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The Use of Irish Folklore in *Ulysses* Through the Irish Literary Revival: Between Tradition, Modernity and Identity

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TABLE DES MATIÈRES

Introduction:

It is difficult to approach a book that is titled *Ulysses* differently from the apparent eponymous aspect of its cover. In front of such a complex work, the reader may find it comforting to identify a guiding line in Joyce's text *Ulysses* by appealing to his knowledge of the Greek mythos associated with the Homerian universe of *The Odyssey*. But this is no invention from the reader or the critics, since the novel often echoes Greek mythology, notably by naming one of the main characters Stephen Dedalus, in reference to the great Greek architect of the Dedalus maze, a maze that is then transposed into the goings of Dedalus and Leopold Bloom through Dublin. Even though the book is not eponymous and Joyce's style is manifestly different from Homer's prose, the book is edited and published in seventeen episodes matching the titles form the chapters of *The Odyssey*. By doing so, it was a way to give a structure to a confusing novel by applying an already existing grid from a literary heritage that *Ulysses* was overtly acknowledging. However, many critics later came to realise that *Ulysses* was a much more intricate work than a mere reverence to Homer's *Odyssey*, and some of them even deplored the reduction of *Ulysses* to a tapestry of Greek signs and symbols:

> Ulysses, of course, is a divine work of art and will live on despite the academic nonentities who turn it into a collection of symbols or Greek myths. I once gave a student a C-minus, or perhaps a D-plus, just for applying to its chapters the titles borrowed from Homer while not even noticing the comings and goings of the man in the brown mackintosh. He didn't even know who the man in the brown mackintosh was. Oh, yes, let people compare me to Joyce by all means, but my English is pat ball to Joyce's champion game.[1]

What Nabokov suggests here is the fact that reading *Ulysses* in relation to Homer's work is not reading *Ulysses* for what it is as a whole. And indeed, the narrative logic of the *Odyssey* is copy-pasted on *Ulysses* chapters as a way to bypass the complexity that the novel proposes. But most importantly, the story of *Ulysses* happening in the time lapse of a single day is associated with a chronology from another work, from another time, which deals with the travels of the Greek hero who took years to come back to his home after the Trojan war. As a result, the association of such a structure to *Ulysses*' narration is more symbolical than it is narrative, and is the result of a process of assimilation by identifying patterns and similarities between the two stories. In other words, analyzing *Ulysses* in relation to the *Odyssey*, however obvious the links are, is still a reading and an interpretation amongst

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[1] From Nabokov's Interview, television 13 Educational Program, New York, 1965.

others. Therefore, Joyce's use of the *Odyssey* does open up other questions in terms of critical backgrounds and referentiality in *Ulysses* that can be widened to other aspects of the novel that are obvious upon reading the novel.

TITLE	SCENE	HOUR	ORGAN	ART	COLOUR	SYMBOL	TECHNIC
1. Telemachus	The Tower	8 a.m.		Theology	White, gold	Heir	Narrative (young)
2. Nestor	The School	10 a.m.		History	Brown	Horse	Catechism (personal)
3. Proteus	The Strand	11 a.m.		Philology	Green	Tide	Monologue (male)
4. Calypso	The House	8 a.m.	Kidney	Economics	Orange	Nymph	Narrative (mature)
5. Lotus-eaters	The Bath	10 a.m.	Genitals	Botany, Chemistry		Eucharist	Narcissism
6. Hades	The Graveyard	11 a.m.	Heart	Religion	White, black	Caretaker	Incubism
7. Aeolus	The Newspaper	12 noon	Lungs	Rhetoric	Red	Editor	Enthymemic
8. Lestrygonians	The Lunch	1 p.m.	Esophagus	Architecture		Constables	Peristaltic
9. Scylla and Charybdis	The Library	2 p.m.	Brain	Literature		Stratford, London	Dialectic
10. Wandering Rocks	The Streets	3 p.m.	Blood	Mechanics		Citizens	Labyrinth
11. Sirens	The Concert Room	4 p.m.	Ear	Music		Barmaids	Fuga per canonem
12. Cyclops	The Tavern	5 p.m.	Muscle	Politics		Fenian	Gigantism
13. Nausicaa	The Rocks	8 p.m.	Eye, Nose	Painting	Grey, blue	Virgin	Tumescence, detumescence
14. Oxen of the Sun	The Hospital	10 p.m.	Womb	Medicine	White	Mothers	Embryonic development
15. Circe	The Brothel	12 midnight	Locomotor Apparatus	Magic		Whore	Hallucination
16. Eumaeus	The Shelter	1 a.m.	Nerves	Navigation		Sailors	Narrative (old)
17. Ithaca	The House	2 a.m.	Skeleton	Science		Comets	Catechism (impersonal)
18. Penelope	The Bed		Flesh			Earth	Monologue (female)

(Source: Stuart Gilbert, 1955, *James Joyce's Ulysses*, Vintage Books Edition, 30)

1) Opening up the possibility for a folkloristic reading of *Ulysses*

Most of the critical reflection regarding *Ulysses* is traced back to T.S Eliot's text "Ulysses, Myth and Order" already mentioned above and which shares the same remark that Nabokov made about the auto-referentiality to Homer:

> Mr. Joyce's book has been out long enough for no more general expression of praise, or expostulation with its detractors, to be necessary; and it has not been out long enough for any attempt at a complete measurement of its place and significance to be possible. All that one can usefully do at this time, and it is a great deal to do, for such a book, is to elucidate any aspect of the book — and the number of aspects is indefinite —which has not yet been fixed.[2]

The key notion here is the notion of "aspect" which is qualified as "indefinite". *Ulysses* is thus presented as a work that can only be assessed in a time-consuming process and which can be

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[2] T.S Eliot, *The Dial*, "Book Reviews Ulysses, Order and Myth", November 1923, Chicago, 480-484.

approached one angle at a time. And as Nabokov suggested, the angle that has been widely focused on is the angle of the Greek mythos. However, Eliot's suggestion does introduce the notion of enquiry and discovery of the book through its several aspects. It is about "elucidating" the book, which opened up the path for a critical thinking that went beyond the Greek universe conveyed by the title of the book and later on through an intertextual web of reference to the Odyssean travels. Critics are thus invited to abandon the binary comparison between the two authors and look for a meaning outside of the Homerian frame and structure.

And yet, regardless of the restrictive view of Joyce's work, the strength of this reading of *Ulysses*, however obvious it appears to be, does question the notion of heritage and intertextuality in the novel. The term "borrowed" used by Nabokov is particularly interesting because it imposes a reflection on the way in which *Ulysses* inscribes itself in the tradition of Homer's work. From that point of view, Nabokov's speech must not be misconstrued. Nabokov does not say that *Ulysses* is not about the Greek mythos, but he claims that focusing on this aspect of *Ulysses* at any cost is not only counterproductive in the sense that it invites critics to force interpretations from that field upon the narrative, but it also undermines the efforts made by Joyce to introduce other notions inside his narrative.

It is also important to understand that Joyce did not mean to use the referential universe of the *Odyssey* as an embellishment of his own work. This is also a point discussed by Eliot, as he tries to deconstruct critics that have been made in response to Joyce's use of the *Odyssey* as a mere ornament. To Eliot, it is not: "an amusing dodge, or scaffolding erected by the author for the purpose of disposing his realistic tale, of no interest in the completed structure." In other words, Joyce did not use Homer's work as a basis for the structure of his work. In fact, Manjola Nasi interpreted the comment as such:

> Thus, to Eliot, the parallel use of the Homeric Odyssey was not an embellishment to the structure of the new Ulysses, but rather an underneath semi-transparent multi-layered stratum on a painting where the two would be present. The old Odyssey introduces the new Ulysses to myth, history, human feelings and deeds. This past the Odyssey provides is as complex and intricate as human activity itself, but on the other hand, it brings depth, memory and meaning to an otherwise isolated bubble-like artificial creation. [3]

The approach proposed here is completely different, because Nasi argues that Joyce did not seek to appropriate the *Odyssey* for the writing of *Ulysses* for the sake of stylistic legitimacy,

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[3] Nasi Manjola, "The Mythic Method and Intertextuality in T.S Eliot's Poetry", *European Scientific Journal*, March edition, vol. 8, No. 06, 2.

but as a new system to the structure of the *Odyssey*. And most importantly, the *Odyssey* allows Joyce to introduce reflections about time, myth and history in his narrative by a process of combining layers of meaning in *Ulysses*.

The one angle this study will focus on is the folkloric and mythological one. In the writing of the first critics of *Ulysses*, what can be drawn is that they all spotted the relevance of the mythological structure and implications of *Ulysses* by its ties to the *Odyssey*. However, the Greek mythos is far from being the only mythological universe referred to and Eliot and Nabokov rightfully invited academics to explore the other aspects proposed by the novel.

From that point of view, it is important to replace *Ulysses* in its context of publication. The novel was formally published on February the 2nd, 1922. But before that, the book was published in part in different magazines such as in the London magazine *The Egoist* in 1919. But between 1918 and 1920, several parts of the book appeared in the American avant-garde magazine *The Little Review* which was later on shut down having being accused of obscenity. In fact, many of Joyce's contemporaries and critics pointed fingers at *Ulysses* for being too elitist, too difficult to understand or too obscene. Joyce was also accused of not having been enlisted in the army during World War I, a time he spent differently in his writing of *Ulysses*.

All these elements combined rendered the publication and later on the study of *Ulysses* very complicated, since the novel was labelled at odds with its time of publication.

And yet, *Ulysses* still was published inside a literary movement which was identified as the Irish literary revival. The Irish literary revival is a movement which influenced the rising of texts that were deeply connected with Irish folkloric stories and myths with the rediscovery, notably, of medieval Irish literature. However, this affirmation of a form of Irish set-in stone is not that easy to establish. Moreover, the movement itself is very difficult to trace back. It is generally associated with the rise of the Gaelic League founded in 1893 by Douglas Hyde and the Gaelic Athletic Association that started to promote Irish literature and Irish drama. This new Irish-centred cultural wave that influenced Ireland at the turn of the 19th century was a manifestation of the general nationalist wave that spread across the country. The main impetus of the movement was the promotion of the Irish language that was considered as endangered by the colonisation of the island by the kings of England.

The Irish literary movement went further in this attempt at "revitalizing" the culture of Ireland by going back to explore and praise the heroic folkloristic and mythological past of Ireland.

All of a sudden, ancient texts in ancient Irish were rediscovered and presented as a national cultural treasure by the authors who instigated the movement. Diarmuid Ó Giolláin talks about these authors as the "Irish pioneers"[4]. He traces back the conditions of this movement to Charlotte Brooke who was "the first mediator of importance between the Irish Gaelic and the Anglo-Irish literary traditions"[5]. Folkloristic texts where then translated back in English, rendering them accessible for the posterity. Writers such as Thomas Crofton Croker, Oscar Wilde and Yeats pursued later on this interest for Irish popular traditions, and especially the supernatural and fairy-tale dimensions of the folktale. The development of this interest overtime became a sign that "popular tradition itself came to be seen as a cultural asset in this period (1880, passage from the Gaelic Union to the Gaelic League), both the proof of continuity from the ancient Gaelic past, and a resource for artistic inspiration to the elite."[6] As a result, the Anglo-Irish writers were interested in folklore as an artistic resource. For most of the writers of this movement, the use of folklore material was meant to preserve the essence of folklore.

From that standpoint, the links between the movement and the publication of *Ulysses* by Joyce in the prime of the nationalistic movement did not appear coincidental to critics such as Maria Tymoczko whose work's title *The Irish Ulysses* says it all. She devotes her work to exploring, as Eliot suggested, "a second axis of mythic correlatives" to read differently the relations between the main characters: "In *Ulysses*, the framework of Irish pseudohistory and Irish Sovereignty imagery sets the relationships of the main characters and provides a second axis of mythic correlatives augmenting the Greek mythos of the book."[7] Therefore, Tymoczko proposes a reading of *Ulysses* through an angle that favours the Irish folklore which is invested with a structural value for the narrative. But Tymoczko's analysis does not simply aim at shedding light on the folkloristic structure of *Ulysses* in terms of internal coherences of the narration. She uses the exploration of certain aspects of Irish folklore in *Ulysses* in order to establish the correlation of mythic correlates and the political dimension of *Ulysses*. As a result, the use of Irish folklore is not just used as a secondary axis in order to reinforce the Greek mythos of the book, but it is also invested with an ethical value in the sense that folklore is given a role that is linked with the nationalistic wave that was fed and fed upon the

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[4] Diarmuid Ó Giolláin, 2000, *Locating Irish Folklore, Tradition, Modernity, Identity*, Diarmuid O, Cork UP.
[5] *Ibid*. 94.
[6] *Ibid*. 102.
[7] Maria Tymoczko, *The Irish Ulysses*, UC Press E-Books Collection, 1982-2004, 2.

Irish literary revival. In a sense, Tymoczko's decision to envisage a political angle justified by an analysis of folklore materials is not revolutionary, since it is what a method that writers for the Irish literary revival had already approached. As Diarmuid Ó Giolláin underscores: "the concept of folklore developed partly as a 'nationalist' reaction to a metropolitan culture with universal pretensions."[8] There are two things to be drawn from this statement. The first one, at least for Ó Giolláin, is that folklore was developed in opposition to modernisation and metropolitan development of cities as a model which progressively overstepped the traditional agrarian culture from which folklore was born. The second point is that the conceptualization of the term folklore cannot be stripped from a political dimension, since it was born as a response to a social context. Etymologically speaking, folklore is the "lore" (science, knowledge) of the "folk" (people)[9]. Inside the concept of folklore, one finds a web of myths that all belong to the same "folk", but which do not spread the same "lore". In other words, the concept of folklore already calls for a pluralistic approach of its content, a remark that is all the more important in *Ulysses*, since folklore manifests itself in many different ways. It also means that a certain "folk" (or legends / traditions proper to one or different groups) needs to be identified and attached to a particular "folk" (people belonging to a same ethnical group, bound by traditions, customs, language, etc.) in question. In the case of this study, the specific "folk" of Ireland has its own specific "lore" that will have to be studied under its diverse manifestations and transmissions inside the narrative. And yet, there is an ambiguity in that definition, since the term "lore" does not specify if the knowledge in question is coming from the "folk" or if it is established after having studied its customs and traditions. In other words, there is a difference to be made between the "lore" that is received and the "lore" that is created, analysed or interpreted.

Tymoczko's angle becomes all the more justified, since she appears to be presenting Joyce's work under that perspective and she justifies the role of folklore in *Ulysses* as a political voice and symbol. Indeed, there can be no doubt as to what folklore was supposed to mean for Ó Giolláin as he wrote in the introduction to *Locating Irish folklore, Tradition, Modernity, Identity*:

> "Folklore" is both subject matter and critical discourse, amateur enthusiasm and academic discipline, residual agrarian culture and the popular urban culture of the present; it is both conservative anti-modernist and radical counter-culture, the sphere of dilettantish provincial

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[8] D. Ó Giolláin, *Locating Irish Folklore, Tradition, Modernity, Identity*, 4.
[9] Cf. definition given by the CNRTL: https://www.cnrtl.fr/etymologie/Folklore.

intellectuals and of committed nation-builders, transmitted by word to mouth in intimate settings and negotiated electronically in the public domain.[10]

This is maybe one of the most relevant quotes in Ó Giolláin's work, because it encompasses all the dynamics that are at play in the use of folklore as both an object of study and a field that produces its own critical thinking. Furthermore, folklore seems to be invested with a transformative power upon the image of a nation, Ireland in the case of this study, as Tymoczko exemplified in her work. Therefore, this study will be aimed at establishing the role of folklore in *Ulysses* and the way in which Joyce used that tool in order to propose a different version of Ireland, both in terms of the definition of "Irishness" through the exploration of folkloristic cultural booth and Irish pseudohistory, but also in terms of political implication of folklore in a country dealing with postcolonialism effects on elements of local colour.

2) Investigating the notion of "critical folklore" in *Ulysses*

And yet, even though Tymoczko's project is to shed light on how Joyce uses folklore in *Ulysses* to get across a message that goes beyond the range of the Irish literary revival ethics, the relation between *Ulysses* and folklore is still difficult to establish. The first reason as to why this is the case is because *Ulysses* is not a work about folklore, nor is it a folkloristic work, in the sense that folklore is not the end of the novel, as it is often the case for other writers of the Irish literary revival movement such as Yeats whose way of approaching folklore in his writings was more reminiscent of the profile of an ethnologist rather than an author.

On the contrary, *Ulysses* proposes folklore as a foil in order to think the relationships between different characters inside a given setting which is Dublin.

Moreover, the term folklore is itself extremely problematic, because the definition of what the term encompasses not only changes according to the culture to which it is applied but it is also a term that has evolved across the year, to the point that a term meant to identify elements of local colour, not specifically nationalist at first, became a symbol of national unity and exceptionalism and later on an academic field. In other words, the object of study "folklore" that exemplified a cultural reality became a field of study itself, focusing on its own entity.

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[10] D. Ó Giolláin, *Locating Irish Folklore, Tradition, Modernity, Identity* 1.

