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Mirrored Disjunctions:
On a Deleuzo-Joycean Theory of the Image

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Critical interpretations of Joyce's discourse on the image have, for the best part, fallen into two categories: idealist or psychoanalytic interpretations of the Joycean imaginary on the one hand, and, on the other, materialist readings often informed by techno-scientific concerns. Different as they are, both these critical paradigms regard the image as a space of dialectical mediation: a means, technical or transcendental, by which an object is given to perception (or a narcissistic subject to self-recognition). This article offers a new point of entry to the issue by recasting Joyce's discourse on the image in a Deleuzian light. In Deleuze, the image is described as an entity existing between the material and the ideal spheres, but in no way functioning as a synthesis of the two. My contention is that through a Deleuzian reading of the discourse on images mobilized in Joyce's fiction—from Dubliners *to* Finnegans Wake*—it is possible to think of the image not as a medium of representation, but as an originary element of being and reality in its own right.*

Keywords: image as event / ontology / death /*Dubliners* / *Finnegans Wake* / idealism vs. materialism

Joyce's discourse on the nature of images has undergone numerous transformations throughout his fiction: from the scholastic model illustrated in *Stephen Hero*, through the dogmatic idealism examined in the "Proteus" chapter of *Ulysses*, and the insistence on the physics of image-production in *Finnegans Wake*, Joyce's philosophical perspectives have varied considerably, but his interest in the workings of the human eye and in the specificity of a visually experienced reality has remained constant. Unsurprisingly (perhaps inevitably), the variety of images tested in the novels has inspired utterly distinct, even polarized readings. When not focusing on the aesthetic implications of Stephen's "applied Aquinas," critics have tended to privilege either a psychoanalytic interpretation of the Joycean imaginary or a materialist analysis informed by techno-scientific concerns.[1] The result is a divided critical scene, split between two very different Joyces: let us call them the subjective-idealist and the empiricist.

This essay undertakes to engage with the theme of the Joycean image as part of an ongoing effort to read Joyce outside the framework of dialectical thought. I do not presume here to offer a theoretical paradigm that will supplant the two prevailing critical models. My aim, rather, is to investigate the possibility of thinking the subjective-idealist character of the Joycean image together with its material or techno-scientific dimension. The reason psychoanalysis has such a prominent voice in the present debate has to do, I suspect, with an unshakeable sense that images in Joyce have a powerful narcissistic charge. My underlying premise is that Joyce's variations on the narcissistic gaze and his insistence on imaging technologies must be viewed not as two competing interpretations of the same philosophical problem, but as complementary predications of a single ontological truth.

I will argue, then, that the driving force behind Joyce's lifelong interest in so many different modalities of the visible is a desire to perceive the image on its own ontological ground, in its materiality and, at the same time, in its ideality. Implied in this claim, or moving parallel to it, is a Deleuzian critique of all philosophical models that regard the image as a space of dialectical mediation—that is to say, as a means by which an object is given to perception (or a narcissistic subject to self-appropriation).[2] In contrast to these models, Deleuze conceives the image not as a medium of representation, but as an originary element of being and a reality in its own right.

There is, however, an additional benefit to reading Joyce alongside Deleuze. As we shall see, the chief heuristic value of the Deleuzian image is that it allows thought to be pitched in a kind of ontological halfway ground. Consistently, the image comes to occupy, in Deleuze's writings, the point of intersection between ideality and materiality; between subject and object; between the virtual and the actual. But what exactly is the significance of this in-between-ness? Does it qualify the image as a conjunctive force or does it denote a blurring of categorical borders? By following through the implications of the Joyce-Deleuze comparison, it will be possible to put these questions to test, breaking them down to their constitutive terms and clarifying their significance within Deleuze's broad philosophical project.

AN ONTOLOGY OF THE IMAGE

The first thing to note about Deleuze's philosophy is that it is, in the most far-reaching and interesting sense, an ontology of the image. Not only does it devote remarkable energies to thinking the specific conditions under which images come to be produced but, more importantly, it identifies the image as the privileged element in which the production and evolution of being are properly thought. As Alain Badiou has shown, most notably in *The Clamour of Being*, this privilege is first of all an important provision on the basis of which Deleuze is able to affirm being as a force immanent in all beings. Indeed, Deleuze believes that there can be no true philosophy of being without a rigorous thinking of immanence. Yet

for such thinking to take place, being must be articulated in a single voice; it must be said of all beings equally. Hence the importance of such terms as "production" and "evolution" in Deleuze's thought and his understanding of images as basic components of a constantly evolving reality.

