. Allusion, which provided one way into Joyce’s literary music in *Ulysses*, similarly works as an indicator of Eliot’s stance toward music in *The Waste Land*. Like Joyce’s novel, Shakespeare and Wagner both figure as key players in *The Waste Land’s* allusive matrix, though with a crucial difference: Eliot frequently uses allusion to signify contemporary poetry’s inability to achieve the so-called formal “purity” of music; a heap of allusions to Shakespearian and Wagnerian music crater the text’s landscape, and are distorted, soiled upon impact with modernity. Its revulsion of *Anders-streben* puts *The Waste Land* in contradiction to Joyce, who “jocosseriously” deploys allusion musically to contaminate his text with semiotic possibilities.

The text powerfully expresses its fear of inter-medial contamination with its frequent allusions to Ariel’s song in Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*. Ariel’s song occurs early on in Shakespeare’s play after a violent storm besieges and shipwrecks a crew of royal Milanese sea travelers. After concluding that his father Alonso has perished in the storm, Ferdinand mourns his father’s death before an other-worldly music washes over him: “Sitting on a bank, / Weeping again the King my father’s wreck, / This music crept by me on the waters, / Allaying both their fury and my passion / With its sweet air” (*The Tempest*, I.i.390-394). In this context, music possesses soothing,

therapeutic powers: it enables Ferdinand to come to grips with the loss of his father, with paternal authority. Music's "sweet air" fills in the absence created by his father's death, preventing Ferdinand from plunging into a chaotic, "passion"-fueled rage. Ariel, the magical sprite who created the storm at Prospero's behest, proceeds to sing a "ditty" to Ferdinand which further explains the nuances of this Shakespearian music:

Full fathom five thy father lies,  
Of his bones are coral made;  
Those are pearls that were his eyes;  
Nothing of him that does fade,  
But doth suffer a sea-change  
Into something rich and strange. (I.ii.396-405)

Ariel's song provides an excellent example of Nietzsche's theorization of *Anders-streben* in *The Birth of Tragedy*: the reciprocal intensification of the Apollonian and Dionysian drives. Through song (a fusion of music and words) Ariel acknowledges the tragic reality of death, or to use Nietzsche's terminology, the "will," that which is strange and unknowable. He does not shirk the fact that Ferdinand's father lies "a full fathom five" below the water's surface. Rather than recoiling from this strange, terrible truth, Ariel creatively affirms and embraces Dionysian dissonance and fashions it into something aesthetically pleasing, a beautiful Apollonian "lie" enhanced by its encounter with the other: dry bones are reimagined as pieces of coral; empty sockets are filled with brilliant pearls. Ariel's *Anders-streben* not only allows Ferdinand to overcome the physical absence of his father; it also demonstrates the will to overcome the metaphysical absence of meaning by creating new methods of expressing the

inexpressible. Death's strangeness is "rich."

By this logic, Shakespeare's use of song is "postmodern" according to Jean-Francois Lyotard. Lyotard argues in his "Appendix" to *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* that modern art is predicated on an aesthetic of the sublime in that it "devotes its 'little technical expertise' ...to present the fact that the unrepresentable exists" (*The Postmodern Condition*, 4). He distinguishes two "modes" within this "sublime relation": the first, which he deems "modern," emphasizes "the powerless of the faculty of presentation...nostalgia for presence felt by the human subject... [and] the obscure and futile will which inhabits him in spite of everything" (5). Clearly, Ariel's song is not in the modern mode, as it displays the *opposite* of the qualities listed above. His musical Nietzschean language asserts the power of the lyric-poet's faculty of presentation; it dissuades Ferdinand from feeling nostalgia for his father's presence by asserting the will to transform the unrepresentable into something rich and strange. Rather than a modern aesthetic, which puts "the unrepresentable forward only as the missing contents," Shakespearian music is postmodern because it "puts forward the unrepresentable in presentation itself" (6). Instead of offering a blank space to signify Alfonso's rotting corpse and the loss of paternal authority, Shakespeare presents a figurative reconstitution of the unimaginable.

Shakespeare engages with music to re-invent the rules of language by emphasizing "the increase of being and the jubilation which result[s] from the invention of new rules of the game" (5). Ariel's song elects to perform a "jocoserious" "sea-change" rather than wallow in "lugububububrious" nostalgia for Ferdinand's lost, fallen father; his language, richly contaminated by the Dionysiac, exhibits the jubilant result.

When Ariel's song first appears in *The Waste Land*, it appears to retain the significance of its original Shakespearean context. The poem's first section, "The Burial of the Dead," introduces "Madame Sosostris, famous clairvoyante, / ...known to be the wisest woman in Europe," who draws a card for "you," an unidentified bystander: "Here, said she, / Is your card, the drowned Phoenician sailor, / (Those are pearls that were his eyes. Look!)" (*WL*, lines 43-48). The "drowned Phoenician sailor" card does not appear in the standard tarot deck, making its immediate significance unclear, though the fact that the sailor is dead arguably casts an ominous shadow over "you." The parenthetical allusion to Ariel's song appears to "allay" this dubious, potentially dangerous symbol: "Look!" Eliot's speaker urges, the drowned Phoenician sailor can undergo a sea-change just like Alfonso's watery corpse; he invokes Shakespearean music as an aegis against the uncertain future. This allusion acquires additional suggestive power when viewed within the context of the previous verse paragraph, which ends with a quotation from act III of Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*, "*Oed' und leer das Meer* [desolate and empty sea]" (line 22). As Lawrence Rainey notes in his annotations to the poem, this line occurs at a particularly bleak moment in the opera: Tristan, who has just been mortally wounded, is delirious, clinging to life only in the hopes of seeing Isolde; suddenly, he appears to catch a glimpse of Isolde's ship in the distance, but a shepherd informs him that this is an illusion, singing the line quoted in Eliot's text (Rainey, 79). Here, Ariel's song alleviates the heavy, tragic overtones of *Tristan* cast over Madame Sosostris' tarot reading, transposing the Wagner's shepherd song into a "postmodern" mode: the music of the tragic past can also be enriched by the present. "Look," the "sea" is not desolate or empty as the

shepherd says; Isolde may arrive yet. Though the Madame urges “you” to “Fear death by water,” the parenthetical presence of Ariel’s song suggests that the old clairvoyant is not as “wise” as the speaker says simply by the fact that she has not read her Shakespeare (*WL*, line 55).