Therefore, it is of paramount importance to constantly be aware of the difference to be made between folklore and folklore studies. This evolution of the term folklore into an academic discipline can be seen as a progress, or even a victory for those devoted to its study, such as Alan Dundes. However, Diarmuid Ó Giolláin is much more assertive on the question, and even questions the notion of the "end of tradition". Indeed, for him, the rise of folklore meant that folklore itself was disappearing: "Folklore is predicated on the death of tradition. Since the word first appeared it has carried an aura which has been a burden to the study of popular culture. "Folklore" appeared as it was disappearing, it was discovered as it was being lost, it was recovered as it ceased to be."[11] To him, folklore was used to give authenticity to the notion of identity of a given culture.[12] It is a compelling statement in the recognition of folklore as a structural element, which Tymoczko recognizes in her analysis of *Ulysses*. And yet, it also expresses the fact that folklore was used in order to justify a society that was no longer representative of this very same folklore. Ó Giolláin constantly opposes the emergence of folklore to the rise of modernity, notably through the Industrial Revolution. Therefore, it would appear the use of folklore as a nationalistic resource contributed to show how obsolete the cultural sphere from which it was drawn was.

In that sense, Joyce's use of folklore is to be analysed under the same angle, as Joyce has been more than often qualified as an avant-gardist of the modernist movement, *Ulysses* being one of the strongest representatives of the aesthetics of modernism. It should be noted that the purpose of this study will not aim at establishing the relevance of this statement, since the qualification of *Ulysses* as a modernist work does not only rely on its use of folklore. However, since Ó Giolláin introduces modernity as an opposing factor to folklore, it would be interesting to explore the way in which the two notions combine in *Ulysses*.

As it turns out, proposing an analysis of *Ulysses* solely resting on the strength of its mythological pattern is not a new concept. It is an idea that Eliot already suggested, presenting *Ulysses* as a text that should be approached under the angle of the "mythological method":

> In using the myth, in manipulating a continuous parallel between contemporaneity and antiquity, Mr. Joyce is pursuing a method which others must pursue after him. They will not be imitators, any more than the scientist who uses the discoveries of an Einstein in pursuing his own, independent, further investigations. It is simply a way of controlling, of ordering, of giving a shape

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[11] D. Ó Giolláin, *Locating Irish Folklore, Tradition, Modernity, Identity*, 8.

[12] *Ibid*. "'Folklore' was tradition, or at least it was traditional, and tradition helped to legitimize identity. Hence the loss of tradition had negative implications for the maintenance of identity.", 8.

and a significance to the immense panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history. [13]

This quote is especially meaningful for our analysis of *Ulysses* because it encompasses all the contradictions that the novel exposes in the use of its folklore material. Not only is folklore invested with a structural role as Tymoczko accurately pointed out, but it also underscores the idea that mythological patterns in the novel are to be approached as a "method" of analysis. Eliot took the remarks he made on *Ulysses* at heart, since the same method he theorized in *Ulysses* helped him for the conceptualization of *The Waste Land*.

What Eliot's vision tells us about *Ulysses* is that it uses old or even antique materials in order to create something new, or as Eliot puts it, to give a structure to "contemporary history". Myth is thus recognized first for its adequacy to draw bridges between history and social present as a guiding line, the same way Theseus followed Ariadne's thread out of the minotaur's maze.

And yet, the "mythical method" Eliot established might have more to do with the way in which Eliot looked at his own work, considering the fact that his text came out after the publication of *The Waste Land*. Also, the depiction of the "mythical method" as a scientific endeavor may seem contradictory to the ironic tone adopted by Joyce in his work, especially in *Ulysses*. It also reminds us that this method is also a reading proposed by Eliot that is very much linked with the premisses of a modernist aesthetic to which Joyce was unaware while writing *Ulysses*. This has not escaped James Nikopoulos' critical eye as he wrote:

> "The point is not that Eliot's method is a science exactly, but that the method participates in the spread of knowledge by disseminating that which is perpetually being verified by posterity. If another writer who uses the "mythical method" is not imitating Joyce, it is because the method makes use of an understanding of myth, to which Joyce never enjoyed the exclusive rights." [14]

According to that logic, Joyce's text would be headed toward posterity and aim at asserting the knowledge brought by myth. The other interesting aspect is the fact that the range of the myth used by Joyce here goes beyond his own grasp. In other words, as he was writing

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[13] i.*e*,T.S Eliott, "Ulysses, Order and Myth".

[14] James Nikopoulos, "The Wisdom of Myth: Eliot's "*Ulysses*, Order and Myth", in Adam J. Goldwyn and James Nikopoulos, eds., *Brill's Companion to the Reception of Classics in International Modernism and the Avant-Garde*, Boston, 2017, 307.

Ulysses, it may not have occurred to Joyce that he was using mythic correlatives in such a way that they would take a life of their own as a literary tool.

However, it should be noted that Eliot's conception came out from an analysis comparing *Ulysses* and *The Odyssey*, even if as we have seen before the theory goes beyond the life of the work itself, it might be widened to other aspects of the text. Moreover, the "mythological method" was meant to be the premisses of modernism, and Nikopoulos' focus on the symbolical aspect of myth bringing order to contemporary history is deeply linked to the post World War I context. Therefore, the "mythological method" as it is applied to *Ulysses* inscribes the work into a modernist aesthetics that is to be discussed at different levels. Eliot's remarks shed light on the fact that the *Ulysses* proposes a highly modernist preview of what the modernist movement will look like, as an answer to the chaos and destruction left by the war, seeking for a general truth that Eliot recognized in myth, as a sort of organisational principle that could answer the search for a general truth the modernism was craving for. Diarmuid Ó Giolláin tackles this relation in another way, presenting folklore as opposed to modernity. His work *Locating Irish Folklore, Tradition, Modernity, Identity* is inscribed into this triangle of terms in a constant opposition, where folklore as a representative of tradition is being threatened by modernity, to the point where folklore becomes engulfed inside the emerging "mass" or "popular" culture. And this particular popular culture has nothing to do with the folk culture that inspired folklore. As a result, the question of the identity of a given country is very much at stake, since folklore becomes associated to a new vision of culture that disregards completely tradition by historicizing the traditional part of folklore.

It should also be noted that the world "folklore" never appears in Eliot's essay, so what is the link with the use of folklore and mythical correlatives on which Tymoczko focused? The word "folklore" is etymologically speaking a mot-valise between "folk" and "lore", thus being the lore of the folk or the people. "Lore" designates knowledge and science. As a result, the coinage is supposed to refer to the knowledge of a specific folk, meaning that in the general concept of folklore, there are several folklores to be explored. Therefore, folklore is a set of collective productions belonging to a given group that are passed on by ways of oral tales or imitation of practices. Folklore is a concept that englobes the notion of myth and legend that are considered as a constituent of folklore, since the myth or legend are supposed to refer back to the creation of the world. But most importantly, folklore is not a passive concept, since its essence is about the transmission of its "lore". In the case of *Ulysses*, the

Greek mythos of the book is revisited but not transmitted with accuracy. It is used but not respected. Insofar as Irish folklore is concerned, the question is different since the ethos of the Irish literary revival favoured a compliance with old traditions, where Joyce's text is a field of literary innovations insofar as the genre of the novel is concerned. Contemplating a study of the transmission of folklore in *Ulysses* thus implies to explore the nature of this transmission from one medium (folklore and tradition) to another (the written text and modernity) and size up the number of changes that were needed to render this transmission effective, or if this transmission was even possible. These are questions that need to be addressed in this thesis, but they also have to be considered under the prism of folklore studies that provided another layer of critical background to an already complex use of folklore in *Ulysses*.

Most of the time, the use of "myth" in order to describe Joyce's intertextual inspiration is used to refer to the Greek mythos. In the case of the use of Irish folklore that Tymoczko describes, her analysis has to be approached under the angle of folklore studies as they are theorized by Alan Dundes who proposes his own definitional link between the two terms "myth" and "folklore":

> The word folklore itself considered as an item of folk speech means fallacy, untruth, error. Think of the phrase "That's folklore." It is similar to the meaning of "myth in such phrases as "the myth of race." This is *not,* however, what folklore and myth mean to the professional folklorist. A myth is but one form or genre of folklore, a form which consists of a sacred narrative explaining how the world and man came to be in their present form. Folklore consists of a variety of genres most of which are found among all peoples of the earth. Nevertheless, the association of folklore with error (consider "folk" medicine as opposed to "scientific" medicine) has made it difficult for the study of folklore as a discipline to gain academic respectability and has generally discouraged the use and study of folklore by educators.[15]

Alan Dundes' work was dedicated to propose a "folklorist method" which suggested that the identification of folklore was necessary to access meaning in a text. In that sense, Dundes "proposed a folkloristic method that combined the pursuit of texts and contexts, and provides a foundation for a distinctive modern discipline of folkloristics." [16] If the "mythological method" exposed by Eliot was already an acknowledgment of the relevance of mythical structures inside a narrative, the "folkloristic method" goes, as it could be argued, one step further in this method, since it proposes to encompass all the myths that constitute a given

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[15] Alan Dundes "Folklore as a Mirror of Culture", in *The Meaning of Folklore, The Analytical Essays by Alan Dundes*, Simon J. Bronner, eds., Utah, SUP, 2007, 56.
[16] Simon J. Bronner, "The Study of Folklore in Literature and Culture: Identification and Interpretation", in *The Meaning of Folklore, The Analytical Essays by Alan Dundes*, Utah, SUP, 2007, 67.

folklore inside a same structure that would have to be analyzed and studied not for what it brings to the structure of the novel but for how a novel is built around it. In other words, the study of *Ulysses* (which is one of the examples Dundes has chosen to apply his method to) will be influenced by the way in which the author chose to use folklore as a structural narrative (which is Tymoczko's approach too). Also, Dundes' approach compels this study to be linked with the context of publication of *Ulysses*. It should be noted here that this context is multi-faceted (post World War I, nationalist wave across the country, censorship of the work labelled blasphemous, the Irish literary revival movement and the premises of the modernist aesthetics) and this study will only focus on some aspects of this context that reinforce the link between the use of folklore and the Irish cultural sphere from which the cultural elements were drawn. Therefore, the Irish literary revival will constitute a crucial contextualization of Joyce's text, because it involves the revalorization of folklore in literature as a nationalistic factor. However, it should be noted that the analysis of *Ulysses* under the theories of folklore studies are an interpretation of Joyce's intention while writing, for folklore studies as theorized by Dundes only emerged after the publication of *Ulysses*, and the analyses (even Eliot's "mythological method") of *Ulysses* under the angle of a valorization of folklore only came out after the work was published.

Consequently, the objective of this thesis will not really focus on explaining why Joyce chose a Greek angle of reading with an Irish subtext, but rather to try and analyse what it implies for the relevance of Irish inspired folklore as a literary and cultural tool, nor will the focus be to establish an exhaustive list of all the micro-internal references to clarify somewhat remote references to Irish myths, stories and traditions. The objective will be more about studying how such assimilations are conveyed into the text to try and assess the level of adaptation of these references from the actual original stories. The point made here is perhaps to remind the reader of this dissertation that there is no "perfect" reader of *Ulysses*, able to spot the different axes of analysis of the novel and all the inside Irish jokes or internal references in the novel. Therefore, this thesis proposes a reading of *Ulysses* using the tools provided by the emergence of folkloric studies in order to shed light on the Irish folkloric elements that Joyce used in his narrative and try to make sense of the specific way in which they were put in place in the book. In other words, the objective is to show how Joyce, who was aware of the fact the Irish folklore was vastly disregarded by literary critics until then, decided to include the topos of Irish folklore inside a European inspired cultural sphere. This, of course will raise other practical issues that will be discussed in the argumentation, such as: Were all the aspects of

Irish folklore conveyed in *Ulysses* equally? How was the Irish folklore introduced into the narrative? What roles do Irish references to myth and legends play in the unfolding of the narrative? What is the range of these references in terms of narration or political message?

All these questions also deal with the fact that the multi-referential level of Irish folklore elements and references in the text do not necessarily work in the same way but serve a common purpose. In the case of Joyce, there are different motifs of the folklore that are developed on several levels. One of the most important is the style and genres used in the writing that are reminiscent of traditional Irish writings. The other one is the symbolical strength of mythological associations, characters and plotlines that sometimes echo each other inside the same character. But in both occurrences, the interesting point of analysis with regard to the deciphering of the folklore in Joyce's writing is the fact that the Irish folklore is not only revisited but also allows a re-definition of the idea of Ireland as a "nation", both in terms of literary potential but also in societal characterization. Considering this aspect, it is not surprising then that the folklore becomes a tool for Joyce to express his own political vision of Ireland through folklore. In that sense, it will also be of interest to explore a little more the reality behind the notion of "revival" in the Irish literary revival. Even if the term is meant to convey the fact that folklore was brought back to life, it can be argued that Joyce, even though he was invested in this movement as well, does not explain this logic at all. On the contrary. In *Ulysses*, the Irish folklore tends to be presented as decadent first in order to be reborn, and maybe the term "reborn" is better to explain Joyce's purview, since the term is connoted with an idea of transformation or metamorphosis. This idea in *Ulysses* is important because the Irish folklore not only influences the societal, literary and political range of the text but it also forces the novel to transgress the rules of Anglo-European novels and writings.

The way Diarmuid Ó Giolláin structures his own work provides an efficient way of looking into folklore in *Ulysses*. The trinity of "Tradition, Modernity and Identity" encompasses all the problematics tied to Joyce's text. This dissertation will follow the same pattern by first exploring the depths of tradition (and thus folklore) in context and co-text. The relation between folklore, Joyce and the Irish literary revival movement will be of particular interest. As Ó Giolláin suggests, the confrontation between tradition and folklore with modernity and modernism is unavoidable, especially in *Ulysses* due to the critical tradition that followed the publication of the novel. Therefore, the contradictions of Joyce using myth and folklore as a structure and being a "modernist avant-garde" author will be explored, notably through his

use of stylistics. The combination of the remarks on those points will lead to consider the ethical potential of folklore insofar as nationalism and the affirmation of Irish identity are concerned. If Joyce is proposing a definition of folklore that is at odds with revivalist aesthetics and yet inspired from folklore, how does he extend the use of folklore beyond literary dominions and inscribe it as a political statement?

I.   Seeing *Ulysses* as an Irish text in context: An intricate filiation between Joyce's *Ulysses*, the Irish literary revival and folkloric studies

At first reading, proposing an Irish reading of *Ulysses* inspired by folklore is not the first idea that comes to mind. Naming his book after the mythological hero of Homer *Odysseus* can only inscribe *Ulysses* in a textual continuity and develop the assumption for the reader that the plotline is, if not constructed around the same characters, is meant to remind the reader of a specific mythological and poetic universe. Not only does the question stand but it also imposes itself to critics and by doing so strongly incites all studies on Joyce to read his book through the spectrum provided by the reference to the *Odyssey*. And as Gérard Genette suggests, the obviousness of such an interpretation is not only imposing itself before the reading but also remains a safe hypertextual field after the reading: "Réduits à son seul texte et sans le secours d'aucun mode d'emploi, comment lirions-nous *Ulysses* de Joyce s'il ne s'intitulait pas *Ulysses*?" [17]The idea that Joyce's text can only be read through a pre-existing grid of reading is at the same time a restrictive statement which yet provides the critic with opportunities. Genette here specifies the path that many critics felt compelled to comment upon and thus making the whole narrative revolve around a dynamic of textual references and intertextual density around the Greek mythos provided by Homer and Ulysses' travels back to Ithaca. And yet, the novel's references to works of Shakespeare for instance does suggests that there are other axes of analysis possible. In the case of Shakespeare, the references to his works are so dense that Stephen Dedalus even discusses his own theory about Shakespeare. The novel thus introduces a reflection on the works of Shakespeare, rather than a mere quotational reverence. For instance, the analysis of Dedalus's theory on Shakespeare's Hamlet is of significant interest for the way in which Joyce not only gets inspiration from intertextual references but also uses these references for his own discourse. And this is as statement that could be applied to other webs of references in *Ulysses*:

> It is possible that that player Shakespeare, a ghost by absence, and in the vesture of buried Denmark, a ghost by death, speaking his own words to his own son's name (had Hamnet Shakespeare lived he would have been prince Hamlet's twin) it is possible, I want to know, or

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[17] Gérard Genette (1982), *Palimpsestes : la littérature au second degré*, Paris, Seuil, 8.

probable that he did not draw or foresee the logical conclusion of these premises: you are the dispossessed son: I am the murdered father: your mother is the guilty queen.[18]

As a result, every other interpretation of the narrative becomes part of a sub-reading and is justified by an investigation inside the potential subtexts[19] integrated inside the narrative, or by its context.

An analysis of the folkloric potential of *Ulysses* is paradoxically justified by its ties with the movement of the Irish literary revival, or at least by Joyce's opposition to the movement. But what is the Irish literary movement?