Two observations of direct relevance to our topic can be abstracted from Deleuze's various writings to serve as a theoretical premise. First, an image is in the same sense that a living creature is. Second, within the immanent movement of being all things come to be constituted and are preserved as living images of themselves. Badiou famously picks on this second point to explain the co-extensiveness of the notions of life, univocity and immanence in Deleuzian ontology:

> Deleuze, in order to hold to the postulate of univocity, which is the condition for deciding on life as a name of being, must pose that all things are, in an obscure sense, signs of themselves; not of themselves as themselves, but of themselves as provisional simulacra, or precarious modalities, of the power of the Whole.
>
> But if something is a sign of itself and its dimension as sign is indiscernible from its being then the following two statements are equivalent: everything is life, everything is sign. (198)

Building on Badiou's comment, and straining its sense somewhat, it may be tempting to suggest that Deleuze believes in a radically textualized world. Severed from its immediate context, the idea that "everything is sign" (or its exact correlate in idealist terms, that "everything is an image") seems merely to reiterate the structuralist fantasy that there is no experience of reality outside the totalizing weave of language. And from here, it is a short step to think of Deleuze's doctrine of univocity as a philosophical elucidation of Stephen Dedalus's stated intent to read reality in the "signatures of all things" (*U* 45). This chain of associations, however, misses the chief motive behind Deleuze's insistence on the concept of univocity—namely that we are in a position to understand the immanent-evolutionary character of the movement of being only once we accept that being is said of all things in a single voice.[3] More importantly, it misses the reason why, within this ontological framework, the image is given such pride of place. Indeed, what Deleuze says is not at all that reality is textually constructed, or even that our experience of it is symbolically mediated, but that precisely to the extent that being is evolutionary it must be seen to unfold in a process of image-production.

A helpful way of framing this issue is to think of being in the most concrete terms possible. The key insight to bear in mind is that for Deleuze, being is never abstract. It does not divide into ideal categories and their formal negations but is always real, existing fully and positively at all times. By the same token, reality is not composed of artificial oppositions (subjects-objects; essences-percepts; ideas-representations) but of a single movement of being, a movement that unfolds evenly in between abstract extremes.

This philosophical premise—this insistence on the absolute reality of being—gestures back to an inaugural scene in the history of philosophy and

identifies a moment of confusion affecting ontological thought from the outset. The point is perfectly summed up by Valentine Moulard-Leonard: "For the Greeks, being is opposed to becoming as the more real is opposed to the less real, or the real to appearances. It follows that for them that which is fixed, immutable, intemporal enjoys an ontological privilege in which existence is synonymous with identity" (63). Yet, as philosophy comes under the influence of evolutionary discourse, it "turns to life-sciences for its model, something that, in its radicality, is able to interrupt this tradition. . . . Confronted with organisms that are born, grow and perish, that constantly adapt actively to their environment, it becomes impossible to distinguish being and becoming" (63–64).

Within this ontological model, images do not serve to represent reality. Such a move, to be sure, would only reinstate the system of dialectical oppositions described above. Rather, they comprise the whole of reality, a reality which changes and regenerates without ever ceasing to be itself.

On the face of it, then, Stephen's "[s]ignatures of all things I am here to read" misunderstands Deleuze's equation between life and signs. Closer to its spirit is a comparison Stephen draws later in the day between the work of the artist and the workings of nature: "As we, or mother Dana, weave and unweave our bodies, Stephen said, from day to day, their molecules shuttled to and fro, so does the artist weave and unweave his image" (*U* 249). I have commented elsewhere on this passage, analyzing the Penelopean metaphor Joyce sets in motion in light of Deleuze's theory of time.[4] What interests me here is the rationale behind Stephen's analogy—the meaning and strategic import of the "as." Plainly, Stephen's purpose is to establish a correspondence between art and nature. The question is whether this correspondence is to be understood as a parallelism or as the assertion of an ontological equivalence—in other words, whether the "as" is simply the hinge on which a simile turns or whether it indicates a leveling of ontological categories. For the Deleuzian thinker, there can be no doubt. Stephen's comparison tells us that the weaving and unweaving of bodies and the making and unmaking of images share the same genetic mechanism and display the same temporal character. Put simply, within an immanent-evolutionary conception of being, bodies are images; or rather, bodies are produced as images and images are produced as bodies.[5]

The upshot of this equation, and of the evolutionary model it entails, is that it allows Deleuze to prise the history of being away from the history of subjectivity. To be sure, Deleuze continues to view ontology as a historical discipline, albeit one involving an open-ended, inventive history that is uncompromisingly future-oriented and that in the long run produces nothing if not acts of self-differentiation. The role of the image, in his thought, is precisely that of guaranteeing the continuous unfolding of this history, of maintaining it in a non-dialectical synthesis. Throughout his writings he will describe several instantiations of this process, always returning to a conception of the image as a dynamic element of reality having both an empirical dimension and an ideal one. His famous quip that has the universe construed as "meta-cinema" (*Movement-Image* 59) is, in this sense, perfectly reconcilable with the seemingly incongruous claim that the image "is

not a representation of an object but a movement in the world of the mind" (*ECC* 169).[6] At issue, in both cases, is the grafting of a technological order of memory onto an organic subjective model; or better still, a displacement of time's intensive unity onto the realm of matter. One can perhaps borrow from Jacques Rancière's original reading of Deleuze's *Cinema* books to imagine this displacement as a folding together of two histories:

> We would willingly conclude that movement-image and time-image are by no means two types of images ranged in opposition, but two different points of view on the image. Although it speaks of films and filmmakers, Deleuze's real project in *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image* is to analyze forms of the art of cinema as events of matter-image. And although *Cinema 2: The Time-Image* imports the analyses of The *Movement-Image*, it analyzes these same cinematographic forms as forms of thought-image. (112–13)