Eliot turns this postmodern reading of Ariel’s song on its head in section II, retroactively revising Madame Sosostri’s admonition into a thematic guiding the poem. Midway through “A Game of Chess,” the text stages a dialogue between two voices:

I think we are in rat’s alley  
Where the dead men lost their bones  
“What is that noise?”  
The wind under the door.  
“What is that noise now? What is the wind doing?”  
Nothing again nothing.  
“Do  
“You know nothing? Do you see nothing? Do you remember  
“Nothing”  
I remember  
Those are pearls that were his eyes (lines 115-126).

The identity of the two voices is unclear: the scene may take place between two characters, or in the mind of a schizophrenic speaker, though this hardly exhausts other possible alternatives. However, the text’s obsession with fragmentation, underscored by the visual presentation of this passage, encourages a reading of the latter. Freud remarks in his essay on “The Unconscious” that the schizophrenic withdraws his

“instinctual cathexis from the points which represent the *unconscious* presentation of the object,” instead placing “a more intense cathexis” in the object’s word-presentation (“The Unconscious,” 203). Once the word’s relation to its object-presentation—its signified, or verbal sound image, to use Saussure’s term—is severed, they “undergo condensation, and by means of displacement transfer their cathexes to one another in their entirety. The process may go so far that a single word, if it is specially suitable on account of its numerous connections, takes over the representation of a whole train of thought” (199). Losing their roots in the signified (object-presentation), words float freely in the schizophrenic’s pre-conscious, and are thus able to take on an innumerable amount of possible connections outside the bounds of the proper language designated by culture. Freud concludes by characterizing the schizophrenic’s mode of thought “by saying that he treats concrete things as though they were abstract” (204). Living in this world of abstraction signifies a rejection of the boundaries drawn by civilization, and a return to “a primitive objectless condition of narcissism” (197): a removal from what Lacan calls the Symbolic order. The first line in this quotation persuasively demonstrates several qualities characteristic of schizophrenia. The unquoted dramatic speaker has an uncertain, dubious connection to reality: he/she only “thinks” the conversation takes place in “rat’s alley / Where the dead men lost their bones” (*The WL*, lines 115-116). The abstract, hallucinatory quality of this setting suggests a back alley in the “Unreal City,” rather than a concrete locale: the unquoted speaker is eerily like “the Dog” caught digging up corpses “again!” (lines 70-76).

Further, the word “bones” operates according to the condensation-displacement mechanism Freud identifies with both schizophrenic speech and the logic of the dream-

work. Working from his claim that the unconscious is structured like a language, Lacan argues that condensation is coeval with metaphor, while displacement is coeval with metonymy (*Écrits*, 152). This added linguistic dimension sharpens an analysis of the schizophrenic dynamics of Eliot's poem. First, "bones" is obviously severed from its object, which is both Ariel's song and the dramatic context in which it appears in Shakespeare's play: the line "Of his bones are coral made," and the fact that Ariel engages with music to transform Alfonso's corpse into something "rich and strange" (*The Tempest*, I.ii.397-405). In Eliot's text, however, the word "bones" works metaphorically by condensing the language and significance of Shakespeare's postmodern music and associating it with fragmentation, nullity and absence; it stands as a metonym for the original allusion, which has been lost after its displacement into Eliot's modern, contemporary context. In rat's alley the "sweet air" (I.ii.394) of Ariel's song means "nothing." It amounts to empty "noise," wind escaping under the door. Alfonso—the "dead man"—has lost his coral "bones" after coming into contact with the present, no longer a figure for the imaginative and therapeutic powers of music. Lacan's analysis of the relation between metaphor and metonymy helps clarify Eliot's treatment of allusion here: "Metaphor's creative spark does not spring forth from the juxtaposition of two images, that is, of two equally actualized signifiers. It flashes between two signifiers, one of which has replaced the other by taking the other's place in the signifying chain, the occulted signifier remaining present by virtue of its (metonymic) connection to the rest of the chain" (*Écrits*, 148). The dead man's "bones" have metaphorically replaced the allusion to Ariel's song, thus "occluding," or obscuring the original significance of the line "I remember / Those are pearls that were

his eyes” (*WL*, lines 125-6).

Shakespearean music, which signifies a productive engagement between music and language in *The Tempest*, and by extension, a postmodern willingness to creatively contaminate one’s medium by entering into strange relations with the “other,” now signifies the “unpresentable”—Alfonso’s musically transfigured body—as the poem’s missing contents. As “The Fire Sermon” soon reveals, a corpse is left in its place. Here, the text reprises the schizo-song “bones,” echoing Ferdinand’s words to chilling effect:

But at my back in a cold blast I hear  
The rattle of the bones, and chuckle spread from ear to ear.  
A rat crept softly through the vegetation  
Dragging its slimy belly on the bank  
While I was fishing in the dull canal  
On a winter evening round behind the gashouse  
Musing upon the king my brother’s wreck  
And on the king my father’s death before him.  
White bodies naked on the low damp ground  
And bones cast in a little low dry garret,  
Rattled by the rat’s foot only, year to year. (*WL*, lines 185-195).