The Irish nationalist movement is itself constituted through several steps that all take the shape of an institutionalization of a particular aspect of folklore[20]. The appearance of several "leagues" were a hint at the recognition of folklore within culture which took different faces and can be sometimes hard differentiate. And according to Diarmuid Ó Giolláin, the term "folklore" itself was coined around the time where the movement started. Therefore, the notion of "folklore" shifted from an ideological concept to a scientific one: "Folklore was conceptualized towards the end of the eighteenth century, coined as a word in 1846 and institutionalized from the end of the nineteenth century on. To speak of antecedents, then, is to some extent a contradiction, since folklore did not exist until it was named." [21] In other words, the term folklore as it was understood and studied by the Irish literary revival authors from Lady Gregory to Yeats was contemporary to the movement, which explains in part the shift of folklore from an ideology into a scientific concept. In a sense, the Irish literary movement proposed their own definition of the new term folklore, even if the essence of folklore goes back to traditional practices. However, Ó Giolláin points out that even though the naming of folklore was new, its practice was not, especially in literature. The Grimm Brothers already proposed a comparative scholarly framework that granted a significant place to folktales as popular material in literature. Folktales were then usually incorporated into narratives or sometimes constituted the basis for a work of literature. Popular culture had already made its way into written form in several ways depicted by Ó Giolláin, such as the

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[18] James Joyce (1922), *Ulysses*, Penguin Books, 1992, 9: 241.

[19] The term subtext here is to be understood in the sense that a them is dealt in ways more or less obvious in the narrative, implying that it has to be unraveled by a critical reader. However, it must not be understood as a hierarchical denomination that would imply that a meaning that is rendered less obvious has less relevancy in the text.

[20] Clare Hutton, "Joyce and the Institutions of Revivalism", Irish University Review 33: 1, Spring – Summer 2003, "Should critics refer to the 'Irish Literary Revival', 'Ireland's Literary Renaissance', 'The Gaelic Revival' or the 'Modernism' of the 'Celtic revival?', 117.

[21] D. Ó Giolláin, *Locating Irish Folklore, Tradition, Modernity, Identity*, (32).

Literature of Confutation (opposition of the churches or other institutional body to diverse aspects of popular religion), Antiquarianism (the study of history through the history of old and ancient artefacts, thus based on empirical evidence of the past), travel accounts (that were already hinting at an ethnographic approach of folklore, as the accounts of travelers and colonists, especially in the case of Ireland, provided important knowledge for popular culture), enlightened enquiry (which were already a form of public enquiries that aimed at informing the state on the several practices of its people in order to produce a more rational government). The common point between all these formats is that they all deal with the relationship between folklore as a non-entity as opposed to institutional bodies, faithful to the angle adopted by Ó Giolláin who exposes the fact that folklore was presented as the enemy of civilization before it was the enemy of modernity. The dynamics animating the Irish literary revival movement were different in the sense that the institutionalization of the Gaelic and Celtic language was supposed to preserve the format of these ancient languages that had been disregarded as a result of colonization.

It should also be noted that the emergence of the revivalist ethos rested strongly on romanticism[22], as an answer to a period of social stress due to modernization and urbanization that threatened the notion of national community. In that sense, Joyce's use of realism in order to portray the wanderings of his characters in Dublin constituted a different approach from the romantic ethos that had been mostly defended by Oscar Wilde and Yeats.

Perhaps the intricate context that surrounds the movement, engulfed between post-colonial aesthetics, the emergence of modernism and the sense of a national crisis in Ireland is the reason why the relation between *Ulysses* and its author with the movement is so controversial. The division inside the movement itself, due to this context, is visible in Joyce's text as well, notably in the analysis of the "Library" scene and the "Cyclops" chapter. As the movement tried to gather cultural elements taken from folklore in order to establish an "Irish culture", Maria Tymoczko understands that despite the book's ties with the Irish literary revival, the definition of the term "Irish" and "Irish culture" is very much at stake in *Ulysses*. The work is divided into a reflection on culture through folklore under the angle of the relevancy of Irish language, sectarism and politics. In that sense, Joyce's debt towards the movement is obvious, even though it will be argued that Joyce was not a revivalist, but an Irish literary revival himself.

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[22] *Ibid*. "Romanticism was the ideological support for the construction of the second kind of state, and it involved the "ethinicization" of folk culture.", 76.

A.   The essence of the Irish Literary revival and folkloric studies

The dynamics surrounding the Irish literary revival could be summarised with one question: "Was it, as some critics have argued, merely a means by which a group of Anglo-Irish intellectuals translated 'political dispossession into cultural production', a means by which 'Anglo Ireland continued to stake its monopolizing claim on Irish culture'?"[23]

The terms used already shed light on the dynamics motivating the movement, as "political dispossession" is strongly marked as a post-colonialist revision of the Irish situation and "cultural production" refers to the creativity of folklore promoted by the movement. This movement presents itself as extremely difficult to qualify as well: "Should critics refer to the 'Irish Literary Revival', 'Ireland's Literary Renaissance', the 'Gaelic Revival' or the 'Modernism' of the 'Celtic Revival'?"[24] In any case, the notion of "revival" seems to be at the center of the movement, thus drawing inscribing the dynamics of the movement into a given temporality. Something that was lost is brought back to life, but what exactly is brought back to life. The subdivision of the movement into several "Leagues" seems to stress that language is at the heart of the movement. This is one of the points on which Joyce disagreed with his peers, not understanding the necessity to keep afloat a language that had not been spoken for a long time, thus setting back Ireland into an antique past that was already lost and preventing the notion of folklore from evolving further. And yet, Clare Hutton does underscore the importance of the revivalist movement in Joyce's experience, for the movement accompanied Joyce in his early writing times: "Yet it is clearly the case that Joyce could not have evolved as he did, had it not been for his exposure to revivalist enterprises, and his engagement with other writers who were trying to establish self-consciously Irish modes of writing." (Clare Hutton, *Irish Revival*). This dissertation will show that this is precisely the bones of contention that Joyce had with the way the movement was conducted by his peers (especially by Yeats) that gave room for the Irish literary revival to have a part in Joyce's structure of *Ulysses*. In the novel, the most frequent aspect of the revival movement that is referred to is the Gaelic League: "The Gaelic League wants something in Irish"[25], which is unsurprising since its primary focus was the revitalization of Gaelic.

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[23] C. Hutton, "Joyce and the Institutions of Revivalism", 117.
[24] *Ibid*. 117.
[25] J. Joyce, *Ulysses*, 9: 247.

The combined study of Irish literary revival and folklorist studies, as anachronical and different in their reach as they may seem, are intrinsically linked. The first aimed at achieving a nationalistic culture by gathering cultural elements belonging to the same folk and transcribing them into written form under the Anglo-Irish format of writing. The latter established a science of this culture and proposed an approach to its different constituents through a process of deconstruction.

The authors of the Irish revival focused on Ireland, which meant the reintroduction of heroic legends and mythological tales as a means of proving their creative and political significance in the Irish culture. This culture now included all of Ireland; therefore, it was common to read about the Irish peasantry in a poetic format. Indeed, the relationship between folklore and peasants and thus poverty, as opposed to modernism, was obvious since "the best storytellers of Irish were among the poorest of its inhabitants."[26] And paradoxically enough, it is this relationship between folklore and poverty that triggered the downfall of folklore, as the anthropologist Roger Bastide suggests in a general statement about folklore in Europe:

> "It is curious to note that folklore became a science just at the moment when it began to disappear in the west, and to disappear exactly after the transformations in the economic structure. M. Varagnac went as far as demonstrating that it was not military service nor even the development of the road network which provoked, in 1850, the disappearance, relatively quickly, of French folklore – but the introduction of mechanization in agriculture. Development kills folklore or, more exactly, does not allow it to subsist, except in certain sectors of the population, more and more reduced, such as children, or societies of those "natives of such and such religion" in the big cities…" [27]

Therefore, the definition of folklore in Joyce's work would seem impossible, since the *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* to *Dubliners*, and *Ulysses* both take place in Dublin, a place where in the fictitious time of *Ulysses* on June 1904, folklore should have been eradicated by modernity. In order to approach Joyce's place inside the Irish literary movement, it is important to understand that the social condition of the country at the turn of the twentieth century was engulfed into an unsolvable binarism, between an industrial vision "primarily associated with the nascent *Sin Féin* party and the labour movement" and "the other agrarian, primarily associated with cultural revivalism and particularly with the Anglo-Irish writers of

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[26] D. Ó Giolláin, *Locating Irish Folklore, Tradition, Modernity, Identity*, 142.
[27] "Préfacio da Primeira Edição" in Souza Barros, Arte, folclore, subdesenvolvimento, Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 1977.

the literary renaissance."[28] The Anglo-Irish writers of the revival movement capitalized on that division by stressing out the Gaelic language and promoting the exceptionality of this language over the English of the dominant culture in which they were writing.

But as Eliot suggested, Joyce was doing something different through the "mythological method", trying to draw bridges between antiquity and contemporaneity in order to provide a structure to the chaotic situation of the country at the time of writing. This is why Joyce's use of folkloristic material is so peculiar, since it partakes of the revival movement but embraces a modernist vision that Anglo-Irish writers were refuting:

> On the one hand Joyce learns craft and technique from writers involved in the Revival (especially Yeats); on the other hand, he parodies and ridicules the whole movement. Derision, or, as Platt terms it, 'snide', is a particularly important aspect of Ulysses, which has two chapters where revivalism provides the explicit cultural environment for the action, the 'Library' and the 'Cyclops' episodes. The 'Library' scene promotes a view of 'Literary Revivalism' as the affair of a haughty self- involved Protestant minority who could not cater for the interests of gifted young intellectuals such as Dedalus. In 'Cyclops', Bloom is exposed to the mentalities of a broader kind of Irish cultural revival which involved the tokenistic use of the Irish language, the revival of Irish industrial interests.[29]

This is where the recourse to folklorist studies in order to analyze Joyce's *Ulysses* is useful, since they propose an analysis of the object "folklore" that would take into account the context in which it is studied. The interesting point about folklorist studies is that the interest that contributed to elaborate them into a science came for the same impetus given by romanticism which led the brothers J. and W. Grimm to establish the mythological school of folklore studies later on. Folklore thus gained an academic status rather than being "folklore relative to various amatory and superstitious practices"[30] as commented in "Ithaca" where folklore is associated with a "comparative study of religions" and "contemplation of the celestial constellations." This comment inside *Ulysses* is extremely insightful on the way in which folklore was used by Joyce in his work. First, this comment is explicitly aimed at Yeats who praised the imaginative power of folklore rather than the realistic one. Secondly, Joyce inscribes himself in that case in another phase of the evolution of the conception of folklore that partakes in a scientific vision of folklore that would have nothing to do with an "amatory" recollection of folktale. And yet, the reflection on folklore studies has evolved since, as folklore as a disciplinary field was first considered to be an auxiliary field linked to other

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[28] D. Ó Giolláin, *Locating Irish Folklore, Tradition, Modernity, Identity*, 144.

[29] Clare Hutton "The Irish Revival" in *James Joyce in Context*, John McCourt, eds., CUP, 2009, 197.

[30] James Joyce, *Ulysses* (1922), "With an Introduction by Declan Kiberd", Penguin Books, 1992, 18: 846.

academic disciplines such as ethnology, sociology, musicology or history of cultures. And this is precisely the disagreements expressed by Joyce towards the nature of the movement that are used as a conversational structure in some passages of *Ulysses*.

1. The place of Joyce and *Ulysses* in the Irish literary revival

Joyce's presence in the Irish literary revival is portrayed adequately in the situation that both Stephen Dedalus and Leopold Bloom face in the "Library" passage (chapter 9) for Stephen and in the confrontation with the citizen in "Cyclops" (chapter 12) by Bloom. In both cases, the structure of the discussion brought about between the characters is highly inspired by the Irish literary movement and the Gaelic League, notably regarding the question of the Irish Language and its pertinence to the core of the movement and to the nation of Ireland.

a) "The Library" passage in *Ulysses*: The Irish literary revival as an auto-referential circle of authors?

Clare Hutton's vision of Joyce's opposition towards revivalism provides another angle of analysis of this complimented relationship between the author Joyce who wanted to be part of the movement as it influenced his writing, but who at the same time rejected the aspects that constituted its core. However, most of these oppositions were addressed against the institutionalization of the movement rather than its essence, which reinforces the historical aspect of the text as it deals with revivalism: "The 'Library' episode has been singled out for detailed consideration because it promotes a view of 'Literary Revivalism' as the affair of a haughty, self-involved Protestant minority, a view which has been accepted by some critics as an accurate historical portrait, *per se*." [31] Indeed in this chapter that overtly discusses the text of *Hamlet*, Stephen Dedalus is inside the National Library and discusses with John Eglinton (a critic and essayist), Russell, T.W Lyster, a "quaker librarian" and A.E (a poet) his theory on *Hamlet* which defends the idea that Shakespeare associated himself with Hamlet's father and not Hamlet himself. On the one hand, Stephen grows frustrated as Eglinton mocks his youth and his etiquette as a recognized author, since Stephen has not published anything concrete

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[31] C. Hutton, "Joyce and the Institutions of Revivalism", 118.

until then. They also answer Stephen's theory by repeating commonplace wisdom on Shakespeare. On the other hand, A.E expresses his disdain for Stephen's theory of Shakespeare by stressing out the uselessness of biographical criticism and claiming that "art has to reveal to us ideas, formless spiritual essences."[32] According to what has been previously established, the focus on the artistic rather than the contextual and societal is following up Yeats conception of the Irish Literary Movement. Moreover, Clare Hutton establishes that "Stephen's reading of Shakespeare insists on the interaction between literature and the historical conditions of its making"[33], which obviously goes against what the defendants of revivalism want for Ireland.

However, Hutton claims that "The debate on Shakespeare is a vehicle which allows Joyce to reflect on both the nature of literary culture in Dublin in 1904, and the conditions of authorship in that environment."[34] There is no distinction in her analysis between the essence of the literary movement and its context, which echoes Dundes' conception of the "folklorist method". In that case, the context is meant to refer to the revival movement which, at the time, faced the painful truth of discovering that the audience they needed for the strengthening of their institutionalization of Gaelic and Celtic languages were not acquainted with them. In fact, only few people out of peasants and common folks could relate to their endeavor, which failed to match their expectations to create a loud Irish movement echoing the nationalist tide that was shaking the country. And yet if language is not the focus of this passage, the librarians and other artists discussing with Stephen seem all enthusiastic at the idea to find the right figure in order to produce a "national epic" as Dr. Sigerson says himself: "Our national epic has yet to be written."[35] But the point Hutton made is that this national epic through culture could not be detached from a political conceptualization, which was the view of the Southwark Irish Literary Club in 1883 which was "the first Society in England founded, as its membership card states, to cultivate and spread among adults a knowledge of Irish history, language, art and literature and to serve as a medium of social and intellectual intercourse for Irish people of both sexes."[36] The notion of "spreading" is a notion on which Hutton dwells which does ask questions about the success of the movement and its message. Hutton argues

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[32] J. Joyce, *Ulysses*, 9: 236.
[33] Clare Hutton, "Joyce and the Institutions of Revivalism", 125.
[34] *Ibid*. 125.
[35] J. Joyce, *Ulysses*, 9: 246.
[36] C. Hutton, "Joyce and the Institutions of Revivalism", 119, see in Clare Hutton, *Ireland in London* (248).

that the movement was good at creating publicity, but that gaining the heart of the publishers was a difficult task, notably due to the fact that the movement became multi-faceted:

> As the 1890s wore on, revivalism itself had begun to stratify into a range of disparate (though still interrelated) cultural constituencies. On the one hand, there were increasing numbers of people with a revivalist *mentalité*, such as Gaelic Leaguers, Irish Irelanders, and individuals who were committed to economic revivalism; on the other, there was a much smaller and more elite group of 'Literary Revivalists'.[37]

The "revivalist mentalité" that Hutton describes is the predominance of the use of Irish that is so dear to the characters in the "Library" chapter and in which they take pride, as the quaker librarian states that "We are becoming important, it seems"[38], talking about the growth of the movement. The passage thus becomes an accurate transcription of the difficulties of publishing during this period that intrinsically link the text and its social context, as the worries around this issue are summarized as such: "Are we going to be read? I feel we are. The Gaelic league wants something in Irish. I hope you will come round tonight"[39], as they are addressing Stephen whose vision of his literature differs from what the representatives of revivalism are promoting. As Hutton suggests, it almost seems as if Stephen was not partaking in this discussion and was sometimes left out, a statement that can be justified by a shift between dialogue and internal monologue. Another argument that is held against Stephen is that he is too young and inexperienced, as the young are presented as too concerned with academic notions: "Our young Irish bards, John Eglinton censured, have yet to create a figure which the world will set beside Saxon Shakespeare's Hamlet though I admire him, as old Ben did, on this side idolatry." [40]

Though Hutton does underscore that aligning the scholars of this chapters with the depiction of a group solely focusing on the preservation of their cultural and influential predominance, and asserting their political stance would be reductive, if not implausible since the economic and social statuses of its participants are discussed: "Social disadvantages such as youth, poverty, and lack of secure employment certainly play a role in Stephen's reception among the Literary Revivalists." [41] Hutton uses this passage to underscore the fact that Revivalism was not exclusively about a group of Anglo-Irish literary figures only concerned by the recovery