Neither simply one, nor simply the other, Deleuze's history of the cinema thus explores the intersection of an ideal history with a history of matter. Bergson provides a recognizable context for this move when he speaks of the image as "a certain existence which is more than that which an idealist calls a representation, but less than what a realist calls a thing" (9). The appeal of this definition for Deleuze is that it responds to the challenge of thinking about reality as a whole that evolves non-dialectically — that is to say, a whole that, in the process of changing, is preserved as itself only outside itself. Placed half-way between an empirical object and a represented idea, the image here comes to double for the very principle of evolution. It functions as a real-time record of the self-differing movement of life, of the very impulse of evolutionary change, played out as a mechanism of simulacral production.[7]

Notably, the impersonal character of this mechanism goes some way towards explaining Deleuze's avowed suspicion of the concept of the imaginary which he describes on one occasion as "a rather indeterminate notion" (*Negotiations* 66) having no more than an incidental bearing on the question of the nature of the image. But the reference to a non-subjective order of memory also alerts us to the dangers of identification implied in reading Deleuze's philosophy alongside Joyce's fiction, a fiction that Jean-Michel Rabaté describes as supremely egoistical.[8] Indeed, this precise issue marks the point at which the comparison between Joyce and Deleuze is at once most urgent and most problematic. Where the weaving and unweaving of an image in Joyce's texts often denotes the handiwork of an overpowering ego-narcissism (typically, that of the artist referred to in the above quote), Deleuze consistently disambiguates the process of image-production from the artistic imagination. Put quite simply, in Deleuze's view the image is the condition for the workings of the imagination, not the other way around.[9] For this reason, despite the common concerns and the shared Bergsonian influence, it is essential to keep the difficulty of the comparison clearly in mind — to remember that Deleuze remains as challenging to an interpretation of Joyce as Joyce is to the study of Deleuze's philosophy. I ought to stress, then, that a Deleuzo-Joycean

theory of the image is not an application of a philosophical model onto a literary corpus but an uneasy, strained meeting of two systems of thought. In this encounter, both systems—the Deleuzian as well as the Joycean—come out a little changed.

"The Sisters" provides an ideal example of this dynamic. It may not be Joyce's most visually striking work, nor is it as obviously informed by the metaphorics of vision and imaging as the "Proteus" chapter in *Ulysses* or, say, the pub scene in *Finnegans Wake* II.3. Yet it contains as strong a demonstration of the workings of the Joycean imaginary as the later texts. Moreover, in the history of theoretical Joyce-criticism it is the work that has lent itself most happily to exemplary readings, functioning as a sort of aesthetic programme—a preview of things to come. To this effect, Helen Cixous describes it as a work that "in both form and content was equivalent to a full manifesto" (372).[10] In a similar vein, Rabaté notes that it "provides an elaborate introduction to the discourses of *Dubliners*" ("Silence" 48). Numerous critics have commented on the manner in which the narrator's mouthing of the word "paralysis" foreshadows Joyce's interest in the materiality of words as displayed in the later works. I hope to show that the treatment of the theme of "seeing" at issue in the first paragraph fulfills a similarly strategic role in establishing a general Joycean discourse on the image.

THE SCENE OF SEEING

The earliest clue to the theoretical elaboration of a Deleuzo-Joycean discourse on the image comes early on in the narrative's opening paragraph. It is the well-known scene in which the boy-narrator describes himself looking up at Father Flynn's window.

> Night after night I had passed the house (it was vacation time) and studied the lighted square of window: and night after night I had found it lighted in the same way, faintly and evenly. If he was dead, I thought, I would see the reflection of candles on the darkened blind, for I knew . . . (*D* 9)

Already eye and image are laid out here in a singular relation that prefigures the dynamics of the gaze later developed in *Finnegans Wake*. One ought to speak, to be more precise, of a relation between three terms: between eye and image, but also between eye, image and a complex system of events in which the gaze is embedded. That "seeing" is the main activity referred to in the paragraph is fairly obvious, with the verb (or one of its synonyms: "studied," "gazed") featuring at least three times. But what is singularly important about the scene is that it posits a disjuncture right at the heart of the act of seeing. And as it maps out this disjuncture, it puts forward a thesis on the correspondence between the nature of images and the event of death.

Joyce draws our attention to this correspondence through a complex manipulation of the scene's temporal coordinates: first, by a reference to vacation time, as if to pitch the narrative in an empty formless past; then, by a strategic use

of the iterative mode. The "seeing" happens over an even period of time. The phrase "night after night"—itself repeated anaphorically—stresses the ongoing, recurrent nature of the act, further draining it of any sense of actuality.

Death, here, is the event that orients the activity of seeing. On the simplest psychological level it is the reason why the narrator keeps returning to the same spot outside Father Flynn's window. But more than that, it is a structural element inherent to the scene—an element that allows the boy to come back to the image, to see the same image again, night after night. In other words, death stands for the very power of the image, for its draw on the narrator's gaze. It is what drives his voyeuristic compulsion, punctuating his vacation time, and anchoring his nights to a scarcely imaginable, scarcely repeatable event.