Freud’s remark in “The Unconscious” that the schizophrenic’s endeavors, which are “directed toward regaining the lost object” (Freud, 204), has its “final outcome in complete apathy” holds true in the case of *The Waste Land* (197). The visual disconnect between the passage’s two speakers in “A Game of Chess,” made more

severe by the contrast between quoted and unquoted dialogue, is not only emblematic of Eliot's estranged relation to music, but of his text's insistence on the futility of presentation: it knows "only / A heap of broken images," and has no interest in imaginatively reconstituting them (*WL*, lines 21-22). The overwhelming emphasis on the word "nothing" here further underscores the poem's exhausted apathy, while hearkening forward to section V, when the speaker states that he-she "can connect / nothing with nothing. / The broken fingernails of dirty hands." (lines 300-303). Implicitly, the text acknowledges that its inability to "connect" with the music of the past stems from its obsession with purity: the disgust it feels for "dirty hands" and "broken images."

Unlike Ariel's song, Eliot's poem presents itself as a symptom, rather than a solution.

In his discussion of the *The Waste Land*, Ben Hutchinson asserts that "the range of styles incorporated into *The Waste Land* can be explained by the decision to renounce any aspiration to a single, coherent 'style'; if the style of *The Waste Land* is impure, it is necessarily so, as a 'symptom' of an impure time" (*Modernism and Style*, 193). The text is passive, preferring to blame its aesthetic impotence on modernity itself, viewed contemptuously as "an impure time" unworthy of the great music and literature of the past. Nowhere does the poem express this sentiment more plainly than in "The Fire Sermon," part III, when Eliot restages the Rhine-maiden's song in Wagner's *Ring* cycle. The Rhine-maidens initially appear in the first opera of the cycle, *Das Rheingold*, as nymphs guarding a lump of gold at the bottom of the Rhine river. They are joyous, expressing their elation right after the rising overture in scene I with the cry

“Weialala leia wallala leialala.” After their gold is stolen by the dwarf Alberich, the Rhine-maidens return in act III of the *Götterdämmerung*, the final opera in the *Ring* cycle, singing of the Rhine gold they have lost and reprising their joyful cry. The Rhine-maiden’s lack of sorrow here is remarkable; despite their loss, they praise the gold with their song, and look forward to the coming of a hero who will return it to them (Rainey, 110-111). Eliot swaps the Rhine for the dirty, modern day Thames; he specifies in his “Notes” to the text that lines 266-291 comprise the song of the Thames-daughters, who “speak in turn” *a la* the Rhine-maidens (“Notes,” 73): “The river sweats / Oil and tar / The barges drift / With the turning tide / ... Weialala leia / Wallala leialala” (*WL*, lines 266-278). The “sweating” Thames is figured as a toiling laborer tarnished by the demands of England’s rapid industrialization; the river-maiden’s cry, as it appears on the page, reads as a *wail* of distress: when divorced from its jubilant Wagnerian context, the allusion distorts into a wild, primal scream bashed out by Eliot on the typewriter. Losing its ecological and musical purity by the hand of modernity causes the text a good deal of consternation. That the section ends in a blaze of “burning,” cleansing Augustinian-Buddhistic salvation is significant (line 311) because it posits the Thames-daughter’s disconsolate wail as a premonition of section IV, “Death by Water.” It can also be read as a terrified reaction to the sudden appearance of Alfonso’s corpse in “The Fire Sermon,” which interrupts a different river song: “Sweet Thames, run softly till I end my song, / Sweet Thames, run softly, for I speak not loud or long. / But at my back in a cold blast I hear / The rattle of the bones, and chuckle spread from ear to ear” (lines 183-186). Demonic laughter, set to the music of rattling bones, “blasts” all the sweetness out of the Thames.

Now that the poem has canceled out the aegis of Ariel's song, it is exposed to the "desolate and empty sea" mentioned by Madame Sosostris. The schizo-song "bones" resurfaces as the text turns to the Phoenician Sailor's newly dead, drowning body, fusing it with Alfonso's corpse: "A current under sea / Picked his bones in whispers. As he rose and fell / He passed the stages of his age and youth / Entering the whirlpool." (lines 315-318). Rendering Alfonso's musicalized body back into a corpse was not enough. The poem cruelly deploys a musical allusion a final time to "pick" the "bones" of its distorted Shakespearean and Wagnerian music, whittling down the "unpresentable" until it is completely absent from the text. After musical allusion's slow "Death by Water," the poem sends the Phoenician sailor-Alfonso's corpse into an unreal "whirlpool" of abstraction. Out of revulsion for modernity, *The Waste Land* abstracts itself from the concrete reality of the present, preferring the void to the demands of temporality. It would prefer to occupy a "primitive object-less condition of narcissism" rather than engage with the "immense panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history" ("Ulysses, Order, and Myth," 177).