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[37] C. Hutton, "Joyce and the Institutions of Revivalism", 123.
[38] J. Joyce, *Ulysses*, 9 :246.
[39] *Ibid*. 9 :247.
[40] *Ibid*. 9:236.
[41] C. Hutton, "Joyce and the Institutions of Revivalism", 128.

of Ireland's ancient past. On the contrary, this ancient knowledge is emphasized in the context of the movement itself in which this folklore was reintroduced, which caused problems of communications. However, it is obvious that the criteria of judgment of Dedalus are influenced by the visions of the pioneers of the movement such as the way he "write about that old hake Gregory"[42] or the fact that he couldn't do the "Yeats touch."[43]

In her article "Irish Revival", Clare Hutton also notes the historical accuracy of the comments made by Yeats on Joyce's reaction towards Lady Gregory after she helped him launch his reviews on paper, comments he made about Gregory's *Poet and Dreamers*. Hutton spots a similarity between Mulligan referencing Longworth, the editor of the Daily express between 1901 and 1904, as he tells Dedalus: "O you inquisitional drunken jewjesuit! She gets you a job on the paper and then you go and slate her drivel to Jaysus. Couldn't you do the Yeats touch? ... The most beautiful book that has come out of our country in my time. One thinks of Homer." [44] and Yeats' preface to *Cuchulainn of Muirthemne* (1902) that opened 'I think this book is the best that has come out of Ireland in my time' and he later described the work as 'a book meant for everybody, the Iliad of a people'."[45]

Therefore, Hutton concludes on the specificity of the library passage that:

> On the one hand, he wants to expose the nature of revivalist publicity and the faintly ludicrous culture of mutual admiration shared between people like Yeats, Gregory, Synge and Russell; on the other hand, he is suggesting that Yeats' 'touch' as a reviewer would be better applied to Ulysses, a 'beautiful book' which (of course) does bear comparison to Homer. What is also significant here is the fact that Joyce creates this moment, with its elaborate interpretive and comic effects, by virtue of his own refusal to either serve or fit in with revivalist culture. [46]

The reading of the "Library" passage is thus completely relying on the context of the movement that explored Irish folklore rather than its content. Hutton tried to show that revivalism was not only about the text and the message but the way in which this message was spread and the agenda behind the project. In that sense, Joyce's reaction towards these conceptions serves as a foil in order for the reader to explore the depth of the text staging the National Library and the interactions between different scholars. The interesting point made

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[42] J. Joyce, *Ulysses*, 9:277.
[43] *Ibid*. 9:278.
[44] *Ibid*. 9: 277-78.
[45] Augusta Gregory, *Cuchulainn of Muithermne* with a Preface by W.B Yeats, p.vii. the reference to the Iliad is taken from R.F. Foster, *W.B Yeats: The Apprentice Mage* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 264.
[46] Clare Hutton, "The Irish Revival" in *James Joyce in Context*, John McCourt, eds., CUP, 2009, 198.

by this passage is the fact that Joyce proposes a contemporary critical vision from which a debate emerges. And this debate was notably triggered by the discussion around Stephen's theory on *Hamlet*.

b)   The Citizen's view of the Gaelic League: entertaining a decadent language

A similar situation happens in chapter 12 "Cyclops", where Bloom is confronted with the character of the citizen who is described by Hutton as holding a very "tokenistic use of the Irish language."[47] The narrative logic in the "Cyclops" chapter is different from the previous example in the library. The whole passage is narrated by an unnamed first-person narrator, and the passage is meant to be read as hyperbolical through the character of the citizen and its praise of nationalism of Ireland. The character of the citizen is to be read as antagonistic, as he is associated with the one-eyed monster Cyclops Ulysses encounters during his travels. This part-blindness is also symbolical, for the citizen is able to comprehend the brutality and moral fragility of the British Empire, but is unable to spot these same characteristics in Irish society. On the contrary, the citizen character has an active part in the movement as the man that "made the Gaelic sports revival."[48] The character of the citizen has on numerous accounts been interpreted as Michael Cusack, the most prominent figure in the foundation of the Gaelic Athletic Association. The discussion that unfolds constitutes perhaps the strongest passage of the chapter that underlines the notion of "Irish exceptionalism":

> A most interesting discussion took place in the ancient hall of *Brian O'Ciarnain's* in *Sraid na Bretaine Bheag*, under the auspices of *Sluagh na h-Eireann*, on the revival of ancient Gaelic sports and the importance of physical culture, as understood in ancient Greece and ancient Rome and ancient Ireland, for the development of the race.[49]

The use of the Irish terminology contributes to the ceremonious aspect of this discussion. Yet, the name *Brian O'Ciarna*in's is a mixture between Irish and English for Barney Kiernan. Moreover, *Sraid na Bretaine Bheag* is a reference to the name of the street where the bar they are at is located, in Little Britain Street, but which actually means Britain Little Street in Irish[50]. The pun appears to be voluntary from Joyce as he purposefully sets the scene on this

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[47] *Ibid*. 197.
[48] J. Joyce, *Ulysses*, 12: 409-10.
[49] *Ibid*. 12: 410.
[50] Don Gifford, *Ulysses Annotated*, Don Gifford with Robert J. Seidman, revised and enlarged by Don Gifford, eds., UCP, 1988, 342.

street in order to signify that the New Ireland the Citizen and the other participants are praising is nothing else but a Little Britain. It is also interesting to note that the comparison with Roman and Greek ancient games purposely leaves out English tradition-based sports. The objective of this comparison is not so much to inscribe Ireland into a long-standing tradition of practicing sports, but rather to give more credibility to the version they are proposing, as they aim to "revive the best traditions of manly strength and power handed down to us from ancient ages."[51] The revival of these traditions that have been "handed down" is meant to strengthen the legitimacy claim of the citizen in appealing to elements taken from ancient Ireland's history. Also, the repetitive use of the term "ancient" and "revival" leaves no doubt as to the position the citizen adopts inside the Irish literary movement. The objective is not so much adaptability of folklore but a reincarnation of what folklore was when the Gaelic sports league was created.

And yet, as Hutton showed, the passage is not deprived from an interest for the context of the movement insofar as sports are concerned in the life of the city, as Joe states about Nannan that "The league told him to ask a question tomorrow about the commissioner of police forbidding Irish games in the park. What do you think of that, citizen? The *Sluagh na h-Eireann*."[52] Once again here is staging debate, both at an institutional debate since the passage here mimics a debate inside the House of Commons, but also by opposing the character of the citizen to Leopold Bloom who is reluctant to adhere to the ideas expressed by the citizen on a very strict Irish nationalism is not without presenting a strong xenophobic view. Once again, the historical aspect of this passage is echoed by the anecdotic use of the *Sluagh na h-Eireann*, which Gifford identifies as standing for "The Army of Ireland", a patriotic society that lodged a complaint to Parliament on June 16, 1904 about the fact that the commissioner of police forbade to pay Gaelic games in Phoenix park. The complaint resulted in polo being allowed as an official sport, even though the game was considered as English and even foreign.[53]

The citizen is also explicitly meant to portray the extreme of the Gaelic league insofar as Irish language is concerned, only willing to speak English and have the reinstatement of Gaelic and Irish being handled by those who master it: "So then the citizen begins talking about the Irish language and the corporation meeting and all to that and the shoneens that can't speak their

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[51] J. Joyce, *Ulysses*, 12: 411.
[52] *Ibid*. 12: 409.
[53] D. Gifford, *Ulysses Annotated*, 341.

own language {…} about the Gaelic league and the antitreating league and drink, the curse of Ireland."[54]

The use of the term "shoneen" once again expresses the citizen's disdain for those who try and see Irish language and customs under the prism of English tradition, since the term in Irish is derogatory and refers to the one who prefers English lifestyle and customs over Irish ones. In that case, this is specifically applied to the use and perception of Irish language[55]. Knowledge of this language to the citizen is presented as the "spread of human culture among the lower animals." The passage underscores the historicity of the language by referring to eminent figures such as Raftery, a blind Irish poet known as the last of the bards who was rediscovered by Hyde and the Lady Gregory, or Donald MacConsidine, referring to Dornhall Mac Consaidín, a Gaelic scribe and poet. The approach of the language proposed, however sustained by historical references, is studied under the prism of linguistic studies, as the narration cuts off into a scholar essay-type of presentation that addresses the readers directly stating that: "The metrical system of the canine original, which recalls the intricate alliterative and isosyllabic rules of the Welsh englyn, is infinitely more complicated but we believe our readers will agree that the spirit has been well caught."[56]

The point that is made here is that even if the character of the citizen is the epitome of the revivalists defending an archaic way of preserving language, a point that Joyce sees as impossible, language was not only considered as an element of folklore but also as an object of study, which brings an interpretation of *Ulysses* closer to what folklorist studies have to say about the use of folklore in *Ulysses*. In both the "Library" and The Citizen, by presenting discussions about folklore in context inside the Gaelic and Irish literary revival league, Joyce is not only historicizing the debate around folklore by providing it as a structure for the reading of *Ulysses* around this same debate.

In other words, the Irish revival structure serves as a double-structure in order to approach these passages. The first one is that the contextualization of the movement triggers a debate,

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[54] J. Joyce, *Ulysses*, 12: 402.
[55] Another good example of this in Ulysses can be found here: *"Well, says the citizen, what's the latest from the scene of action? What did those tinkers in the cityhall at their caucus meeting decide about the Irish language?"*, 421. Once again, the infantilization of those who try to deal with this language is at play as in the library, accused to be too young in order to approach such an ancient object. In the case of the citizen, the approach is strictly linguistically based.
[56] *Ibid*. 12: 404, completed by Griffith, 339.

and the second one is that this debate is answered by Joyce through his narrative power and the confrontation of the movement's ideas through his characters. It is also a way for Joyce to take a stance towards the movement through ironic distance and hyperbolic representations of the character of the citizen. Joyce was then, in a way, demarking himself from Russel and Yeats' approach to the movement as Hutton suggests: "For Joyce did prove to be a 'clan' of his own, choosing not to engage with either Yeats' activities in establishing an Irish theatre, or Russell's various enterprises as a writer, mystic and organizer of agricultural co-operatives." [57] The historical aspect of these passages is also a way to invite his readers to assess his fiction in accordance to what they may find in historical records through the historical anecdotes spread across the text.

Therefore, the reader of Joyce's use of folklore is necessarily meant to be a critical reader that has to envisage historical correlation, co-text and context. The Irish literary revival as it is used in *Ulysses* can only be accessed afterwards, as a second reading that requires looking for resources outside of what the text proposes, which renders *Ulysses* the perfect candidate for an approach of its content through the prism of folkloristic studies.

2.   The emergence of folkloric studies, a new approach of literary analysis

In this part of the argumentation, the reader needs to bear in mind that folkloric studies emerged after the publication of *Ulysses*. So, when Joyce decided to write *Ulysses*, he did not have in mind any theories of analysis that were brought to light by the theorists of folkloric studies. However, these theories allow us to make sense of the subtext of *Ulysses* that was meant to be perceived by a cultivated readership, and thus underlined the fact that Irish references in the text were working as a solid system of interpretation. The folklorist studies approach of *Ulysses* is strongly dominated by Alan Dundes, who focused on what exactly in folklore was transmitted from one generation to the other and how it was implemented into another social and cultural sphere. In other words, Dundes did no defend the idea that tradition and folklore were relics of the past to cherished and adored, but he instead took part into relocating folklore as part of the modern technological world. Using folklore as Alan

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[57] C. Hutton, "The Irish Revival", 195.

Dundes did was not a retroactive process but a way of moving forward in the understanding of present texts as social questions.

As a result, the logic followed by the Irish literary revival and the one followed by folklorist studies is completely different, even though they share the same focus on folklore being the key element of their enterprise. Where the Irish literary revival was meant to give a structure to folklore and regrouping them under a common national narrative, folklorist studies were this same folklore made science of the object of study folklore that was dissected into different angles of studies. The Irish folklore, in a sense, could be an object of study for folklorist studies. But if folklore was not a relic of the past that had to be rediscovered, what had it become?

Dundes's answer to that is that folklore was to be approached as a variation, a concept in movement that was no longer restrained by its ties to oral transmission since the Irish literary movement contributed to put folklore into words and later on triggered the academization of folklore. In fact, Simon J. Bronner proposes to introduce his vision under the following syllogism: "Using his logic, one could construct the syllogism, "folklore is tradition and tradition is variation, so therefore variation is folklore." [58] One of the questions that may be asked is the reliability of folklore at becoming a stable structure for a narrative if the concept is in perpetual evolution. The point is that the variation of folklore, notably its change of medium from oral communication to written words is what allows a structure to be built around it. Folklore is thus able to preserve its ties to the antique past from which it was extracted and can at the same time be transferred from one medium to the other.

- The folklorist method as a modernist approach of *Ulysses*: "identification and interpretation"

Before establishing the folklorist method, Alan Dundes signifies that so far, there was no specific method in order to analyse folklore inside a text, but rather folklore was a science that lent itself quite well to other existing literary technique of text analysis. Yet this can be seen in two ways. Either folklore was easily adapted enough to be applied and studied under other techniques, which meant that folklore became a "genre" that could be approached through these lenses, or folklore was not sufficient enough at first to provide its contents on a critical catalogue. This is mostly due to the fact that a textual study of folklore went against the spirit

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[58] Simon J. Bronner, *Meaning of Folklore, The Analytical essays of Alan Dundes*, 20.

of orality that was disregarded and still has been for quite a while as Dundes spots, in comparison to the study of texts:

> There is almost no method or approach found in the study of literature which could not also be applied to folk materials. One could discuss formal features such as metrics, rhyme, alliteration; one could discuss content features such as characterization, motivation, themes. By using the materials of folklore as a point of departure, the educational process may be comprehended as dealing with the real world rather than with a world apart from the world in which the students live. [59]

But approaching folklore as a point of departure meant being able to identify it. In *Meaning of folklore, The Analytical Essays of Alan Dundes*, Simon J. Bronner described the new approach adopted by Dundes in order to make the study of folklore a literary tool of interpretation[60]. The Irish mythos was usually argued to deepen the Greek mythos that seems prevalent in Joyce's text and the mixing of these two universes can indeed be said to establish a connection between the different themes explored in the novel. But Dundes' approach invites the reader to separate these two spheres through the process of "identification" of the folkloristic, and that this very same identification would lead to a meaning instead of just establishing a chronology of events related to the folklore in the novel. Even if the term does not appear in the article, in this analysis of the folklore in *Ulysses*, the process emphasized by Dundes' approach is close to the system of "mise en abîme", which is already obvious in *Ulysses* through the multiple embedded references to Dante's *Inferno* or Shakespeare's plays such as *Macbeth* or *Hamlet*. As these references in the text make the plot progress instead of just being a courtesy made by Joyce to the genius of these authors, Dundes argues that folklore and literature explore the same ideas and problems and should not be considered apart. Therefore, it is not so much the listing of folkloric elements that is important to spot but rather the way in which the author makes use of them: "Too many studies of folklore in literature consist of little more than reading novels for the motifs or the proverbs, and no attempt is made to evaluate how an author has used folkloristic elements and more specifically, how these folklore elements function in the particular literary work as a whole." [61]

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[59] A. Dundes, "Folklore as a Mirror of Culture, 57.

[60] Especially in chapter "The Study of Folklore in Literature and Culture: Identification and Interpretation" where the new approach by Dundes is described: "Dundes proposed a folkloristic method that combined the pursuit of texts and contexts, and provided a foundation for a distinctive modern discipline of folkloristics." (p.67)

[61] Simon J. Bronner, "The Study of Folklore in Literature and Culture: Identification and Interpretation", 70.

The idea that all the references to the Irish folklore create a web of meaning, either within the folkloric unit studied for itself or in a broader way through a web of internal references throughout the novel, is a rather new approach of the text. It bloomed with the popularisation of folkloric studies and thus has been the subject of many critics revisiting Joyce's works in general.

 Howard Emerson Rogers underscores the "organisational role" of the myth in *Ulysses* [62]not only as web of references which ties the plot and the characters' development together, but also as a keystone for the very structure of the text. Howard Emerson exemplifies it perfectly by using the incipit of the novel. The tower which is the first setting of the novel is presented as a multi-referential object. The tower is a cross-reference to different periods of the Irish folklore. It can be interpreted as the tower described in the *Book of Nennius* which is a reference to the origins of the population in Ireland:

> After these came three sons of a Spanish soldier with thirty ships, each of which contained thirty wives; and having remained there during the space of a year, there appeared to them, in the middle of the sea, a tower of glass, the summit of which seemed covered with men, to whom they often spoke, but received no answer. At length they determined to besiege the tower; and after a year's preparation, advanced towards it, with the whole number of their ships, and all the women, one ship only excepted, which had been wrecked, and in which were thirty men, and as many women; but when all had disembarked on the shore which surrounded the tower, the sea opened and swallowed them up. Ireland, however, was peopled, to the present period, from the family remaining in the vessel which was wrecked. Afterwards, other came from Spain, and possessed themselves of various parts of Britain.[63]

This reference in itself already opens the novel with a multi-layered panel of interpretation. The analogy places the tower as a symbol of birth for Ireland, linked to the roots of the country. In accordance to many other stories in Ireland folklore, the tower here refers to the colonization of Ireland through its ties with *The Book of Nennius*.