Psychoanalysis traditionally accounts for this notion by imagining death as a force constitutive of narcissistic desire and then conceiving of the image as a phantasmatic space in which this desire is negotiated. Approaching the issue from a Lacanian perspective, Rabaté notes that the two candles (not) placed in the square frame of Father Flynn's window point to a double absence encoded in the image: "What the child saw in his fascinated gaze was . . . the lack of an expected lack" (52). In this interpretive context, "gnomon" and "paralysis" come to indicate the structural position of the lack within the frame. The gnomon famously names a mutilated parallelogram (what remains of a square after a smaller square has been subtracted), whereas paralysis stands for the work of death entering the child's narrative before death has actually happened. In both cases, the word takes the place of a lack, in the sense that it covers an absence while marking the spot where that absence occurs.

Of course this double movement is, in the final analysis, an allegorical staging of the dialectical process itself. It refers to the role of the image in the dialectic. Where the lack is identified with death, and more generally with the principle of dialectical negation, the image is the object of sublation and the means by which every dialectical negative is mediated and overcome.

A Deleuzo-Joycean theory of the image, as I am trying to codify it, takes on board this association between the nature of images and some kind of experience of death. But, even as it does so, as it acknowledges the power of death in the production of images, it insists on one uncompromisable point: namely, that the image implies neither a fall into negativity nor an imaginary re-elaboration of a past experience. Death itself, in the examples we have analyzed so far, is not even strictly speaking an imagined experience. Rather, it is an event (or part of an event) that remains incommensurate to the child's discursive and imaginary repertoire.[11]

The paradox we must reckon with here is that of a scene bearing all the promise of narcissistic identification, but in which the narcissistic image returns only the memory of an impersonal impossible event. We do well to recall, in this connection, that death makes its impact on the boy's imaginary not through the discovery of a corpse, but in the expectation of an event he can somehow visualize without having witnessed it. Reflected on the darkened blind, to be sure, is not a

picture of what the boy actually saw, but a conjectured scene — introduced with a conditional clause ("If he was dead, I thought, I would see . . .").

Like the candles signaling the presence of a corpse, or the magic word "paralysis" that punctuates the paragraph with its sinister message, the clause stands, here, between Father Flynn's death and the boy's anticipation of the event. It qualifies the narrative datum of the priest's demise. But, crucially, it also frames the act of seeing itself. And in so doing, it exceeds it, placing it in an abyssal relation with itself and thus telling us something important about images in general. Namely, that the truth of an image is not in a correct perception of what is contained in the frame; it is not a question of the picture's actual content. What matters is rather the possibility of perceiving an event, not as it happened, but as it might happen. This possibility characterizes the image before the objects reflected in the window have been properly identified. The movement of thought announced by the logical operator "if" already opens onto the proper ontological space in which an image may be regarded as such. In other words, the conditional clause signals not so much a lack as an original state in which the truth of the image is constituted.

There is a sense, then, in which the expression "if he was dead . . . I would see" belongs to all images. It is not just a compositional element of one particular scene in Joyce, but a figure for the structure of images, for what defines the image at large. The relevance of the figure is best understood in light of Deleuze's conception of the image as an event.[12] Let us recall that death, for Deleuze, is in many ways the event *par excellence*, a kind of matrix of all events. Yet this notion is also complicit with Deleuze's understanding of ontology as a philosophy of life: events are markers of the evolutionary character of being. Within this scheme, the image corresponds to that part of an event that is always in the process of being actualized. Is it not in the nature of an image to preserve death in its virtuality, to carry forth death's power as it already subsists in every living moment? Deleuze explores this idea time and again in his *Cinema* books, most notably in his discussions of decadence and historical belatedness in Visconti (*T-I* 94–97), of memory in Orson Welles (*T-I* 109–12), and of the Lazarean motif in Alain Resnais (*T-I* 207–09). The example of Welles in particular, resonates with the logic of Joyce's scene:

> [E]ach witness in *Citizen Kane* makes his effort to evoke, which corresponds to the sheet of past to which he is committed. But all of these efforts coincide in the actuality of "Kane has just died, Kane is dead" which constitutes a kind of given, fixed point from the outside (similarly in *Mr Arkadin* and *Othello*). And it is in relation to death as a fixed point where all the sheets of past coexist; childhood, youth, the adult and the old man. (*T-I* 111)

In the narrative structure of *Citizen Kane*, no less than in Welles's innovative use of montage, the image as event comes into its own. What interests Deleuze, far more than the content of the flashbacks, is the relation between different regions of memory, their coexistence organized around the enquiry into Kane's

indecipherable death. The film itself feigns an attempt to gather as complete a record of Kane's life as possible. But the significance of that life is necessarily elusive. The event that could have tied all the flashbacks together, the interpretation of Kane's dying word, remains unrecalled: "when Rosebud becomes embodied from its own movement in an image it is strictly *for nobody*. . . . Not only could Rosebud have been anything; insofar as it is something, it goes down into an image which burns independently, is totally pointless and of interest to no one. It thereby casts suspicion on all the sheets of past which have been evoked by the various characters" (*T-I* 111). By this movement, the logic of the film repeats the unity of the image-event: an actual event coincides with a virtual memory, the one bleeding into the other.