### **The Popular, the Horror!: Eliot's Melancholic Gramophone**

In his original manuscript-typescript, Eliot opened *The Waste Land* with an epigraph from Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*: "Did he live his life again in every detail of desire, temptation, and surrender during that supreme moment of complete knowledge? He cried in a whisper at some image, at some vision, — he cried out twice, a cry that was no more than a breath— 'The horror! The horror!' (*The Wasteland Facsimile and Transcript*, 3). Ezra Pound's editorial remarks are hilariously brusque, expressing skepticism in regard to Eliot's quote of choice. Despite the pressure of

Pound's obvious disapproval, Eliot defends the epigraph, writing to Pound that "It is much the most appropriate I can find, and somewhat elucidative" (125). Eliot's critical faculty is spot on: Kurtzian "horror" at modernity is entirely "appropriate" to the dynamics of *The Waste Land*, and also a discussion of the poem's nostalgic, debilitated modern musicality. However, it fails to elucidate an aporia in the logic of the poem: despite its contempt for modernity and its cruel treatment of allusions to canonical musical and literary precursors, the text seems to sympathize with popular music and its method of consumption: the record and the gramophone. A quote from Eliot's later essay "The Music of Poetry" works to bolster this notion: "The music of poetry... must be a music latent in the common speech of its time" (Eliot, 112). If Eliot considers the true "music of poetry" to be the "music latent" in contemporary "common speech" and music, his rough treatment of Shakespearean and Wagnerian music in the *The Waste Land* has some sense: his poem then reads as an act of musical-literary revisionism. Rather than striving after the musical "other" as represented by the Western canon, Eliot seeks to energize his poetry by productively engaging with the music of the "pop" with the "Shakespearean Rag," dialectically bridging the gap between high and low art in the process.

Perry Meisel elaborates on the complementary between high and low art which "The Music of Poetry" implies. Emphasizing the irreconcilable disparity between the Avant-guard and kitsch, as Clement Greenberg does, elides the fact that "values, historically, in art and culture alike, emerge through contrasts within specific contexts" (*The Myth of Popular Culture*, 40). He explains how, exactly, the values of high and low culture and art emerge in relation, or contrast to one another: "High needs to

distinguish itself from ‘low’ in order to be what it is, and given our enthusiasm for a ‘pop’ culture distinct from a ‘high’ or learned one, ‘low’ or ‘pop’ also needs ‘high’ to have its own presumably separate identity. The pop is a function of high culture, not its antitheses in any but a dialectical sense” (59). Meisel also notes that Eliot’s *The Waste Land* thematizes this dialectical relation where high and low are “at once supplemental, and entirely distinct” (40)—however, he does not mention *how* Eliot presents it, whether the text recoils or rejoices after its inevitable interaction with the vernacular.

One of Eliot’s most striking engagements with popular music in *The Waste Land* occurs in “A Game of Chess,” near the end of the section’s schizophrenic verbal-visual breakdown. With manic insistence, the quoted speaker asks their interlocutor: “Are you alive, or not? Is there nothing in your head?” (*WL*, line 126). In response, the text breaks, leaving a gaping blank on the page: yes, there is literally “nothing” there but white noise, save for a single “But” positioned in the far right hand side of the margin (line 127). Expelling “But” to the fringes of the page and making it float in empty space suggests that this is a pitiful gasp, rather than a rebellious riposte by the unquoted speaker. However, he-she soon fills the space with the following line: “O O O O that Shakespeherian Rag—” (line 128). “That Shakespearian Rag” was a popular song first published in 1912 (Rainey, 95); this line is from the start of the chorus, with one important alteration. Tuning into the popular music of the time, the unquoted speaker adds a touch of jazz syncopation to the song’s original title, performing the sounds of the present: the title is “Shakes-pe-her-ian,” rather than “Shakesperian,” when set to music. This is a clear instance of *Anders-streben*. Rather than miming “That Shakesperian Rag” by quoting its lyrics verbatim, the poem’s temporarily passes

into the condition of popular music to produce an instance of performative, musical language. The music of poetry is the music of the “pop”; as the song itself suggests, the reverse is also the case: “Shakespeare never knew / Of ragtime in his days / But the high browed rhymes, / Of his syncopated lines, / You'll admit, surely fit, / any song that's now a hit, / So this rag I submit.” (Quoted in Rainey, 96-99). As Shakespeare’s “high browed rhymes” fit well inside the rag’s “syncopated lines,” so the rag’s “syncopated lines” fit well inside Eliot’s high browed, Avant-guard poem. Does Eliot’s other addition to the rag, “O O O O”, actually signify the jubilation Lyotard identifies with the postmodern artist’s shattering and remaking of language? The dash after “Shakespearean Rag” distances this musical moment from the next two lines, which are dehydrated, distorted bits from the popular song’s chorus: the text replaces “most intelligent, very elegant” with “It’s so elegant / So intelligent” (*WL*, lines 129-130). This mocking chiasmic gesture turns the original song on its head; rather than taking low culture seriously as a means to playfully rejuvenate its poetic language, the text turns up its nose at the popular “other” to which it is nevertheless tied. It literally “submits” to the rag. Eliot qualifies both his own postmodern, musical language, and his sympathetic endorsement of “common” culture—in the *The Waste Land*’s apocalyptic vision of modernity, popular music shreds the high-browed Shakespeare into “rags.”

Eliot’s position is similar to Adorno’s in that while he recognizes the dialectical complementarity of high and low art, he does not view their interrelationship as a productive one. In a passage from “On the Fetish Character in Music and the Regression of Listening,” Adorno remarks that “the unity of the two spheres is thus

that of an unresolved contradiction. They do not hang together in such a way that the lower could serve as a sort of popular introduction to the higher, or that higher could renew its lost collective strength by borrowing from the lower” (35). Eliot’s “Shakespearean Rag” illustrates this claim vividly. The popular song from which the poem borrows does not serve as an “introduction to the higher”—by emphatic contrast, *The Waste Land*’s repeated distortion of Shakespearean and Wagnerian music refuses to “admit” that the great art of the past “surely fits” in context of the present. Further, both Adorno and Eliot reject the possibility of high art performing an *Anders-streben* with low art. As this passage demonstrates, *The Waste Land* cannot “renew its collective strength by borrowing from” the common. For Adorno, the consequence of this “unresolved contradiction” is the “liquidation of the individual”: fleeing from popular culture, high art’s “marketability...shrinks to nothing,” eventually degenerating into “incomprehensibility”; lacking serious artistic models to draw from, low art relies on the “standardization” of past “successes,” and subsequently gets locked in an inescapable pattern of “imitating” “old styles” (35). Again, Eliot’s poem puts forth an example of Adorno’s arguments:

When lovely woman stoops to folly and  
Paces about her room again, alone,  
She smooths her hair with an automatic hand,  
And puts a record on the gramophone.