The opening of the novel also provides the imagery of the mirror that encapsulates well the dynamics between identification and interpretation. As Declan Kiberd suggests in his

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[62] Howard Emerson Rogers, "Irish Myth and the Plot of Ulysses", in *EHL* 15: 4, JHUP, "{...} the fact that Ulysses contains two myths, the Homeric and the Irish. The functional one is Irish, and has been so diffused in the body of the narrative that no critic of Joyce has perceived it up to this time. As opposed to this internal myth, the Homeric references are external in nature.", 307

[63] Nennius "History Of The Britons (Historia Brittonum)" Translated by J. A. Giles, In parentheses Publications Medieval Latin Series Cambridge, Ontario, 2000, 7.

introduction to *Ulysses*: "It holds a mirror up to the colonial capital that was Dublin on 16 June 1904, but it also offers redemptive glimpses of a future world which might be made over in terms of those utopian moments."[64] The image of the mirror is particularly interesting as it is the object that opens up the novel as well*:* "Stately, plump Buck Mulligan came from the stairhead, bearing a bowl of lather on which a mirror and a razor lay crossed"[65]. It also emphasizes the dynamics between the three main characters that keep echoing each other in throughout the novel. But this notion of reflected image is also very interesting for what Joyce is doing in his text. In a sense, the tower is also to be seen as a mirror of culture, as it represents both a mythological and historical past of Ireland, and yet refers to an existing tower.

But by recreating a mirror of the Irish folklore and mixing up references, Joyce ends up recreating a universe of his own as Howard Emerson Rogers suggests speaking of Joyce in comparison to other Irish writers whose works were also deeply inspired by the Irish folklore: "Joyce was more universal than they (Yeats, Lady Gregory): he sought a myth that would be, for him, the synthesis of all Irish myth." [66]. By an interplay of gazes, the mirror also becomes the symbol of the reflected perception of the Irish folklore by the author himself through the character of Stephen[67].

But most importantly, the tower is strongly associated with death (the death of Stephen's mother which is widely discussed in the first pages of the novel and which will condition Stephen's evolution throughout the novel further on. The haunting memory of the mother in this passage can also be assimilated to the figure of the banshee:

> In a dream, silently, she had come to him, her wasted body within its loose graveclothes giving off an odour of wax and rosewood, her breath bent over him with mute secret words, a faint odour of wetted ashes. Her glazing eyes, staring out of death, to shake and bend my soul. On me alone. The ghostcandle to light her agony. Ghostly light on the tortured face. Her hoarse loud breath rattling in horror, while all prayed on their knees. Her eyes on me to strike me down. [68]

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[64] Declan Kiberd, Introduction to *Ulysses*, Penguin Books, 1992.

[65] J. Joyce, *Ulysses*, 1:1.

[66] H.E Rogers, "Irish Myth and the Plot of Ulysses", 308.

[67] The objective here is not to argue that Stephen Dedalus is meant to be read as a double of the author but to expose the fact that his relation to the Irish folklore which is truncated and not directly exposed at the beginning of the novel (as opposed to the Greek mythos which is immediately exposed), as is Joyce interpretation of the Irish folklore and its meaning.

[68] J.Joyce, *Ulysses*, 1: 10-11.

This passage at the beginning echoes the hallucination that Stephen has in "Circe". The motif of ghosts is recurrent in *Ulysses*, especially through the figure of Stephen's mother haunting him[69]. In mythology, the banshee is one of the most famous mythical creatures of the Irish folklore, also called the "crying woman". She is a herald of death. Her screams are supposed to hint at the imminent death of a close relative and thus set a tone of impending doom for the rest of the novel. Once again, the meaning offered from the pattern of the mother's ghost, according to Dunde's theory, would mean that the mother is not a banshee in the novel, but can be interpreted as such. Such an analysis of a potential folklore reading is brought about by the context which is the Martello Tower, a mythological, realistic and historical reference. The presence of the tower at the beginning is thus extremely important for the possibility of a folkloristic interpretation at the same level with the realistic and historical symbolism.

The tower becomes an interesting foil for the Irish folklore, both hinting at its most cosmological and supernatural aspects but at the same time trying to mirror it as a contemporary setting, thus creating a completely new reading of the Irish folklore. A reader not aware of the metareferential significance of the tower may pass by the complexity of the thematic network that is going to be displayed in *Ulysses*. As Emerson Rogers reminds us: "Structurally, then' the tower archetype defines the two axes of inner myth-meaning in *Ulysses* by the opposites of birth and death and good and evil, whose themes become, respectively, Stephen's search for self-recognition and the conflict between idealist and citizen[70]." In other words, Emerson notes that binary division of the use of myth in the structure of *Ulysses*, showing that to there is always a foil to the myth provided, or at least the possibility of another way. In many cases, as it has been described earlier, this foil is the one provided by Joyce's own perception of his use of mythical structure, carried mostly by his two protagonists Stephen Dedalus and Leopold Bloom. Therefore, as Tymoczko describes a relation of mythic correlatives in *Ulysses*, serving an "architectural structure" of the plot, one may even argue that we are dealing with "mythic convergences" and "mythic divergences". The reader is given a set of symbols that he may or may not recognize that leads to a specific reading of a character, an event or a comment. And when a pattern is drawn, the narrative voice or focalizer may provide another point of view on the same object of discussion. In other words, mythical structures and folkloric references are not set in stone and acknowledged as such. They are open to interpretation. Joyce's text is not folkloristic, but the

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[69] The other notable reference is the appearance of Paddy Dignam's ghost during Bloom's trial in "Circe".
[70] *Ibid*. 313.

presentation of a tapestry of symbols such as the tower opens up the possibility of a folkloristic interpretation of Joyce's text. This is the reason why folklore is a sub-reading of *Ulysses*, as it is the result of a double process of analysis which consists of being able to identify the reference and then extract the meaning from the association. And this tapestry of symbols is encompassed by the image of the cracked-mirror presented as a symbol of Irish art: "It is a symbol of Irish art. The cracked looking-glass of a servant."[71] Therefore, the references to folklore in *Ulysses* need to be understood as broken reflections echoing each other inside the narrative. And in doing so, they are not only ruled by another country and language (the British Empire) but they are also submitted to the main Greek mythological structure of the novel. And like the many shards of a broken mirror, the pattern of Irish folklore through art is scattered across the narrative.

B. Locating the Mythological and structural pattern of Irish folklore: The relation between *Ulysses* and its readership

Even if *Ulysses* does indeed present an axis of reading solidified by mythical and folkloristic correlatives, its reception tells a different story. The understanding of folkloristic material in the text was only accessible to those who were already familiar with Irish traditions and myths. And because the Greek mythos provided a sufficient structure for the text, understanding folklore in *Ulysses* was not necessary in order to approach the text. Even in the early days of the novel, Maria Tymoczko underscores that the early critical readership of *Ulysses* interpreted the text in a direction that favoured an Anglo-cultural sphere interpretation, rather than valuating the folklore potential of its content, as Joyce's works have been read and discussed primarily within dominant traditions of Western literature. Western standards have thus been applied to its analysis, notably the intertextual work that was mostly focused on the *Odyssey* and *Shakespeare* at first.

The problems of censorship that have already been discussed earlier also represent a strong hindrance to its reception, since the blacklisting of the book by clerical authorities, shortly after its publication, deprived the book from its Irish readership that may have been more inclined to read through all the Irish inspired parts of some passages.

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[71] J. Joyce, *Ulysses*, 1: 6.

But Tymoczko does not comment on the fact that the book was also considered, even by critics, as being too elitist. This ties up with the own critique that Joyce makes about the authors of the Irish literary revival being too self-centred, a point that is not omitted by Ó Giolláin who accurately reminds that the first texts that have been recorded by Hyde and Lady Gregory were from the poorest people:

> Douglas Hyde and Lady Gregory were aware of the poverty of those from whom they recorded their tales and songs. The narrators of the stories in *Beside the Fire*, according to Hyde, were 'to be found only amongst the oldest, most neglected, and poorest of the Irish-speaking population.' While speakers of English 'either do not know them at all, or else tell them in so bald and condensed a form as to be useless'[72]

This aspect is also discussed under a certain light in *Ulysses* through the accusations labelled at Stephen in the "Library" episode, when he is accused of being too young to have any authority in the unfolding of the Gaelic League, at point that was supposed to echo Joyce's own struggle with publishing his works at the time. Thus, the comic aspect used by Joyce in his text provided a double consciousness about humour in *Ulysses*. Not only did Joyce work on a comic aspect of *Ulysses* in order to refer to the oral tradition of Celtic culture, but he also uses ironic distance to comment on his own alienation from the movement.

Tymoczko also notices that the use of Joyce's mythological structure and his realism create a form on unbalance due to the conveying of European symbolism mingled with Irish symbolism attached to folklore. Upon reading the three main characters closely, none of them has an Irish stock background. The folklore in *Ulysses* is thus a double-puzzle, one that has to be found first and then that has to be put together, sometimes hidden by ironical distance.

Stephen W. Gilbert uses the theory of Wolfgang Iser about the implied reader in order to promote the fact that understanding of the parallels in *Ulysses* is up to debate, and that the deciphering of the irony in the text calls for the emergence of the "ethical reader":

> Iser argues that horizons (of expectation, or of an imagined world) are created by, and are a part of, any reader's interpretation of any utterance or sentence; gaps exist between the utterance and a complete (or completely imagined) world and must be "filled out" by a reader; the process of filling gaps and establishing horizons constitutes the creation of a "virtual dimension" of a text, which interacts fruitfully with its written, or literal, dimension. Memory plays a central role: "*Whatever we have read sinks into our memory and is foreshortened. It may later be evoked again and set against a different background with the result that the reader is enabled to develop hitherto unforeseeable connections*" (Iser, 54). I would add that the virtual dimension of a previously read text also constitutes a memory that may be evoked by some future text, and used

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[72] D. Ó Giolláin, *Locating Irish Folklore, Tradition, Modernity, Identity*, 143.

to enrich or change the virtual dimension, or narrative world, which is thus continually under construction.[73]

This is exactly what happened with the superimposition of the chapter of the *Odyssey* on *Ulysses*, and this is what happens also as Tymoczko analyses the structure of *Ulysses* under the prism of the *Book of Invasions*. The association of the notions of "memory" and "construction" expressed here fit perfectly the approach that critics had of *Ulysses*. This is also reminiscent of the way in which Alan Dundes theorized the process of interpretation of the meaning of folklore, as he specifies that meaning is not something that is granted, but which is the result of a construction that requires the reader to perform several readings.

The fact that folklore and mythological structures are employed as a subtext is also another difficulty that presents itself to the reader. Tymoczko notes that:

> The parallels between Joyce's text and his mythic prototype are general and sketchy rather than complete and detailed in part because of his mythic method itself: though most retellers of mythic method surface content of myth, manipulating the mythic material so far as to foreground thematic material, Joyce uses myth as an architectural substructure to the realistic surface of the story.[74]

In other words, Joyce is not writing a mythic story but he is using a mythic structure to support his main text, that structure being analysed by Tymoczko as provided by *The Book of Invasions* which refers back to the first invasion of Ireland and the first traces of written history. Tymoczko's insight also allows to replace Joyce as a reader before being the author of *Ulysses* as she underlines the strong historical aspect of Joyce's influence by Irish history, even though these references seem only partial, preventing the establishment of a complete parallel. This is very important in the definition of the folkloristic pattern in *Ulysses*, since the reader and critic are to assume that *Ulysses* is not about folklore but it is reminiscent of folklore.

In that case also, the mythical method Tymoczko is talking about can be tied to the one established by Eliot, which then ties up with the modernist movement. If folklore is a mirror of culture, as Alan Dundes puts it, then *Ulysses* can be said to try and find an order through mythical relevance in order to answer the chaos left after the war, which would also justify his parodic use of the epic in *Ulysses*. As Declan Kiberd writes in his introduction to *Ulysses*: "If

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[73] Stephen W. Gilbert, "The Ethical Reader in Ulysses".
[74] M. Tymoczko, *The Irish Ulysses*, 28-29.

history was a nightmare, it was a heroic deception from which all Europe – and not just Ireland – was trying to awake."[75]

1.   A European identity of Irishness

As Maria Tymoczko stresses out in *The Irish Ulysses*, one of the biggest sources of inspiration for Joyce was *The Book of Invasions* which is the first attempt at retracing a pseudohistory of Ireland, and especially a history of conquest that exposes the fact that Ireland was a country of immigration before it was a country of emigration. Levin notes that Joyce's books "are of Irishmen and by an Irishman, but not for Irishmen."[76] This comment is extremely important, because it does not only refer to the readership of *Ulysses* that may not be familiar with the folklore the Anglo-Irish writers wanted to promote, but it also refers to the fact that Joyce did not mean to serve the image of a restrictive nationalism inside the borders of Ireland. His choice to refer primarily to the Greek mythos is already significant enough.

But of course, the main opposition at stake in *Ulysses* is the opposition between Ireland and the "Sassenachs"[77], a term sometimes used to designate an English or a Lowland Scot, which comes from Scottish Gaelic and from the late Latin *saxones*, which eventually gave Saxon. In the nationalist tirade made by the citizen, the question of the European identity of Irishness is interestingly reversed by the citizen, who claims that Europe (in that case England most of all), has an Irish cultural sphere, as they are discussing the colonization of Ireland which the citizen perceives as "Their syphilization" as he argues that "No music and no art and no literature worthy of the name. Any civilisation they have they stole from us."[78], as English are being characterized alongside Ireland in the "European family".

Tymoczko's work on the structure of *Ulysses* around *The Book of Invasions* provides some insight on this aspect. It assumes that Ireland is the second Promised Land and that the Irish language is second only to Hebrew.

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[75] Declan Kiberd, Introduction to *Ulysses*, ix.
[76] Harry Levin (1944), *James Joyce: A critical Introduction*, London, Faber & Faber, 1960.
[77] J. Joyce, *Ulysses*, 12: 421.
[78] *Ibid*, 12: 421.

This is also hinted at by the fact that the characters in *Ulysses* all tie to foreign lands and cultures, Dedalus being the representation of the Greek, Leopold Bloom being the representation of the ersatz Jew and Molly being from Spain. The European dimension of the text can also be seen through the extensive use of segments in different languages inside the narratives, and especially Latin. The use of Latin is the perfect example of a European assimilation but also of the dominance of English above other forms of nationalistic languages such as Celtic or Gaelic that are the subject of very few occurrences in the novel, in comparison to Latin.

One may ask whether the presentation of characters that symbolize outsiders are relevant for a study of Irish folklore, a question answered by Tymoczko as follows: "In sum, *The Book of Invasions* helps to explain why the central characters in *Ulysses* are all outsiders though they stand as universalized representations of Dubliners, for the invasion theory of Irish history in *Lebor Gabála* is predicated on the notion that there are no aboriginal inhabitants of the island." [79] In other words, the point established here is that being Irish would necessarily mean being an immigrant. Charles Vallency [80] even advances the idea that the original explorers and settlers of Ireland were Phoenician, and that the Irish language would be a derived form of the Phoenician. If Joyce was aware of Vallency's writings, it could have been an inspiration for him to draw the bridge between the Irish mythos and the Greek mythos.

All these conceptions threaten the idea of a pure race in Ireland that is so dear to the character of the citizen, as he is deploring the lack of what he considers Irish authenticity: "Where are our missing twenty millions of Irish should be here today instead of four, our lost tribes?" [81]

In fact, the use of historical (or pseudo-historical as it will be discussed later) structures of Ireland allowed folklore to be recontextualized in the domain of a European cultural booth, which goes beyond the agenda of the Irish revivalists.

This was a message that Joyce defended vividly, as he wrote himself:

> our civilization is a vast fabric, in which the most diverse elements are mingled, in which Nordic aggressiveness and Roman laws, the new bourgeois conventions and the remnant of a Syriac religion are reconciled. In such a fabric, it is useless to look for a thread that may have remained pure and virgin without having undergone the influence of a neighbouring thread. What race, or

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[79] M. Tymoczko, *The Irish Ulysses*, 35.

[80] Cf. Charles Vallancey, *An Essay on the Primitive Inhabitants of Great Britain and Ireland. Proving from History, Language, and Mythology that they were Persians or Indosythae composed of Scythians, Chaldeans and Indians.* Dublin : Graisberry and Campbell, 1807.