Referencing Blanchot's discussion of death as an event that is at the same time intensely individuating and incommensurable with any subjective model of experience, Deleuze identifies two simultaneous directions in which the image is split:

> On one side, there is the part of the event which is realized and accomplished; on the other, there is that "part of the event which cannot realize its accomplishment." There are thus two accomplishments, which are like actualization and counter-actualization. It is in this way that death and its wound are not simply events among other events. Every event is like death, double and impersonal in its double. (*LS* 151–52)

This trait—this quality of being "double and impersonal in [one's] double"—clarifies the sense in which an image can be said to exist between material reality and the idea. Not only does the image fall in-between these two realms, exceeding them both. It also functions as the middle-term that holds them together in a virtual, non-dialectical co-existence. We are able to appreciate, here, the peculiar structural significance of death in Deleuze's ontology. Death is not to be confused with non-being. It is an actual ontological state of which all individual moments in life are a virtual correlate. The challenge, for the Deleuzian reader, is precisely to think of actuality and virtuality—death and its wound—as different modalities of a single predication. They are co-implied states of being that exist at the same time and to the same degree.

But the definition of the image as a death-like event also suggests a comparison between the opening scene of "The Sisters" and another "scene of seeing" occurring much later in Joyce's career: namely the description of HCE's funeral at the beginning of *Finnegans Wake*. Indeed, it may be helpful to think of the two episodes as structural counterparts. Joyce constructs both scenes around the figure of an absent corpse, insisting on a fundamental association between the spectacle of death and the dynamics of the gaze. In the later text, the corpse is absent. This is not because it has been substituted by symbols and a logic of expectation, but because it is itself a figure, functioning within a precise allegorical framework: "But, lo, as you would quaffoff his fraudstuff and sink teeth through that pyth of a flowerwhite bodey behold of him as behemoth for he is noewhemoe. Finiche! Only a fadograph of a yestern scene" (*FW* 7.12–15). Focalized through HCE's

own voyeuristic gaze, HCE's corpse does not simply indicate a death, but rather offers an illustration of death's complex phenomenal structure.[13] And because it figures not just any death, but death as such, one's own death as one might conceive of witnessing it, the corpse cannot but vanish from sight the moment it is imaged.

Joyce articulates this paradox with characteristic economy by coining the word fadograph. Merging the senses of "photography" and "fading," he asks us to contemplate the bond between imaging technologies and death by way of a double impossibility. On the side of the eye, the scene faces us with the impossible scenario of a man bearing witness to his own death; on that of the photograph, it toys with the impossibility of immortalizing a vanishing act—of capturing, if you will, a still-image of disappearance. This double impossibility takes on the same structural function as the conditional in the previous scene. It acts as a frame to the entire description; it shifts the hermeneutic effort away from narrated fact and cues the reader to the allegorical dimension of the episode.

Viewed in this context, the image cannot be reduced to an artifact situated outside the order of living things. Nor is it simply a space of representation in which death is dialectically held in check. Its association with death is of another kind altogether. The image fades because it is hard-wired to fall into the past, because it shares in the evolutionary movement of life, of which it is an intrinsic part. Yet, while fading, it also preserves a still memory of that movement. What I am calling the scene's double impossibility (and what Deleuze calls "being double yet impersonal in one's double") is the co-existence in a single event—in a fadograph—of these two impulses: one given to material fading, the other to perpetuation in a technological yet somehow organic memory. Once again, it is important to emphasize that for both Joyce and Deleuze this redoubled structure attaches to the very truth of the image—to what, in another context, we would have called its phenomenality.

THE TRUTH OF THE IMAGE, SPATIAL AND TEMPORAL CHARACTERISTICS

Having discussed the manner in which images are always necessarily embedded in an event (and having determined the essential role played by death in this discussion), we may now turn to the problem of describing the Deleuzo-Joycean image in terms of its spatial and temporal characteristics. Given that from a Deleuzian perspective an image is in the same way that every object is, and that for Joyce (certainly the Joyce of *Finnegans Wake* and of the latter half of *Ulysses*, but also, arguably, the Joyce of *Dubliners*) images are no less an original component of reality than the gaze that supposedly produces them, how are we to understand the specific distribution of an image in time and space? And, more concretely, how do the various scenes of seeing in Joyce's fiction, and his meta-discursive passages on optics and photography, illustrate the possibility of theorizing the image on its own distinctive ontological ground?

In *Finnegans Wake*, it is the complex structural unity of the fadograph that first reveals this possibility when it brings life and death into such close proximity. Spatial metaphors are only partially accurate here, but to the extent that the ground of the image can be mapped out, it is best described as a liminal space in which death and life are somehow intertwined. The power of the fadograph—and potentially, the power of the Joycean image at large—is to bring this conjunction into full relief, to show how it works, without confusing its terms, or merging them into a single indiscernible state. Life, as the fadograph frames it, unfolds in a double movement of simultaneous fading and enduring. And death, as we have seen, is always at work in this movement. It accompanies life throughout; not in actual form, obviously enough, but as an inherent tendency—specifically, the tendency of all living things to endure while being finite. If the defining function of an image is to bring this tendency into view, its proper ground is the liminal space in which life and death overlap.