“This music crept by me upon the waters” (*WL*, lines 252-257).

Human emotions take on the “automatic,” standardized quality of the popular music

the “lovely woman” listens to. Despite the technological advancements in music listening symbolized by the “record” and the “gramophone,” the modern music the “lovely woman” puts on is a word for word quotation of the old, Shakespearean style. That the unquoted speaker in “A Game of Chess” fills his-her blank mind with a popular song is bitterly ironic: the song in his-her head is *literally* “nothing.” Eliot sees no place for subjectivity in between the broken halves of high and low art. The poem, however, is not a critic standing exterior to the phenomenon described: by virtue of its melancholia, *The Waste Land* internalizes and exhibits the liquidation of the individual in its form, thus staring in horror at itself.

### **The Genealogy of Joyce’s Popular, Musical Body-Language**

Though Eliot’s brief, tantalizing example of an *Anders-streben* between high and low in *The Waste Land* appears as an aberration in the poem, his “Shakespearean rag” serves as a helpful introduction to Joyce’s engagement with popular music in *Ulysses*. Unlike Eliot, Joyce exuberantly reconstitutes the so-called “broken halves” of high literary modernism and popular music, thus adding to the long tradition of musical, performative language that extends past Nietzsche to Wagner. Tracing this network of influence illuminates Joyce’s contribution to tradition: his “historical sense,” in the words of Eliot in “Tradition and the Individual Talent” (Eliot, 100). Though Wagner’s theorization of musical language does not abide by the logic of *Anders-streben*, his ideas exert a palpable influence on Nietzsche in *The Birth of Tragedy*.

Of course, music is only one component of Wagner’s music-dramas. For

Wagner the ideal art work—*Gesamtkunstwerk*—is the “great United Art-Work” that gathers up the different branches “of art and use it as a mean... for the unconditioned absolute portrayal of perfected human nature” (*The Art-Work of the Future*, 88). While Wagner’s music strives to the condition of prose, his language strives to the condition of music. Before explaining the poet’s proper function within the united art-work in “The Music of the Future,” he elaborates on the aesthetic aim of poetry in itself: “The hopes and wishes of all great poets, he says, is “to use language, the materialization of abstract ideas, in such a way as to work immediately upon the feelings themselves” (Quoted in Ellmann and Feidelson, 105). The Wagnerian poet makes his appeal to *directly* to “the feelings themselves.” If the poet is to succeed in his aim, therefore, he must seek “in his language, to make the abstract conventional meaning of words subordinate to their original sensible one” (105). Form follows feeling. The poet attempts to trace words back to their “original sensible” meaning, the original site between sense and interpretation: “Human speech certainly developed from a purely sensuous, subjectively-felt signification of words” (106). Wagner likens the purely sensuous original meaning of a word to the purely sensuous character of music: when the poet reaches the end of his trace, of his search for original sensuous feeling, he “seems to touch music; and thus the most successful work of the poet must be, for us, that which should be, in its perfection, entirely musical” (106). Wagner makes no exceptions: the perfect poem is “entirely musical” or sensual; the poet, lest he be a philosopher, makes no concession to logical thought. In order to communicate poetically—to explain *why* something is alogically—the poet must appreciate “the tendency of music, and its inexhaustible power of expression, and therefore composes

his poem that it can penetrate into the finest fibres of musical texture, and completely dissolve the spoken idea in feeling” (107). Whereas Wagner’s “musical prose” seeks to endow melody with semantic ideas, his poetic music works to “dissolve” the conceptual, semiotic components of language “in [musical] feeling.”

Unlike his “musical prose,” which accounts for the difference between music and language by producing a mixed, categorically unstable remainder of their reciprocal intensification (the leitmotif), Wagner’s poetic theory does not work according to the logic of *Anders-streben*. His demand that language be “entirely musical” results in subordination to the musical “other”; this attitude in turn inflects Nietzsche’s melo-centric remarks in section 6 of *The Birth*, though his text works beyond Wagner’s influence with the Dionysian-Apollonian bi-polarity. Nietzsche’s concept nuances Wagner’s poetic theory by recognizing language’s dual structure: poetic language cannot literally become “entirely” musical—language’s *gestural* component cannot entirely collapse into its *tonal* representation of the “will.” However, the semiotic components of language can perform its tonal content, though this entails reaching beyond the strictures of “proper” speech for musicalized methods of expression: the reciprocal intensification of Apollo and Dionysus. In the “Sirens” chapter of *Ulysses*, Joyce puts Nietzschean performativity into practice, though he goes beyond his precursor by finding new resources for linguistic experimentation in popular music. Derek Attridge remarks that in “Sirens,” Joyce employs “puns, portmanteau words, syntactic deformations, insistent onomatopoeic and rhythmic patterns, various forms of reduplication, and repeated verbal motifs” to achieve an “intense concentration of meaning” (*Peculiar Language*, 172). However, Attridge does

not link the chapter's excessive verbal experimentation with the fact that Joyce chose *music* as the chapter's formal model. The Wagnernian-Nietzschean genealogy outlined thus far elucidates why music serves as an emblem for invention in "Sirens," and how Joyce's tendency to draw on popular music as a resource for linguistic experimentation is a new contribution to this tradition: neither Nietzsche nor Wagner touch on the interaction between "high" poetic language and "low" music.