[81] J. Joyce, *Ulysses*, 12: 423.

what language {…} can boast of being pure today? And no race has less right to utter such a boast than the race now living in Ireland.[82]

Joyce's vision is very close to what Dundes will be working on, presenting folklore as the mirror of culture. In that case, the reflection in the mirror given by the Irish folklore through its history is a multi-facetted one. However, it should not be considered that Joyce was accusing authors of the Irish literary revival of denying those assumptions, but he simply exposed the fact that they were completely disregarded. In comparison, Joyce overtly claimed about *Ulysses* that he was aiming at writing "an epic of two races (Israelite-Irish)" in a letter to Carlo Linati[83]. On that point, with the acknowledgment of a European dimension of Ireland, one should not consider that Joyce was a defendant of the Saxons over the Irish. Quite the contrary, the "two people" rhetoric used is one of the Irish nationalist politics, presenting Irish as suffering under England, as compared to the captivity of the Israelite. Therefore, it shouldn't be considered as a diminishment of the nationalist importance of the conceptualization of folklore as Ó Giolláin expressed it, as he reminds us that "The concept of folklore developed partly as a "nationalistic reaction to a metropolitan culture with universal pretensions."[84] As Joyce widened the cultural identity of Ireland through folklore to rest of Europe, Ó Giolláin reminds us that folklore was transferred from a regional concept into a nationalistic one, stressing the fact the debate around folklore outgrew the boundaries of its object "in an era where folk, popular, mass and elite culture are no longer where they used to be."[85]

2. The issue linked to the "revival" of folklore: the Irish metempsychosis of folklore

It would seem that most of the confusion expressed regarding the use of folklore, notably by the Irish literary revival, has to do with the project to "revive" folklore, a project that raised many questions as to its possibility. If the notions of purity of a culture are so tainted by histories of cultural construction through European internal connection, what exactly is to be

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[82] James Joyce, *Ireland, island of Saints and Sages*, 165-66.
[83] Letters I, 146.
[84] D. Ó Giolláin, *Locating Irish Folklore, Tradition, Modernity, Identity*, 4.
[85] *Ibid*. 7.

revived that would be the privilege of Ireland? In other words, how can one claim to have rediscovered Irish folklore when the folklore in question was not specifically "crafted" in Ireland? A question among many others that are listed in Ó Giolláin's introduction:

> Are these folk culture or are they not? If not, is it because they are not authentic? What is authentic? Can folklore be other than residual? Can it be emergent? Can it move to the towns, like Irish music or storytelling sessions? Or was it always in the towns? Or is folklore a term that represents something fixed and static, or if, in motion, only towards its own extinction?[86]

The main focus of Ó Giolláin was the threat that modernity was imposing to tradition and thus by extension, folklore. It was a transcription of the fear that tradition could not be bent enough to fit the aesthetics of modernity that were not only conditioning culture but also the emergent research on this same culture. Did the pioneers of the Irish literary revival stick to the authenticity of the texts they rediscovered by just acting as the vessels of this knowledge, or did they use these texts by adapting them to a more contemporary social and cultural situation in order to promote their own agenda? As Ó Giolláin suggests, one of the first things revivalists had to do was to translate the rediscovered texts into English, a work on which Hyde and Lady Gregory spent a lot of zeal. If translation allowed Irish folklore to become a useful material for its author, it came at the price of the authenticity of folklore itself.

In that sense, the use of the term "revival" to qualify what the movement was doing might be misconstrued. The word revival can be interpreted in such a way that one may think the movement was trying to bring back the authenticity of the discovery of folklore, a point that both the issues of the necessity of translation and the vision of the citizen have proven to be difficult, if not impossible to achieve. "Revival" can be understood as an improvement of something past, in the sense of the restoration of something lost to consciousness. This is the difference between the notions of "revival" and the notion of "resurrection" which in that case might better fit the ideas of the citizen. "Revival" implied change, a transformation or at least the project of making something new with old and ancient material.

Maria Tymoczko goes even further by introducing the notion of Metempsychosis in her analysis of *Ulysses*. Metempsychosis is the Greek concept of reincarnation of the human soul into an animal after a process of transmission after death. This theme is introduced in the "Circe" chapter by Bloom as he corrects Molly for mispronouncing the word as "Met him

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[86] *Ibid*.3.

Pikes Hoses". Tymoczko sees the use of metempsychosis in *Ulysses* as a way to stage the rebirth of the avatars from *The Book of Invasions* in contemporary Dublin, which would allow these characters to represent simultaneously characters from the *Odyssey*, *Hamlet* and *The Book of Invasions*. This idea of reincarnation is described by Bloom as such: "Some people believe, he said, that we go on living in another body after death, that we lived before. They call it reincarnation. That we all lived before on the earth thousands of years ago or some other planet. They say we have forgotten it. Some say they remember their past lives." [87] Bloom's definition seems to refer to a physical dimension that would include the shift from one body into the other across the ages, which contributes to the theory evoked by Tymoczko who applies the same logic to the characters of *Ulysses*.

However, this reincarnation is as much symbolical in *Ulysses* as it is physical. The physicality of this reincarnation is intrinsically linked to the written dimension of folklore, it's a shift from a voice into a text. This is also the way in which the Irish literary revival can be described, as the forgotten is brought back into existence. The metempsychosis of the characters in *Ulysses* can also be widened to the whole reincarnation of Ireland, as Joyce proposes in *Ulysses* to show how the old Ireland is being renewed into a new one that would openly claim its ties with Europe:

"The book is a sort of journey undertaken to a reincarnation of Ireland and for a reincarnation of Ireland; *Ulysses* is in part about the old Ireland becoming renewed, and the metempsychosis of mythic characters."[88]

It would appear that if Ireland were to be renewed, it has to accept to become European and not barricade itself behind a wall of inchoate nationalism. In fact, the definition of nationalism in that case can be changed into the acceptance that one's culture is to be considered amongst others and as being influenced by others. Joyce, according to Tymoczko, would invite Ireland to reach beyond England and its own borders, notably by the link created with Homer and the Greek mythos. In that case, the Greek mythos used as a structure in *Ulysses* would be meant to nourish the definition of what it means to be "Irish". This is maybe one of the most meaningful bones of contention that Joyce has with other writers from the Irish literary revival, who thought that a return to the nobility of the Irish peasantry would redeem the corrupt English-speaking world. Once again, this conception is motivated by an ideological and even utopian drive that Joyce here is correcting by calling on the strength of his mythical referential system. By doing so, Joyce opens up the possibilities of textual adaptation of

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[87] J. Joyce, *Ulysses*, 4: 78.
[88] M. Tymoczko, *The Irish Ulysses*, 49.

folklore in *Ulysses* that now remain to be explored further. Therefore, Joyce's vision regarding the recognition and reinstatement of the Irish language goes beyond the revivalist movement.

II.   <u>The essence of folklore in *Ulysses*: an "Irish" *Ulysses* confronted to the difficulties of modern narration</u>

One of the main difficulties of introducing Irish folklore inside *Ulysses* is due to the traditional way of passing on Irish tales and narratives through orality (songs, poems and story-telling). However, even though it has been agreed to consider *Ulysses* as a novel, this classification could not be farther from the actual aspect of *Ulysses*. Upon reading it closely, it is a combination of journal reviews, drama, poetry, songs, anecdotes and even sometimes neologisms and archaisms,[89] with some inconsistency in language, using Celtic or Gaelic variants or even Spanish, French and also onomatopia. The use of metempsychosis as described by Bloom can be widened to the book as an object, itself being the physical reincarnation of oral traditions and bearing witness to the transmission from oral word to written word.

This is also a way for Joyce, as it has been studied previously, to mock the hopes of the revivalists to be able to bring back a language that had been dead for some time, which can be justified by the use of a "decadent language" in *Ulysses*. The first difficulty Joyce was facing was the transcription of oral into written, an observation that Alan Dundes made in the context of his classes:

> In evolutionary terms, pre-literate society which was orally oriented became literate, but now we have "post-literate" man who is influenced by oral communication once more. Yet the education system has not always kept pace. The traditional emphasis has been upon "reading and writing." What about "speaking?" Oratory, valued so much by oral cultures around the world, has become almost a lost art in literate societies.[90]

Joyce's case is especially particular in *Ulysses*, since the presence of orality is strongly hinted at, notably through the recitations of many poems, the presentation of music or the introduction of riddles, as the one Stephen presents to his class[91]. Joyce's approach of language in that sense is exemplified in the way he carries his narration, shifting between dialogues and interaction between the characters and internal monologues, such as Molly's

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[89] See for instance the combination of music sheets and songs in *Ulysses*, 17: 809-10 or the theatrical staging of the "Circe" chapter with the intervention of different characters, 15: 561-703.
[90] A. Dundes, "Folklore as a Mirror of Culture", 58.
[91] J. Joyce, *Ulysses*, 2: 32.

lengthy monologue which closes the novel[92]. The narration is also characterized by the profusion of polyphonous voices, whether they are emerging from the many passages written in other languages or if they refer to the constant changing of narration[93] or focalizer, sometimes putting an emphasis on the main characters without having the latter as the main focalizer. This is notably the case in the "Cyclops" chapter where the scene is observed by a remote focalizer, and occasionally shifts back to Bloom through internal monologue.

Even if Eliot's establishment of the "mythical method" to qualify Joyce's *Ulysses* was more headed towards a study of the Greek mythos and how the structural power of the myth conferred to Joyce's text a modernist tone, it did introduce the possibility to approach Joyce under the prism of comparison. As it has been established so far, Joyce's use of folklore was first and foremost the subject of a reaction to the way Irish nationalism was dealing with folklore rather than using folklore in an innovative way. Manjola Nasi's attempt to link the vision of Eliot to Joyce's use of myth establishes the connection of symbols that Tymoczko developed with metempsychosis:

> In addition to the temporal depth, one of the important functions of this method was to *provide order*, a way of organizing the various elements of the literary work without employing the rigid rules of fixed and/or closed structures, the verbose elaborations of the narrative method and all its connective restrictions. The mythic method provided no need for explanations. Instead of isolated symbols, the mythic method introduced the *mechanism of symbol* which were significantly more powerful and contributed as much to meaning as they did to structure.[94]

The structure that is being replaced is the structure of the novel and of traditional ways of narration, and this structure is presented as being replaced by a "mechanism of symbols", which redefines the way in which one approaches Joyce's text. Style, language and genre then provide a rich domain of analysis in the way in which Irish literature is to be studied in *Ulysses*. However, Tymoczko notices that Irish literature presents wider boundaries than English literature which becomes its medium: "Irish literature has wider boundaries than those of modern English literature, because Irish literature includes in its domain various types of *senchas* ("ancient or traditional lore") such as history and magical charms, as well as imaginative prose and poetry and other literary genres."[95] There are two conclusions to be

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[92] J. Joyce, *Ulysses*, 18: 871-933.

[93] A good example of this phenomenon is to be found in the "Circe" chapter through the use of prosopopoeia ("THE DOORHANDLE", 15: 640) and the intervention of voice non-identified: ("A VOICE", 15: 637).

[94] Manjola Nasi, "The Mythic Method and Intertextuality", 2-3.

[95] M. Tymoczko, *The Irish Ulysses*, 140.

drawn from this statement. On the one hand, Tymoczko stresses out that there are different textual types intervening in *Ulysses*. On the other hand, these textual types take their place within the field of Irish literature. In other words, inside the already wide use of different genres in *Ulysses* that are tied to English literature, there are other types of texts that one may find in *Ulysses* that can only be deciphered with knowledge of Irish folklore. Inscribing the lore of Irish folk in terms of orality and literary types inside a European setting (provided by English literature novelization of *Ulysses*) helps establishing Joyce's own vision of style.

Joyce complained on that point to Harriet Weaver in his correspondence with her: "The task I set myself technically in writing a book from eighteen different points of view and in as many styles, all apparently unknown or undiscovered by my fellow tradesmen, that and the nature of the legend chosen would be enough to upset anyone's mental balance." [96] Joyce is dealing with the "unknown" or the "undiscovered", in the sense that he is not creating a style. He is merely using a material that he was aware of and that he rediscovered.

 If Dr. Sigerson's ambition was to find the perfect candidate to "write the national epic" of Ireland, Joyce's project, driven by his own political agenda, ambitions to reformulate the novel in the terms of the styles he has rediscovered. This is a point where Eliot's "mythical method" and Dundes' "folklorist method" might meet again, as Eliot claimed the scientific aspect of this method. In terms of language, Joyce's novel is as much an assertion of his rejection of Irish revival aesthetics as it is an experiment of the adaptability of English literature to Irish folklore. This is the way in which Tymoczko asserted Joyce's genius, which is due to his recognition of the potential of Irish form and rhetoric for enriching modern narratives and then to transpose these features into English traditional literature. The fascinating point of this phenomenon in *Ulysses* is the fact that Irish folklore is both transforming the way in which the novel functions for Joyce and the fact that this transformation results in a process of cultural assimilation inside English literature's norms. *Ulysses* thus provides an efficient and meaningful synthesis between the two literary realms. And the synthesis of these two aspects is in its own way an answer to the necessity brought about by modernism to reshape contemporaneity by creating a bridge with antiquity as Eliot suggested.

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[96] James Joyce on *Ulysses*, in a letter to Harriet Shaw Weaver, 24 June 1921.

- The failure of language

But if the mythical structure is supposed to reconstruct order in a broken contemporaneity, Joyce's use of language tells another story. The depth brought by Joyce's feud with the revivalists provides the reader with insight as to the way in which language is broken in *Ulysses* in terms of style and narration. In an approach of Joyce's text; if the "mythical method" helped to consider the structure of *Ulysses*, it cannot be separated from the "folklorist method" which recontextualizes folklore, both in the lore and folk from whence it was taken and the lore and folk into which it was "reincarnated". Maria Tymoczko's analysis of the use of metempsychosis in the characters of *Ulysses* also helps to draw bridges towards a plurality of interpretations and textual references, rather than a one-sided interpretation. Of course, the establishment of referentiality can never be fully asserted without question. There is no guarantee that Joyce meant for his characters to portray different figures from *the Book of Invasions* while at the same time being reminiscent of characters from other intertextual references. However, regardless of the critical background used to comment on *Ulysses*' prose, it seems commonly agreed that *Ulysses*' aesthetics, insofar as language is concerned, is closer to modernism than romanticism:

> The romantic writer says: there is an essential Ireland to be served and a definitive Irish mind to be described. The modernist rejoins: there is no single Ireland, but a field of force subject to constant renegotiations; and no Irish mind, but Irish minds shaped by a predicament which produces some common characteristics caught up in it.[97]

The term "renegotiations" sums up accurately Joyce's use of language in *Ulysses* and the diversity of genres and styles he proposes, not looking for an essence, nor a unity that would be provided by the English language. Joyce's debunking of the way in which revivalists such as the citizen were trying to revive Irish had nothing to do with a disapproval of Irish language, but rather with the fact that the energy of the movement was pointlessly used in this vain attempt at reinstating Irish. In *Ulysses*, Irish sentences are only spread here and there across the narrative, only to be understood for those who speak the language or if a footnote provides a translation. The Irish language is not granted any preferences in *Ulysses*, and is used by Joyce alongside other languages. Declan Kiberd as he describes Joyce's use of language explains how dissatisfied Joyce was with the use of English:

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[97] D. Kiberd, *Introduction to Ulysses*, lxxvii.

> The artist in Joyce was dissatisfied with aspects of the English language, despite its formidable expressive powers and despite the skill with which he realized its genius. Indeed, that dissatisfaction was a measure of the Joycean skill, for in extending the range of English, the artist inevitably found himself probing its limits. Living, like other Irish writers, at a certain angle to the English literary tradition, he could use it without superstition, irreverently, even insolently.[98]

Joyce's use of language can then be described as an act of freedom (which is already a very political stance) by exposing how insufficient it is to express what he has to say.

Joyce's use of Irish folklore and mythological material as a sub-structure for some of the key moments of his chapters provided another dimension to his depiction of folklore, an aspect that is developed from the chapter of "The Wandering Rocks" and on in *Ulysses*, alternately depicting Stephen and Bloom's mediations on language and style, an aspect which is already at play in the "Library" chapter.

> Those meditations addressed a central problem of modern writing: the breakdown of the old equation between the structure of language and the structure of a known world. In simple terms, the zones of scientific and technical knowledge had expanded massively in the modern period, while the resources of language seemed to lag behind.[99]

This comment aimed at the description of the use of internal monologues in *Ulysses* in order to describe the research on emerging studies about human consciousness and the subconscious. The empirical language is especially targeted here, since as Dundes stressed out, the orality he was trying to provide was not only difficult to transpose from one medium to the other, but it would have also meant that the boundaries of modern language were not suited to describe folklore. In other words, because the folklore is by definition linked to the "lore" of the "folk" and thus to orality, the written word could never transmit it. For indeed, most of the discussions and analyses of folklore in the novel are conveyed by songs and poems often separated from the prose text by the use of italics and a specific layout on the page[100].

As a result, as "there is no identifiably Joycean style"[101], the focus of this part will be to analyse the way in which the novel plays with the rules of English literature by analysing the

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[98] *Ibid*. xxxviii.
[99] *Ibid*. xliv.
[100] The songs, riddles and poems used in the "Nestor" chapter provide a good example on the way in which the layout of the page is influenced by the necessity of a space for orality, *Ulysses*, 2: 30-32.
[101] *Ibid*. xlvii.

vectors of folklore in *Ulysses*. As Joyce is reincarnating folklore, it is necessary to explore the different means used in order to convey the notion of folklore in a language that is presented as insufficient in order to welcome folklore. In order words, how did folklore leave its mark in *Ulysses.*

A.   Echoes to Irish folklore, narration and literary tools in *Ulysses*

It is commonly agreed that the story should be read in accordance with the plot of the *Odyssey*. Therefore, the three main characters were meant to be read as follows: Telemachus as Stephen Dedalus, Ulysses as Leopold Bloom and Penelope as Molly Bloom. And the different sections of the book would be reminiscent of the different episodes in the *Odyssey*, following the perception of each characters. This approach justifies a focus on more textual elements which refer to Irish folklore or which at least could be read through a game of assimilation to folkloristic aspects. This can be done by exploring the onomastics conferred to each character. Stephen Dedalus' name is obviously meant as a symbolical association with the Greek mythos, and as Tymoczko showed, Stephen is the character associated with the Greek universe. In that sense, the semantic meaning of the names bestowed to each character would become an emblem of their true nature. Tymoczko precises that Celtic names are often used metonymically in order to stress out certain traits of a character or to evoke a particular story. In most occasions, they are invested with a humoristic value, and Celtic folklore is not shy about attributing derisive names to fairy deities or royalty characters.