Joyce's commitment to these themes is evident in a number of other images from the *Wake*. For instance, in Chapter 5, the idea of photography is referenced to describe a letter uncovered from the "mudmound" of history:

> Well, almost any photoist worth his chemicots will tip anyone asking him the teaser that if a negative of a horse happens to melt enough while drying, well, what you do get is, well, a positively grotesquely distorted macromass of all sorts of horsehappy values and masses of meltwhile horse. Tip. Well, this freely is what must have occurred to our missive (there's a sod of a turb for you! please wisp off the grass!) unfilthed from the boucher by the sagacity of a lookmelittle likemelong hen. Heated residence in the heart of the orangeflavoured mudmound had partly obliterated the negative. . . . (*FW* 111.26–35)

Right away, two details from this passage lend themselves to an allegorical interpretation: first, the letter, which stands for the entire text of the *Wake*; and second, the orangeflavoured mudmound, which corresponds to the entirety of the past. The point of the allegory is to explain that the *Wake* is barely legible because it has been buried in the past too long. But what is of interest to us is that the metaphor renders the illegible text as a deteriorated copy of an already hypothetical image. Recovered from the rubbish-dump of the past, the image now appears as a distorted version of itself—a simulacrum. Joyce insists on the material-technological conditions underlying the change. Once again his theme is the disjunctive unity, in a single frame, of a material and an ideal history. But whereas in the case of the fadograph this unity was realized by the invention of a new concept (and therefore of a purely ideal technology), here the emphasis is on the concrete photochemical processes by which the image is reproduced.

The same ideas are at issue in the pub scene of Chapter II.3, which includes a detailed description of the workings of television. Joyce emphasizes the material processes that make the technology possible, supplementing his account of a televised broadcast (a fight between Butt and Taff) with a reconstruction of the physics involved in its production:

> *In the heliotropical noughttime following a fade of transformed Tuff and, pending its viseversion, a metenergic reglow of beaming Batt, the hairdboard bombardment screen, if tastefully taut guranium satin, tends to teleframe and step up to the charge of a light barricade. Down the photoslope in syncopanc pulses, with the bitts bugtwug their teffs, the missledhropes, glitteraglatteraglutt, borne by their carnier walve. Spraygun rakes and splits them from a double focus. . . .* (*FW* 349.6–13)[14]

What we have here is a kind of technological flipside of Woolf's "atoms as they fall upon the mind." The impulse is the same: to break reality down to its smallest components, to magnify those components and capture the quick of life in their imperceptible motion. Only, instead of situating this motion in the flow of consciousness, Joyce associates it with a flash of light-particles discharged upon a screen.

Like the fadograph and the corroded photo from Chapter 5, Joyce's televisual image exists in a liminal space and time. It not only displaces life's intensive movement onto the world of matter. It also pitches this movement in a dual temporal frame that marks the coincidence of night and day: a "heliotropical noughttime." Viewed out of context, the association of the image with this temporal marker may seem somewhat arbitrary—or, at the very least, incidental to the nature of the image itself. But its significance becomes clear when read alongside the adjacent phrase: "following a fade of transformed Tuff and, pending its viseversion, a metenergic reglow of beaming Batt. . . ." Let us venture that the "heliotropical noughttime" names a zero hour in which night turns towards the day (and vice-versa). In other words, it affirms the interpenetration of one body of time with another (yesterday and today, but also, more generally, the past and the present). By this logic, we may interpret *fading* and *reglowing* as the two directions in which the event is split. If Joyce believes the "heliotropical noughttime" to be inherent to the temporality of the image, it is because he sees the image itself as being always composed of two disjunctive forces: fading and reglowing, or passing and coming to presence.

From here, we are able to trace a full circle back to the logic of images in *Dubliners*. Eveline at her window "watching the evening invade the avenue" and Gabriel looking sleepily at the snowflakes at the end of "The Dead" illustrate, as clearly as any excerpt in Joyce's canon, his conception of the image as a liminal formation. Of course the focus in these cases (as in the opening of "The Sisters") is on the complex geometry of the scene of seeing rather than the physics of image-production. But the temporal and spatial configuration of the image is the same as that observed in the Wakean segments on photography and television.

Especially powerful is Gabriel's final vision that the text associates, significantly, with a sense of oncoming sleep. The scene is complexly constructed, as if by juxtaposition of two moments of seeing, one fictive and one actual:

> [H]e *imagined he saw* the form of a young man standing under a dripping tree. Other forms were near. His soul had approached that region where dwell the vast hosts of the dead.

And:

> It had begun to snow again. He *watched sleepily* the flakes, silver and dark, falling obliquely against the lamplight. The time had come for him to set out on his journey westward. (*D* 223; my emphasis)

The image itself is produced in the combination of these two acts. Not as their sum, but as a record of their unity—a simulacrum of a movement of being in which the actual and the virtual are originally co-implied.[15] The very content of the image reflects this unity: taking shape behind Gabriel's window pane is a world of solid objects and concrete perceptions pressed against one of fading identities and dissolving memories.