A particularly striking instance of Joyce's *Anders-streben* with popular music in *Ulysses* occurs when Simon Dedalus sings an aria from Flotow's opera *M'appari* in the Ormond Hotel.

The text affects a kind of call and response between Dedalus' sung lines and Bloom's psychic response to the music, which Joyce's language goes to great lengths to perform. In this passage, Bloom's masochistic imagination fixates on a hypothetical sexual encounter between his wife and Blazes Boylan, his rival:

Bloom. Flood of warm jimjam lickitup secretness flowed  
to flow in music out, in desire, dark to lick flow,  
invading. Tipping her tepping her tapping her topping  
her. Tup. Pores to dilate dilating. Tup. The joy the feel  
the warm the. Tup. To pour o'er sluices pouring gushes.  
Flood, gush, flow, joygush, tupthrop. Now! Language of  
love. (*Ulysses*, 274).

Joyce's language welcomes Simon's music, allowing it to "flood" the text: it flows in and out, "joygushing" over into the tonal-background of Bloom's thoughts, inflaming the Dionysian drive to the point where it exerts enormous pressure on the Apollonian.

Unable to withstand the pressure of the Dionysiac, music breaks through the dam of proper language until finally, in an orgasmic instance of their mutual intensification, the Apollonian follows the feeling of “desire” and transmutes into the “Language of Love”—an entirely new field of semiotic gestures. The text’s jubilant, lively language explicitly rejects the notion that modernity has suffered a “retrogression in listening.” When *Ulysses* puts its ear to the gramophone, the sound of the living past “Krahks” through into the present in a new tenor: “Put on poor old greatgrandfather Kraahraark” (114). Engaging with popular music enables the text to remake the “old style” of musical language outlined by Wagner and Nietzsche. It is hardly surprising that the sound of *Ulysses*’ gramophone resembles the sound of a moving train, the “Kran, kran, kran” which Blooms tellingly reads as a “Good oppor.” for unleashing some bodily music of his own (291). The erotic force of Joyce’s popular musical-language stands in stark contrast with the deadened, automatic movements of Eliot’s “lovely woman.” It signifies “the increase of being and the jubilation which result[s] from the invention of new rules of the game” which Lyotard associates with the postmodern artist (“Appendix,” 5). As a postmodern text, *Ulysses* demonstrates that the rules of the novel can be remade by embracing the complementarity of high and low art.

As Joyce’s bodily music amply demonstrates, the text associates popular music with sensuality, reclaiming so-called “lower” manifestations of feeling by incorporating them into the body of a “high” modernist novel. This in itself stands as a radical aesthetic move when read in relation to the German Romantic tradition of *Anders-streben* and Eliot’s allergy to popular forms of expression. Joyce, however, goes even further in his engagement with popular music in “Ithaca,” when he harnesses

one of the *means* by which popular music conveys sensuous or “common” feeling: repetition. While the repetitive quality of popular music signals mindless imitation and intellectual poverty—“nothing”—in both Eliot and Adorno, Joyce uses nonsensical repetition to signify the accumulation, or clotted accretion of meanings over the course of *Ulysses*, composing a kind of pop song of his own which traces Bloom’s relation to various historical, mythical, and fictional “other” figures:

Womb? Weary?  
He rests. He has travelled.

With?  
Sinbad the Sailor and Tinbad the Tailor and Jinbad the  
Jailer and Whinbad the Whaler and Ninbad the Nailer  
and Finbad the Failer and Bindbad the Bailer and Pinbad  
the Pailer and Minbad the Mailer and Hinbad the Hailer  
and Rinbad the Railer and Dinbad the Kailer and Vinbad  
the Qualier and Linbad the Yailer and Xinbad the  
Phthailer. (*Ulysses*, 737).

Sinbad, Turko the Terrible, Odysseus, and all their minute permutations are evoked here by repetition: Bloom carries with him a long, complex series “other” figures, a living history which travels across the text until its ostensible death, the unusually large mark which punctuates the chapter’s (though not the book’s) conclusion. Joycean repetition rebukes Eliot’s blank nothing, reminding his fellow modernist that just as historical “sense” can be made out of lexical “nonsense,” so the absence of a single controlling myth can lend sense(s) to the present by permitting the infinite play of language, whether such play manifests itself in nonsensical reputation, or the erotic-musical language of love.



## **Conclusion: Louis Armstrong's Double Perspective on the Relationship between Music and Language**

Joyce's sympathetic engagement with popular music in *Ulysses* paves the way for a reading of Louis Armstrong as both a literary and musical modernist, a man whose life and work subsumes the dialectical complementarity of high and low art within itself. Led by Gary Giddins, a phalanx of music critics associated with *The Village Voice* have argued since the 1980s that Armstrong's aesthetic achievement encompasses both his pioneering, canonical Hot-5 and Hot-7 recordings and his later work as an international pop-star.<sup>1</sup> Giddins speaks to this in the opening pages of *Satchmo*: "Armstrong was an artist who happened to be an entertainer, an entertainer who happened to be an artist—as much an original in one role as the other. He revolutionized music, but he also revolutionized expectations about what a performer could be. In the beginning, he was an inevitable spur for the ongoing American debate between and high art and low" (Giddins, 5). Armstrong is an "inevitable spur" for the high-low debate precisely because he radically collapses this bi-furcation, repurposing the tension which results from the destabilization of the artist-entertainer binary to "revolutionize" both categories. While Joyce represents an instance of a "high" modernist crossing over into popular culture, Armstrong occupies both poles simultaneously, extending the tradition of *Anders-steben* further by making their interdependence an integral function of his "entertaining art." That is, his innovations as a singer and musician are dialectically entwined—a striking example of the reciprocal intensification of the Dionysian and Apollonian drives. Perry Meisel describes this facet of Armstrong's aesthetic in *The Cowboy and The Dandy*:

“...[Armstrong’s] exuberance on his instrument is actually more vocal, more lyrical than his voice; his grainy voice meanwhile, is more instrumental than his instrument” (Meisel, 98). Armstrong sees the *Anders-streben* between music and language from both ends, going beyond Wagner in his refusal to subordinate one the other. In this regard, Nietzsche’s Apollonian-Dionysian polarity is a theoretical model well equipped to explicate Armstrong’s literary and musical modernism.