In the case of Molly Bloom, her family name which ties her deeply with flowers is inherited from her marital union with Leopold Bloom, which confers a semantic value to their union, as if they were meant to be paired together. Of course, their union is also symbolical, the association of a Spanish girl with a Jew as the only couple in the narrative, is extremely significant for the vision of a diverse Ireland. Also, the marital union between Leopold and Molly is presented as fertile, since the action of blooming hints at a change of season and a symbol of hope and life. Bloom is also the eponym of the mountain in Ireland called Slieve Bloom (*Sliab Bladma* in Irish) which was the residence of the consort of Eriu, the territorial goddess of Ireland itself. This creates a web of semantic meanings and association between the different characters that have to be analysed together, notably in the case of Molly and Leopold.

- The Irish subtext: main characters and their counterparts in Irish myths

As Maria Tymoczko observed, most of the grids of reading that can be attributed to the main three characters are inherited from the structure of *The Book of Invasions*, which helps to create a cohesive universe between the different characters but also to shed light on their interactions with each other. [102]And it would appear that most of these interactions are in opposition. Metempsychosis allows the characters in *Ulysses* to portray several figures at the same time. In that sense, the character of the citizen is modelled on the founder of the Gaelic Athletic Association Michael Cusack. But Tymoczko proposes another analysis of the citizen as a representant of the Fomorians who were the people responsible for the failure of the Nemedian invasion of Ireland. The Fomorians were mostly known for having battled the Tuatha Dé Danann, a people of deities who were ruling over Ireland before the conquest of the Milesians, a battle after which the Tuatha Dé Danann walked out of the world of men and retired into the hollow hills of Ireland, protecting their lands behind a magical mist. The Fomorians, deities as well, were considered as the gods of chaos who were then fighting the gods of order. This binary conflict between two mystical entities sums up some of the interactions between the characters.

Leopold Bloom is in an obvious contrast with the Citizen in "The Cyclops" who is perhaps the most chaotic character in *Ulysses*, which fits with Joyce's vision of the nationalist movement, seen as destructive and chaotic. The most chaotic figure amongst the Fomorians is the one-eyed Balor, the Irish counterpart of Medusa who can turn men to stone with his gaze. He was eventually killed by Lug during the second battle of *Mag Tuired*. Such an association is justified by the description of the citizen when he is first introduced in the narrative:

> The figure seated on a large boulder at the foot of a round tower was that of a broadshouldered deepchested stronglimbed frankeyed redhaired freely freckled shaggybearded widemouthed largenosed longheaded deepvoiced barekneed brawnyhanded hairylegged ruddyfaced sinewyarned hero. From shoulder to shoulder, he measured several ells and his rocklike mountainous knees were covered, as was likewise the rest of his body wherever visible, with a strong growth of tawny prickly hair in hue and toughness similar to the mountain gorse.[103]

The description of the citizen focuses on the abnormality of his features, to the point where language needs to be complemented by a series of composed adjectives that contribute to underscore the hyperbolic magnitude of his character, both in shape and in symbolical

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[102] M. Tymoczko, *The Irish Ulysses*, 35.
[103] J. Joyce, *Ulysses*, 12: 382.

relations. His ties to the mountain are also significant of the age before modernity, where the mountains were covered in forests still, as he is vehement in defending the trees of Ireland as part of his nationalistic endeavour: "Save them, says the citizen, the giant ash of Galway and the chieftain elm of Kildare with a fortyfoot bole and an acre of foliage. Save the trees of Ireland for the future men of Ireland on the fair hills of Eire, O."[104]

The contrast between the different cities mentioned here is striking. On the one hand, the city of Galway is nicknamed the city of the fourteen tribes, or the tribes of Galway, as a reference to a committee of fourteen families that were ruling over the city between the 18th and 19th century. They were mostly all Anglo-Norman families except three of them that were Irish. The association of these merchant families was already a sign of the decline of Irishness to leave place to the more mercantile world brought about by the British Empire, a structural change that the citizen deplored earlier: "Where are our missing twenty millions of Irish should be here today instead of four, our lost tribes?"[105] The calling to preserve the ash tree of this city is an invitation to preserve ancient traditions, since the ash trees were invested with mystical powers and used by druids for their medicinal traits.[106] On the other hand, the reference to the city of Kildare is extremely significant, since it harboured the shrine of the goddess Brigit, goddess of war, magic, arts and medicine and member of the Tuatha Dé Danann. Also, the use of the term "Ireland" to talk about the future of men is to be opposed to the use of the Irish term "Eire" to designate the Ireland of the "fair hills of Eire", a reference to the refuges of the Tuatha Dé Danann after the Milesian conquest that have to be preserved.

The example of the citizen is perfect to develop the idea that through a conflictive language, folklore is introduced inside the essence of the character in such a way that the interactions of these characters can be interpreted in regards to the axis they propose. If the citizen character had already been analysed due to its strong ties to the nationalist movement as it is openly claimed, an analysis in semantics grants the reader a glimpse into the referential folkloristic universe that surrounds his character.

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[104] *Ibid*. 12: 423-24.

[105] *Ibid*. 12: 423.

[106] "The ash tree was thought to have medicinal and mystical properties and the wood was burned to ward off evil spirits. In Norse mythology, ash was the 'Tree of Life' and the first man on Earth was said to have come from an ash tree. Even today it is sometimes known as the 'Venus of the woods'. In Britain, druids regarded the ash as sacred and their wands were often made of ash because of its straight grain." See more at https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/trees-woods-and-wildlife/british-trees/a-z-of-british-trees/ash/

1.   Stephen Dedalus: the controversial vessel of Irish folklore

Stephen Dedalus has a peculiar status in the novel. He is the protagonist but more importantly he is the figure of the man of knowledge, thus the recipient of the transmission of the folklore in the story. He is skilled in ancient knowledge equally between Irish tradition but also the richness of Western culture. He also represents the figure of the Irish invaders with a Greek heritage and he could be compared to the Tuatha Dé Danann which were the equivalent of druids known for their learning and their magical skills. In the novel, Stephen is a teacher, a bard, a singer and even a potential journalist, thus encompassing all the aspects of the artist to whom the transmission of Irish knowledge becomes the mission. Stephen's role in folkloristic representation and symbolism can easily be compared to the one of the *fili* who was the visionary of the tribe. A role that was also conferred to the poet who was seen as a seer, a visionary of truth. Therefore, not only is Stephen the vessel for potential Irish mythological figures but he is also one of the reasons why folklore is carried on throughout the text. He educates, sings and writes about folklore, and can therefore continue to inspire the oral transmission of folklore. His association with deity figures of the Tuatha Dé Danann is only matched by the amount of knowledge he possesses: "The fili was the source of knowledge of the future through his skill at divination; the repository of knowledge of the past as historian, storyteller and genealogist; and the guardian of the norms of the present as praise poet, satirist and keeper of law, precept, and proverb."[107] Therefore, not only is he keeper of knowledge but he is also the keeper of the word of knowledge and folklore, whose authority relies on the timelessness of his knowledge. He is in that sense the keeper of the past as he establishes himself: "You have spoken of the past and its phantoms, Stephen said. Why think of them? If I call them into life across the waters of Lethe will not the poor ghosts troop to my call? Who supposes it? I, Bous Stephanoumenos, bullockbrefriending bard, am lord and giver of their life."[108]

Even if this sentence is more filled with Greek references [109] than Irish ones, the association of the Greek mythos with the figure of the bard remains meaningful, especially for the mission that Stephen grants himself in being the vessel of their life memory. The coinage "bullockbefriending bard" is meant to portray Stephen thinking that Buck Mulligan will come

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[107] M. Tymoczko, *The Irish Ulysses*, 139.
[108] J. Joyce, *Ulysses*, 14: 543.
[109] Léthé in Greek mythology is the goddess of forgetfulness, who is often mistaken with Léthé, one of the five great rivers of hell which is sometimes nicknamed "the river of forgetfulness.

up with another mocking nickname for him. And yet, the coinage is of Stephen's own making, and says a lot about his personality as a character, but also signifies the bridge between two mythical and folkloristic universes, but also between different literary universes.

Stephen is schooled in ancient knowledge, notably through his admiration for Shakespeare to be considered as the figure of the "Bard" with a capital B. Tymoczko compared Stephen Dedalus to the chief hero of the Tuatha Dé Danann Leg, the *samildánach* (which means the many-skilled in Irish) as a reference to his many activities in *Ulysses*. Stephen's vision of the artist as exposed in *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* is quite telling of the way in which his status is to be approached: "the artist, like the God of creation, remains within or behind or beyond or above his handwork, invisible, refined out of existence, indifferent, paring his fingernails."[110] This is not without reminding Flaubert's own conception of the role of the artist as he claimed that: "L'artiste doit être dans son œuvre comme Dieu dans la Création, invisible et tout-puissant, qu'on le sente partout, mais qu'on ne le voie pas."[111] It should be noted that Stephen is the only representative of written production in the day of the narration, and his writings are welcomed with mixed enthusiasm, as he is praised for his genius in the library but discredited for the alienation of his thinking from the current trend of nationalism. Stephen's failure at being recognized by publishing houses for his ideas and poems in "Proteus" is used by Joyce as an occasion to mock the insufficiency of words and the vanity of those who claim to master it:

> "Stephen's is the only literary act of any minor value on the day and even that deed in the Proteus chapter is undercut by two other transformations – by the fact that the poet pees on the sand and picks his nose. It is in the course of this chapter that the narrative turns against itself and its chosen language. In the attempt to find a verb for the lugubrious motions of the midwife on the beach, languages of various kinds are pressed to serve: "she schlepps trains drags transcines her load."[112] Then the question is raised as to who will read these written words, a reference in the immediate context to Stephen's poem, but more generally applicable to Joyce' own book.[113]

Once again, the consciousness about the world of literature is brough up inside the narration, alongside a concern for the longevity of the narrative itself. The problematic of the relevance of language into carrying the heritage of folklore is doubled with the problematic of considering the posterity of what has been passed on:

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[110] James Joyce, *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, 215.
[111] Gustave Flaubert, *Correspondance,* Ed. Gallimard, 1988.
[112] J. Joyce, *Ulysses*, 3: 60.
[113] D. Kiberd, *Introduction to Ulysses*, xlvi.

> Remember your epiphanies on green oval leaves, deeply deep, copies to be sent if you died to all great libraries of the world, including Alexandria? Someone was to read them there after a thousand of years, a mahamanvantara.[114] Pico della Mirandola like. Ay, very like a whale. When one reads these strange pages of one long gone one feels that one is at one with one who once…[115]

It is clear that to Joyce, the publishing world cannot succeed in passing on these texts under the pretext that they are being too old or ancient, as if the word of folklore was not relevant to a structure that, through the influence of the Irish revival movement, was supposed to promote the return of folklore as a literary and cultural influence.

2.   Leopold Bloom: the multi-facetted tarnished hero

Leopold Bloom is another example of the invaders of Ireland as the citizen accuses him to be, depicting the conflictive Jew character. He has been analysed by Maria Tymoczko through the prism of the Goidels, which were Irish invaders that could have been Jews, they were confederates of Moses attached to Hebrew history, but they decided to follow another path. As for Bloom, he has the possibility to fully embrace his Jewish roots through his father but he does not fully identify as Jew. He reminds us several times, especially to the Citizen, that he is an Irishman. He becomes thus a sort of ambivalent figure of Irishness.

However, he is also attached to some figures of the Irish folklore because the character of Bloom in the text is the strongest recipient of Irish humour and sometimes serves as a parody of the epic by Joyce. The Irish folklore did not hesitate to poke fun at their own gods or heroes (which is something that is completely absent from Greek myths) and Bloom may sometimes be associated to the image of the tarnished hero, especially through the episode at the beginning of "Calypso" where his animal gluttony is mocked:

> Mr Leopold Bloom ate with relish the inner organs of beasts and fowls. He licked thick giblet soup, nutty gizzards, a stuffed roast heart, liver slices fried with crustcrumbs, fried hencod's roes. Most of all he liked grilled mutton kidneys which gave to his palate a fine tang of fitly scented urine. [116]

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[114] A cosmological cycle in Hindi mythology.
[115] J. Joyce, *Ulysses*, 3: 50.
[116] J. Joyce, *Ulysses*, 4: 65.

The character of Bloom inscribes himself in the domain of the physical and the bodily as opposed to Stephen who is a character that is more marked by his spirit rather than his physical presence. His relation towards physicality ties him deeply with the sexual tone of the whole novel, as Bloom is aware that he is being cheated upon by his wife Molly. Bloom's union to Molly goes a long way into characterizing his place and representativeness inside Irish folklore. Most of the links tied to his personality are to be found through the hallucinations in the episode in the brothel of "Circe", where Bloom stands on trial under a series of farfetched accusations such as being a cuckold, an anarchist, a forger, a bigamist, and a bawd. The hallucinations happen one after the other, until the illusory election of Bloom as mayor of Dublin leads to the arrival of Buck Mulligan, being a "sex specialist" who accuses Bloom of being a woman and being pregnant: "Professor Bloom is a finished example of the new womanly man. His moral nature is simple and lovable. Many have found him a dear man, a dear person. He is a rather quaint fellow on the whole, coy though not feebleminded in the medical sense."[117], a statement that is welcomed by Bloom as he learns that "he is about to have a baby", to which he exclaims: "O, I so want to be a mother."[118] Declan Kiberd confers this want to be a woman to the willingness of men to project themselves into having a role in giving birth to children. This is particularly at stake in Bloom's character, who lost his son with Molly six weeks after birth. The presentation of the androgynous figure and its recognition by the trial in "Circe" is invested with all sort of modernist-like elements, aiming at abolishing the boundaries of sexes, a point extremely reminiscent of the "New woman" wave that was hitting England at the turn of the 19th century. In terms of folkloric referentiality, the recognition that Bloom's identity is not his own and is not definite, as it shifts between the two spectrums of the sexes[119], is to be linked with his relationship to Molly, considered as the true sexual power in *Ulysses* through her association with the Sovereignty goddesses of Ireland.

Bloom could easily be read as a consort of Molly, as Maria Tymoczko is suggesting. All the traits used to describe Bloom in the tirade made by Dr Dixon render an association of Bloom with Celtic kings very plausible, as he gave a sizable contribution to the Dignam family and as he offers to take Stephen in his home. Celtic kings were often married with Irish Sovereignty goddesses that embodied the particular territory the king aimed to rule. It was a

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[117] *Ibid*. 15: 614.
[118] *Ibid*. 15: 614.
[119] Talking about Stephen and Molly, Declan Kiberd notices that: "They recognize that Bloom is both average and special, a man with so many sides that his identity is tenuous and provisional, everything and nothing, the androgynous goal.", lXII.

way to legitimize the power of the new king over the land he claimed to rule. In that sense, Bloom is to be read as the perfect match for Molly, whose affection for flowers is echoed once again in the onomastic "Bloom" and in the fact that Bloom considers Molly as a flower. Through the prism of Molly, Maria Tymoczko has little doubt as to the relevance of this association between Bloom and Celtic kings: "Bloom is a rightful king, albeit a modern, domestic representation of one whose kingdom has shrunk to the size of a semidetached villa."[120] This statement allows Bloom to stand out amongst the many other men to be considered as Molly's consorts as they are being enumerated in her final monologue.

Bloom is also a father figure, first for his daughter Milly Bloom but also to Stephen as a foster father. The recurrent focus on his sexual organ is also a way to stress out the fertility of his character, both into the possibility of folkloristic associations, but also with the way in which he carries those associations further across the narrative. Declan Kiberd reminds us that androgynous figures in mythology "are customarily prophets"[121], as the citizen, mocking Bloom's androgyny and potential homosexual relationship with Stephen, scornfully claims: "That's the New Messiah for Ireland".[122] Bloom's character introduces the possibility of otherness and dualism, described as an ambiguous identity symbolically widened to Ireland.