> His soul had approached that region where dwell the vast hosts of the dead. He was conscious of, but could not apprehend, their wayward and flickering existence. His own identity was fading out into a grey impalpable world: the solid world itself, which these dead had one time reared and lived in, was dissolving and dwindling. . . . His soul swooned slowly as he heard the snow falling faintly through the universe and faintly falling, like the descent of their last end, upon all the living and the dead. (*D* 223–24)

It has been suggested a number of times that this passage contains a reference to Dante's *Inferno*. Jackson Cope (1970) was the first to note that the snow falling generally on the whole of Ireland may be read as an echo of the frozen pit of hell as Dante imagined it. The allusion not only invites a comparison between Joyce's Dubliners and the crowd of lost souls Dante encounters in the underworld, it also implies an analogy between the political-moral dimension of Dante's allegory and Joyce's declared intent to write a chapter in the moral history of his country. The link with Cocytus (with the last stage of Dante's passage through hell) works particularly well on a narrative-structural level.[16] Occurring as it does at the end of *Dubliners*, and emphasizing the themes of moral corruption and social despair explored throughout the collection, it affirms a narrative-allegorical continuity between one story—one example of desperate Dublin life—and another. This idea is reinforced by an additional Dantean echo detected in the opening words of *Dubliners*. As Cope explains, the phrase "[t]here was no hope for him this time" harks back to the warning famously inscribed above the gates of hell ("Abandon all hope . . ."). Dante's hellish experience is thus allowed to bookend the entire collection of stories.[17]

Yet the full force of the allusion is less in the moral-political dimension of Dante's allegory than in a second point of comparison at issue in both texts. Dante's journey constantly blurs the boundary separating life and death. Mary T. Reynolds traces this reference to a specific excerpt from the *Divine Comedy*, explaining that:

> As a coda that epitomizes the dialectic of living death and thus significantly stands for the book as a whole, the final section [of *Dubliners*] also echoes the lines in which at a comparable stage of the work Dante addresses the reader.
>
> How frozen and faint I then became, ask it not, reader, for I do not write it, because all words would fail. I did not die and I did not remain alive (*Inf.* 34: 22–25, trans. Singleton) (156–57).[18]

The proper ground of the image—the meaning of its liminality—is this threshold experience which is potentially in play every time we look at a photograph or a film. It is a power images possess to be of the present and the past at the same time—an uncanny ability to bring the memories of the living in stark contact with the expressions of the dead.

CONCLUSION

The different images discussed in this paper have allowed us to identify this power in a set of features common to the early and the later Joyce. Whether he is mapping the relation between a gaze and its object or dissecting the physics of image-production, Joyce insists on regarding the image as an event that splits in two directions, as if joining-and-disjoining two orders of reality—perception with memory, the actual with the conjectured, the present with the past. Time and again, a conditional clause is used as a framing device to mark a virtualizing impulse encoded in every image. And increasingly, from *Dubliners* to the *Wake*, this impulse is characterized as the double of a concrete image-making mechanism, which mirrors it in turn, opening it up to repetition. To the same effect, Joyce often describes images as fading or dwindling entities. But throughout his texts, this movement is consistently paired with a sense of emergence or coming to presence. The pattern comes to describe a structure that folds in upon itself, in which the idea of the image as an imaginary or virtual object ("if he was dead"; "he imagined he saw"; "if the negative of a horse") becomes inseparable from the thought of its inherent materiality. And in the repeated conjunction of material and ideal processes, the image is revealed as an evolutionary order of being—a simulacrum in a strictly Deleuzo-Joycean sense.

Notes

1. Amongst several studies dealing with Joyce's deployment of narcissistic themes, or with the centrality of identificatory processes in his fiction, I should at least mention Sheldon Brivic, Kimberly Devlin and Julia Kristeva as the most influential. In addition to these, I should also like to single out Christine Van Boheemen's insightful commentary on the metaphor of the cracked mirror-image in *Ulysses*. On the opposite camp, Darren Tofts, Donald Theall, and, more recently, Annalisa Volpone provide excellent examples of what I am calling the techno-materialist reading of Joyce; but a complete survey would have to include the numerous essays on Joyce and cinema to have emerged in recent decades.

2. Previous Deleuzian readings of Joyce have addressed the theme of subjectivity by referencing Deleuze and Guattari's anti-Freudian stance and stressing their discourse on anti-Oedipal desire. See for instance Joseph Valente, Vicki Mahaffey and Nicholas Miller. My line of enquiry differs from these in that it is chiefly concerned with Deleuze's (and Joyce's) treatment of ontological issues.

3. The point is made most compellingly in *The Logic of Sense*:

> The univocity of Being does not mean that there is one and the same Being, on the contrary; beings are multiple and different they are always produced by a disjunctive synthesis, and they themselves are disjointed and divergent, membra disjuncta. The univocity of Being signifies that Being . . . is said in one and the same 'sense' of everything about which it is said. That of which it is said is not at all the same, but Being is the same for everything about which it is said. (*LS* 179)

It ought to be clear here that Deleuze's aim is not to identify a matrix of general sameness underlying every different being, but to establish "difference-in-itself"—in other words, immanent becoming—as a synonym of being.