His late record *Hello, Dolly!* (1964) serves as the ground for the somewhat contentious claim that Armstrong is a literary modernist. The record’s title track, in particular, depicts Armstrong working in a Joycean mode, contaminating his vocal performance with the music of the “pop”—the difference being the world-wide, monumental scale of Armstrong’s popularity at the time (Giddins, 133). “Hello, Dolly!” was released as a single in 1964, and achieved massive commercial success: the song reached number one on the billboard charts, unseating “Can’t Buy Me Love” at a time when Beatlemania was at its apex, in addition to winning the 1964 Grammy for Song of the Year. Further, “Hello, Dolly!” was originally a tune from the Broadway show tune *Bye Bye Birdie*; Giddins colorfully describes it as a “trite song...pompous and logy” (142). On all counts, “Hello, Dolly!” appears to be representative of post-WWII America’s bloated, hyper-appetitive consumer culture, an easy target for the wrath of Adorno. In *The Dialectic of Enlightenment*, he collaborates with Max Horkheimer to develop his earlier claim that popular music liquidates the listening subject by virtue of its numbing, mindless regurgitation of the past’s canonical forms: “Culture today is infecting everything with sameness....Each branch of culture is unanimous with itself and all are unanimous together” (Adorno, 94). Popular music

now represents a part of the “culture industry,” a larger, more insidious consequence of late capitalism. The case of “Hello, Dolly!” illustrates the unanimity of musical theater and jazz music, two popular “cultural branches” now infected “with sameness.” They further complicate this idea in a passage specially equipped to de-legitimize “Hello, Dolly!” as a work of art:

All mass culture under monopoly is identical, and the contours of its skeleton, the conceptual armature fabricated by monopoly, are beginning to stand out...Film and radio no longer need to present themselves as art. The truth that they are nothing but business is used as an ideology to legitimize the trash they produce. They call themselves industries, and the published figures for their director’s incomes quell any doubts about the social necessity of their finished products. (Adorno, 95).

Adorno and Horkheimer’s critique of “mass culture” is remarkably damning. From their theoretical perspective, a song like “Hello, Dolly!” is a piece of “trash” existing solely for the purpose of “business,” i.e. of keeping the ruling elite’s wallets stuffed with cash. However, despite the merits of their exacting, laser-like critical examination of the culture industry, their critique allows no room for the possibility of resistance from within the strictures of consumer culture—a possibility Armstrong’s scandalous vocal performance of the song exuberantly realizes. His engagement with “mass culture” here is Joycean in several respects in that Armstrong revels in sensual

expression; possess an appetite for coining neologisms; and deploys radical linguistic experimentation and reconstitution of the oppressor's language to make a serious political claim.

In doing so, Armstrong reunites the “broken halves” of high and low culture by performing a sophisticated, Nietzschean *Anders-streben* between language and music within the saccharine conventions of normative pop song structure, thus making the song unmistakably his own. He transforms a bloodless, cliché-ridden “product” of mass culture into an authentic expression of individuality, a vaccine beating back the “infection of sameness” besetting mass culture. Armstrong's self-signification is apparent from the opening line: “Hello, Dolly, This is Louisssssssss, Dolly.” Here, Armstrong alters the song's original lyrics, subbing in his own name. He hisses the “s” in Louis, dragging it across the recording like a writhing, sinister serpent, a decision that lends a sense of danger, of recklessness, to what was originally supposed to be a promotional recording for a family friendly Broadway show—the line is perilously close to a sexual proposition. This serves as a fine example of what Giddins calls the “irony of authorship”: the song has become “the embodiment of individual signifying” (*Visions of Jazz*, 25) rather than the embodiment of normative behavior. As Giddins remarks, Armstrong's performance asserts that it is “the singer, not the song” that counts (25). The tension between the Apollonian and Dionysian drives reaches a fever pitch in even this first line: Armstrong's strange, shredded, rumbling baritone animates a familiar, doe-eyed pop song, pushing the Apollonian beyond the limits of genre and white middle-class taste. The listener is forcefully brought into direct contact with a frightening, formidable “strangeness” which explodes the false “universality” sold by

the culture industry in a bang of particularity.