4. See Borg, *The Measureless Time of Joyce*.

5. In this context, even Stephen's "*signatures* of all things . . ." can be reread, in the manner of a Wakean portmanteau, as a non-predicative conjunction of "sign" and "natures."

6. An excellent commentary on this quote, and its significance within Deleuze's general conception of the cinematic image, is provided by Alain Ménil. For a sustained book-length discussion of the relation between image and thought in Deleuze see D.N. Rodowick.

7. A simulacrum, in Deleuze's understanding of the term, is an image produced not according to a principle of resemblance, but rather according to a principle of divergence and invention (a logic that is also that of evolutionary progress). This does not mean that it has no intelligible referent; crucially, simulacra are nothing if not repetitions. But even as they repeat an idea, or duplicate a form (albeit falsely), they carry within them the evidence of their irreducible singularity. In the final analysis, the distinctive feature of a simulacrum (what we are calling the principle of divergence) is that it sets in motion a certain understanding of the absolute singularity in play in every act of repetition.

Deleuze's engagement with these notions spans the entire arc of his intellectual career, tracing a continuously developing line of argument between the early readings of Bergson and Nietzsche and the later more encyclopaedic volumes on cinema, philosophy and art. The revolutionary anti-Platonic aspect of his philosophy resides precisely in the suggestion that the simulacrum tells us more about the nature of images than its respectable counterpart, the "accurate" copy. Let us recall that for Plato, "accurate resemblance" is the measure of truth in an image: it is what makes an image authentic. Deleuze, however, is interested in what becomes of the image when it is false—that is to say, when its resemblance to the original source falls short. Here an image is "true to life" in a non-mimetic sense. Its task is not to represent life, as it were, but to sustain an impulse latent in every living thing, in every object—to become a "false" version of itself. Accordingly, Deleuze explains that "[t]hings are simulacra themselves, simulacra are the superior forms, and the difficulty facing everything is to become its own simulacrum" (*D&R* 67). For a full exposition of these ideas in an anti-Platonic context see Deleuze's "The Simulacrum and Ancient Philosophy" (esp. 261–65).

8. I am thinking, here, of Rabaté's use of this concept alongside its dialectical opposite, "hospitality," in *Joyce and the Politics of Egoism*.

9. Indeed we shall see that in addition to pulling Joyce away from the critical tug-of-war between idealist and historical materialists, the Joyce-Deleuze pairing allows us to read into the latter's complex philosophy a subtle narcissistic inflection—one that functions independently of historical consciousness and subjective idealist conventions.

10. It is interesting to mention, here, that Cixous describes the window as a reflective surface.

11. This incongruence between the event and the narrator's discourse is nowhere more evident than in the dream sequence of "The Sisters," in which Joyce employs words, concepts, even syntactic patterns that obviously exceed both the narrator's vocabulary and his range of possible experiences.

12. For a detailed study of this topic see two excellent essays by Tom Conley: "*L'evénement-cinéma*" and "From Image to Event." Also pertinent is Zsuzsa Barros's discussion of Deleuze's theory of perception in the context of Maurice Blanchot's notion of "the cadaverous image."

13. The recognition of this gaze as HCE's depends on a series of references internal to the text, as well as intertextual associations ranging from the last supper to the psychoanalytic discourse on incorporation. For a detailed analysis based on the theories of Abraham and Torok, see Borg, "Fadograph of Whome."

14. Darren Tofts provides an excellent commentary of this passage.

15. Something akin to this unity is described by Deleuze in the second *Cinema* book under the heading of *the crystal image*. This is a type of image-formation in which the two sides of the event—virtual and actual—are preserved together in their original unity. The crystal, Deleuze explains, "constantly exchanges the two distinct images which constitute it, the actual image of the present which passes and the virtual image of the past which is preserved . . . the crystal always lives at the limit, it is itself the 'vanishing limit between the immediate past which is already no longer and the immediate future which is not yet . . . mobile mirror which endlessly reflects perception in recollection'" (*T-I* 81).

16. It is less convincing, however, from a rhetorical viewpoint, since one cannot easily reconcile Dante's icy landscape, rendered in "*rime aspre e chiocce*" 'harsh and raucous rhymes' (*Inf.* 34:22–25), with the lyricism of Joyce's faintly falling snow.

17. And in the same vein Marie-Dominique Garnier speaks of the coda of *Dubliners* as the inverse-double of the opening: "the main point of interest of Joyce's final novella is that it . . . writes the inverse, the inner fold or double [*la doublure ou le doublage*] of the first novella which is obsessed with fathers, with silence and the gnomon" (143; my translation).

18. For yet another take on this idea, see Garnier's description of the final image of *Dubliners* as a subterranean world: "a map of hell prepared not so much by Gabriel himself as by the author's other [*l'autre face de l'auteur*], the dead man standing under the tree . . ." (143; my translation).

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