In response to the single's commercial success, Armstrong quickly recorded and released a full length record of the same name. The second track on *Hello, Dolly!*, "It's Been A Long, Long Time," offers several exemplary instances of Armstrong's Nietzschean use of language. By the second verse, Armstrong's musical, Dionysian mood has dissolved the strictures of the song's original context, his Archilochean outburst prefaced by a squealing, belligerent trumpet solo. What was originally an innocent expression of teenage love becomes an irreverent, erotic roar: "Yeeeaasssss, kiss me once, kiss me twice, kiss me once again / It's been a *long long*, a *long long a-tiiime*." Armstrong's language is performative: the swaggering cadence, repetition and chewed emphasis of the word "long" suggests a bristling erection, one that is going to last for quite some "*tiiime*." That he opens the verse with a roar implies that he intends on using it, that he will not be denied the satisfaction demanded by his primal, Dionysian urgings. In the song's "climactic" moment, Armstrong is no longer being coy: "It's been a long, ba-ba ba-doo time, OH YEEEEES!". The body's erotic urge subsumes language in a fit of irrational, spontaneous jazz scatting; thought has given way to feeling in the song's final orgasmic moment. The binary dividing the Apollonian and the Dionysian has utterly collapsed, resulting in an aesthetic mixture which flouts the discrete bounds of genre. Meisel's description of Armstrong's musical language—his Dionysian vocal expressionism is more "instrumental than his instrument" (*The Cowboy and the Dandy*, 98)—helpfully articulates the Nietzschean dimension of Armstrong's performance, which in itself constitutes his literary modernism.

Yet his radical aesthetic innovation is equally matched by his radical politics. Scatting functions as the categorically unstable product of Armstrong's double perspective on the tension between music and language; it is analogous to Wagner's leitmotif. Armstrong started his career by transforming the "polyphonic folk music" of New Orleans jazz into "a soloist's art," that is, a mode of music making grounded on the unpredictable, arbitrary articulations of everyday speech (Giddins, *Satchmo*, 7). Again, the similarity with Wagner is striking, though unsurprising in this context: Armstrong's vision of a "soloist's art" is "musical prose" modulated into an American, 20<sup>th</sup> century key. The song "Heebie Jeebies" (1926) marks the confluence of Armstrong's double *Anders-streben* for the first time in his career: the first appearance of jazz scatting not only in his oeuvre, but in American music. Giddins writes that Armstrong's first scatted vocal "did more than introduce a language of nonsense syllables that jazz singers could use when a song's lyric proved too constricting; it embodied a joyous, vernacular, and convincing attitude that complemented the spontaneous nature of the new music" (*Satchmo*, 64). Scatting, then, signifies the fact that the dazzling representative of this "new" American music is an African-American man: Armstrong's Dionysian assertion of his subjectivity in *Hello, Dolly!* not only works as a critique of consumer culture and its drive to erase particularity; it signifies in bold strokes his "otherness" as a black performer in pre-civil rights America—a previously silenced constituency begins making itself heard. In effect, "Heebies Jeebies" answers Wallace Stevens' call for a new, "skeptical music" for the 20<sup>th</sup> century (*Collected Poems*, 122), though Giddin's account of both the white public and

the academy's reaction to Armstrong in the 1920s suggests that Stevens was either unaware of unreceptive:

This was music innovated by blacks without the benefit of a conservatory imprimatur. As such, it affronted the generation of New England humanists who were self-consciously attempting to do for American music what Whitman had done for American poetry—give it a New World voice. When the man who embodied that voice made himself known (in sweet guttural tones)... [they] repaired to their ivory-covered dens, hoping he would go away. (*Satchmo*, 62).

Giddin's description within the parentheticals speaks to the tenor of Armstrong's politics: he signifies black subjectivity indirectly within a discourse largely hostile to his art via "sweet guttural" humor.

According to Adorno's concept of the dialectical relationship between harmony and dissonance, Armstrong's ironic, sweetly humorous affect constitutes a "mature" aesthetic style, despite the former's notoriously hostile attitude towards jazz. In his *Aesthetic Theory*, Adorno claims that possessing the awareness that "dissonance is the truth about harmony" belies aesthetic sophistication, a mature style: "Inside everything that can justly be called harmonious in art there are vestiges of despair and antagonism... Without this reminder, without contradiction and non-identity, harmony would be irrelevant aesthetically." (*Aesthetic Theory*, 160-161). Clearly, Armstrong's

“harmonious” humor in “Hello, Dolly!” exposes the vestigial “despair and antagonism” triggered by African-American’s cultural “non-identity” in pre-civil rights America. His “sweet guttural tones”—the reciprocal intensification of Dionysus and Apollo—exposes the dissonance inherent in harmony by dramatizing it, thus making his new, “skeptical music” far from being “irrelevant,” politically or aesthetically. Indeed, Stanley Crouch perspicaciously chooses Armstrong’s “Laughin’ Louie” to express the “enigma” of this great entertainer-artist: [The song]...opens with a trite theme that collapses into a burlesque of sad jokes and buffoonery from both Armstrong and his band members...Armstrong then plays in unaccompanied melody. It’s rich tone conveys a chilling pathos and achieves a transcendence in the upper register that summons the cleansing agony of the greatest spirituals.” (“Laughin’ Louis,” 21). The harmonies he does offer are achieved dialectically, in relation to their inherent contradictions and antagonisms: the pleasure of laughing along with Armstrong’s buffoonery comes at the “chilling” cost of pain; humor is a function of “cleansing agony.” Though Armstrong later openly feuded with be-boppers bent on stretching the harmonic confines of the twelve-bar blues into difficult, atonal territory, he is no stranger to Dionysus—he repeatedly shatters the placid, Apollonian portrait of the pop star by skillfully manipulating the dialectical interdependence of harmony and dissonance.

### **Notes to Conclusion**

<sup>1</sup> These include, in addition to Giddin’s *Satchmo: The Genius of Louis Armstrong and Visions of Jazz*, Stanley Crouch’s 1978 *Village Voice* article “Laughin’ Louis; former *Voice* editor Robert Christgau’s “Pops as Pop,” ([www.robertchristgau.com](http://www.robertchristgau.com)); and chapter 7 of Perry Meisel’s *The Cowboy and the Dandy*. I deliberately draw from these critics in my discussion of Armstrong.



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