3.   Molly Bloom: the depraved sexuality of Irish folklore's female characters

Molly Bloom is perhaps one of the strongest characters in relation to Irish folklore because she is the most relevant female character in the novel. A reading of *The Book of Invasions* allows us to tie her to Mediterranean origins (Spain) which also makes her affiliation to Ireland ambiguous. But more importantly, she is the epitome of mythological Irish goddesses. Now, in Irish folklore, there were many gods and many goddesses that were separated into factions, like the Tuatha Dé Danann for instance. But Irish goddesses all shared the similar attributes of close relationship to nature and land but also to fertility through the expression of a strongly depraved sexuality. The vigorous aspect of their sexual desire was often attributed to the idea of violence, for goddesses in Irish folktales were no strangers to the art of war. Even though the notions of birth and death seem contradictory and depicted in other

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[120] Maria Tymoczko, *The Irish Ulysses*, 124.
[121] D. Kiberd, *Introduction to Ulysses*, lvii.
[122] J. Joyce, *Ulysses*, 12: 438.

mythologies by several deities, Tymoczko (talking about Sovereignty) notes that "the great mother, especially when she is associated with the earth, is at once the source of life and the repository of life after death"[123]. Maria Tymoczko notably associates her with the figure of "Sovereignty" considered as the mother of the gods and also the mother of the earth. And it is no coincidence that the novel should end on Molly's monologue as a way of emphasizing the cycle or life and death of the novel, but also to make of the character of Molly the bearer of the conception of Ireland that was nurtured by Joyce when he wrote *Ulysses*.

Molly's fertility comes first and foremost from her connection to the land and to nature, which Tymoczko associates with the goddess *Taieltiu* of *The Book of Invasions*, as Molly claims:

> I love flowers Id love to have the whole place swimming in roses God of heaven heres nothing like nature the wild mountains then the sea and the waves rushing then the beautiful country with fields of oats and wheat and all kind of things and all the fine cattle going about that would do your heart good to see rivers and lakes and flowers all sorts of shapes and smells and colours springing up even out of the ditches primroses and violets[124]

The idea of nature goes even into her personal space, as most of the representations that we have of Molly before the monologue are tied with her bed, the place where she cheats on her husband. This is perhaps the only place that retraces the physical presence of Molly, other than the descriptions of her bosom and bottom. The bed, symbolically speaking, is both reminiscent of the incest and the allegory for the river bed, an analogy for her menstruations. However, as the quote selected shows, Molly's fondest memories are brought up in her reminiscence as she was walking outside in the world, walking about the territory that is hers. The readers, Tymoczko notes, are put into the position of mortals across the narrative, as they only hear about the appearances of Molly through other characters.[125]

Tymoczko also notes that Joyce's use of the Sovereignty pattern is as much mythical as it is realistic: "Indeed, the way Molly's character is poised between mythic and realistic components itself recapitulates almost perfectly the presentation of most of the great female figures of early Irish literature[126]". The fertility of the Sovereignty goddess is underscored by the importance of blood and urine. Molly in *Ulysses* produces a lot of urine and menstrual

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[123] M. Tymoczko, *The Irish Ulysses*, 98.
[124] J. Joyce, *Ulysses*, 18: 931.
[125] See M. Tymoczko, *The Irish Ulysses*, 117.
[126] M. Tymoczko, *The Irish Ulysses*, 111.

flow that contribute to the fluidity and circularity of her monologue at the end of the novel. Her endless list of lovers across the chapter "Penelope" sheds light on her immortal-like status of Irish godess. Molly's monologue can be seen as a linguistic and mental reflection of her physical menstruation, as the references to roses and "crimson sea"[127] can be seen as correlates for her own menstrual blood or even to Irish war, hinting at women's capacity to bleed without dying.

Molly is also the daughter of a soldier in an Irish regiment of the British army who served back in Gibraltar, another occasion to underscore Molly's proficient sexual appetite that is fuelled by her sexual dissatisfaction with her husband.

In a thesis published by Jeremy James Grootenboer[128], Molly is associated with the figure of the "Devouring Female" theorized by Patrick J. Keane, thus only portrayed through the destructive potential of her sexual raw appetite. And it is accurate that even in her own monologue, Molly refers to the fact that she drains her victim through sexual endeavour to preserve her vitality: "a woman wants to be embraced 20 times a day almost to make her look young no matter by who so long as to be in love or loved by somebody if the fellow you want isn't there sometimes"[129]. If one takes into account Tymoczko's analysis of Molly's fertility, the destructive power conferred to Molly is much more structural than it is symbolical or mythological. Molly is the epitome of the destruction of the conventions that limit the role of women in society, which as we have seen is not the case in Irish mythology. The power roles are reversed and Molly, while being the recipient of Irish intertextual interpretations through metempsychosis, is also the epitome of the modern woman. Her decision not to have any more children is to be linked with the use of birth control at the time. The exposition of her multiple fantasies openly shared with the reader go against the dogma of sexual purity preached by the Church. As it occurs, Molly is the subject of most of the scenes deemed obscene that have earned the book an early censorship. Also, sexual aspects of early Irish literature were seen as an embarrassment for most of the Anglo-Irish writers.

Molly is also in also involved in her own open war against language, as the technique of internal monologue used in "Penelope" bears no punctuation mark until the very end of the novel. She is also the one at the origins of the semantic confusion between metempsychosis and "Met him pike hoses", a funny misunderstanding that sexually connotated.

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[127] "O and the sea the sea crimson sometimes like fire", *Ulysses*, 18: 932.

[128] See Jeremy James Grootenboer, *Celtic and Irish Myth and Folklore in the Fiction of James Joyce and Morgan Llywelyn: The Physical Hero, the Devouring Female and Myth-Making*, MMU, September 1999.

[129] J. Joyce, *Ulysses*, 18: 925.

By appealing to realistic elements of sexuality and linking them into the patterns of legends revolving around the early female figures of Irish literature, Tymoczko shows that the sexual dimension of *Ulysses* is meant as a symbolical way to embrace the feminine side of Irish identity, the same way Bloom embraces his own androgyny against the corrosive nationalism of the chauvinistic citizen. It is no wonder then that Molly's monologue should end on a positive act of creation that leads back to the creation of *Ulysses*, as she recalls "I said yes I will Yes" [130] in answer to Bloom's proposal.

B.   The stylistic aspects of *Ulysses* echoing the folklore

An analysis of the characters of *Ulysses* is sufficient to realize the relevance of intertextual connection to early Irish literature, through *Ulysses* does not stop at exposing a wide network of potential readings. It uses this potential in order to shape its own format of narration. *Ulysses* is written as a cycle of discontinuous narratives that all depicts episodes from a moment of the same day. The episode structured around the *Odyssey* provide no continuity between each scene proposed. It has to do with the fact that the way of approaching the novel under the Irish prism is singular, since the oral tradition that the book aims to mimic is different from the written one. Every creation of a story or a scene in *Ulysses* is to be approached as a re-creation of either a myth or a historical anecdote. Alan Dundes goes as far as developing the concept of "metafolklore", [131] arguing that it shares the same characteristic as "metalanguage" which is undeniable at this point in *Ulysses*. Metafolklore means that *Ulysses*' text would be invested with commentaries on aspects of folklore. A perfect illustration of this phenomenon would be the riddle that Stephen asks his students to solve, which appears several times in the narrative:

> "The cock crew
> The sky was bue;
> The bells in heaven
> Were striking eleven.
> Tis time for this poor soul
> To go to heaven"[132]

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[130] J. Joyce, *Ulysses*, 18: 933.
[131] Alan Dundes "Metafolklore and Oral Literary Criticism" in *The Monist*, 50: 4, Symbol and Myth, October 1966, pp 506-516.
[132] J. Joyce, *Ulysses*, 2: 32.

This particular example is extremely interesting in the sense that it contextualizes the transmission of folklore under the academic structure, which is an invitation from both the students and Joyce's readers to solve the riddle that was answered puzzlingly by Stephen about "the fox burying his grandmother under a hollybush"[133]. Of course, an analysis of metafolklore could not be separated from the "identification and interpretation" compromise that Dundes established, meaning that a requirement for metafolklore is an awareness of the presence of a folkloristic element that is being either studied, commented or precised. In that case, Dundes argues that the fox imagery comes from *The Robber Bridegroom* by Aarne Thompson, a story staging a little girl watching from a tree Mr Fox digging a grave-to-be for his betrothed that he intends to murder. Later on, the girl recites the riddle at a large gathering and describes the action, thus unravelling the villain's nefarious plans. In the case of Stephen the betrothed could be analyzed as Stephen's mother instead, making the story a direct reference to Stephen's guilt about having killed his mother, in the sense that he did no prevent her death. Dundes reminds us however that neither the fox nor Stephen actually committed the crime: "However, in terms of the folktale the fox only plans to kill his sweetheart; he does not actually commit the crime. The fox is judged by his thought rather than by his act. In the novel Stephen did not kill his mother, but he judges himself in thought".[134]

Another example would be the way in which Stephen's knowledge is praised by the ones surrounding him, especially Haines who asks Stephen to let him make a compilation of his saying: "I intend to make a collection of your sayings if you will let me" [135]. Metafolklore may also be represented as the commentary of the raconteur on the particular element of folklore in the text, which implies a double consciousness on folklore in the text.

1.   Discontinuous narration and stylistic variations

The stream of consciousness technique used in *Ulysses* makes it difficult to follow one narrative voice and sometimes the focalization is not obvious at first, until the narrator drops a hint about whose point of view the reader is experiencing. Each episode proposes its own way

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[133] *Ibid*. 2: 32.
[134] A. Dundes, "The study of Folklore in Literature and Culture: Identification and Interpretation", 72.
[135] J. Joyce, *Ulysses*, 1: 18.

of narration, staging different genres. For instance, the "Library" episode is written as a form of dialectics. It has to be approached under the art of dialogue staged in the discussion between literary men in search for a truth regarding the subject of literature as seen through the prism of revivalists. Yet, Stuart Gilbert underscores the inconsistency of the dialogue: "The episode abounds in abrupt contrasts, formal speeches alternating with clownery, argot with metaphysics. Each of the speakers in the dialogue has his appropriate tempo".[136] If the style Joyce chooses can be headed towards bringing together scholars from different backgrounds to discuss the same literary artefact (in that case *Hamlet*), Joyce's narrative ingenuity also introduces different types of writing, such as what is happening the "Circe" episode. The eminently magical dimension of this chapter is echoed by a series of hallucination experienced by Bloom that leads him into grotesque situations as he is spending time in a brothel, going from hallucination to hallucination. Stuart Gilbert qualifies the style of this passage as "hallucination":

> The art of this episode is magic and its technic "hallucination". Inanimate objects, unuttered thoughts, take life, speak and move as independent, zoomorphic beings. Spectres rise from the dead, the squalid brothel parlour is transformed in a bewildering sequence of scenic changes. In fact, the background of this episode, the most "theatrical" of Ulysses, is a series of transformation scenes. [137]

Maria Tymoczko also associates this aspect to the entrance into the Irish Otherworld, especially by the way in which Bloom is described entering Nighttown at Mabbot Street:

> *The Mabbot street entrance of nighttown, before which stretches an uncobbled transmiding set with skeleton tracks, red and green will-o'-the-wisps and danger signals. Rows of flimsy houses with gaping doors. Rare lamps with faint rainbow fans. Round Rabaiotti's halted ice gondolastunted men and wone squabbl. They grab wafers between which are wedged lumps of coal and copper snow. Sucking, they scatter slowly. Children. The swancomb of the gondola, highreared, forges on through the murk, white and blue under a lighthouse. Whistles call and answer.[138]*

The eminently gothic tone of this passage that signifies the entrance into another realm is only echoed by the incongruity of the dramatic form that follows, mimicking theatre. Tymoczko notes that the Irish Otherworld has many names, notably the *Tír no Nóg* and *Tír inna mBan*

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[136] Stuart Gilbert, *James Joyce Ulysses, A Study*, Vintage Books Edition, January 1955, 212.
[137] *Ibid*. 318.
[138] J. Joyce, *Ulysses*, 15: 561-62.

("the land of youth" or "the land of women"). They were usually located in underground, yet accessible locations, and the figures living there had the power to transform themselves. In the case of *Ulysses*, the entrance into the Otherworld is signified by a changing of style and typography, either manifested by the rhythm of didascalies and theatrical replicas staging Bloom's trial, coronation, and accusation of androgyny. Even if the passage seems to be narrated under a dreamlike state, Tymoczko suggests that: "In early Irish literature, dream logic structures some of the adventures to the otherworld as it does in Joyce's episode; however, because the otherworld was part of the Irish belief system, events there become structural features of the plot."[139] Therefore, it would appear that the mythic system of Irish Otherworld is brought into the narration of the modern world, and staged as a brothel. The absence of a narrative voice in this chapter leaves place for the dramatic structure to take hold of the text, a trick that, according to Tymoczko, inscribes this dreamlike state into the domain of the real:

> The dramatic form allowed Joyce to present the Otherworld elements – used in part as correlatives of the psychic manifestations of his protagonists – as unproblematic, unmediated, objectified phenomena, as "real" "events"; and at the same time it obviated any necessity for comment on those phenomena.[140]

The peculiar way of the technique of this passage underscores another time the incongruity of the narration in *Ulysses*. It is also a way to hint at the fact that different genres cross the narrative in *Ulysses*, such as drama, poetry and prose, music and even ekphrasis through the depiction of Molly's pictures. However, it is possible to draw a binary line of techniques used by Joyce that shift from direct dialogue or indirect dialogue and internal monologue. In any case, it is rarer in *Ulysses* to come across a narration that does not imply interactions between several characters. This aspect sheds light on the attempt at preserving oral tradition and transmission of knowledge, as there always needs to be an interlocutor and a listener in the novel. Monique de Mattia-Viviès invites any reader of Molly's monologue to be careful about the categorization of this speech, as different forms reminiscent of the "stream of consciousness" are present in *Ulysses*:

> On ne confondra pas la technique du discours rapporté et celle du monologue intérieur. Le discours rapporté est toujours inclus dans la narration alors que le monologue intérieur est à lui

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[139] M. Tymoczko, *The Irish Ulysses*, 193.
[140] *Ibid*. 214.

seul une narration. Le monologue intérieur n'est ni mention ni citation. C'est la conscience de ce personnage qui fait l'histoire et semble se passer de tout intermédiaire.[141]

The self-referentiality of Molly's speech is underscored here, presenting itself as its own narration. In other words, Molly's monologue in terms of folklore analysis uses the folklore that has already been spread across *Ulysses* to take a life of its own. Most importantly, the thoughts of Molly are carried by a narrative voice that would interfere between the content of Molly's consciousness and their expression. However, one should bear in mind that the monologue is triggered by Molly's excess of jealousy towards her husband as he comes back home, suspecting that he might have gone to see another woman. Molly's monologue can be argued to be the firmament of Joyce's experiments on language. The noticeable aspect of this passage is the fact that grammatical structures (punctuation notably and even typography to separate paragraphs and ideas) are absent. Therefore, the interpretation of Molly's fluctuating thoughts, insofar as writing techniques are concerned, is to be questioned as follows:

> S'agit-il encore de MI, ou plutôt de MIA ? La technique linguistique utilisée est certes le DIM mais les énoncés sont à peine construits, comme s'ils n'étaient adressés à aucun destinataire. Que faire de ces énoncés qui visent à décrire le fonctionnement psychique d'une pensée en en livrant les contradictions, le caractère apparemment illogique, qui n'empruntent pas la structure du langage parlé ou écrit, en d'autres termes qui ne posent pas, contrairement au MIA, l'existence d'un destinataire ? [142]

It would then appear that the lack of second party in Molly's monologue justifies its ties to the stream of consciousness technique, which might be in fact the only passage that can be labelled so in *Ulysses*. However, where language fails to grant a structure to Molly's fluctuating thoughts, folklore patterns allow the reader to establish connections with feminine strength and vitality as symbols of Ireland.

- Stylistic diversity and orality

The narrative disheveled aspect in *Ulysses* is only matched by the stylistic diversity of early Irish heroic narrative prose that Tymoczko categorized in three types:

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[141] Monique de Mattia-Viviès, Monologue intérieur et discours rapporté : parcours entre narratologie et linguistique. *Bulletin de la Société de stylistique anglaise*, Société de stylistique Anglaise, 2005, pp.9-24, 4
[142] *Ibid*. 10

> At least three types of prose can be identified in early Irish hero tales: an idiomatic and syntactically direct prose for the narrative and the dialogue, a formulaic prose used for descriptions behind which we see the traces of oral formulaic verse (Slotkin), and an alliterative prose used for certain ornage passages.

It would then appear that prose in *Ulysses* is intrinsically tied with poetic structures inherited from Irish oral traditions. The diversity of poetic prose both echoes the relationship that is established with Irish epic traditions and the willingness of Joyce to write a book from eighteen points of view (as many points of view as the number of chapters). The poetics of western literature however are to be considered as different from the prose of Irish epic. However, the absence of stylistic continuity insofar as poetics is concerned is replaced by the cyclical aspect of Irish poems that would always repeat at the end of the poem the introducing sentence, words or phonemes. Such a phenomenon is called *dúnad* (closing or shutting). Also, in *Ulysses*, poems are often referred to as songs or tunes that are sung by the characters rather than recited, bringing the spreading of oral tradition closer to the figure of the bard rather than the figure of the poet. The most common word for poem in Irish is "laid", which can also be translated into "song".

Poetry in *Ulysses* is not carrying the narration further, that it to say that it never brings any other information as to the unfolding of the plot, but it is often referred to as a musical accompaniment that creates a parallax view of the situation. One example of *dúnad* can be found in the first pages of *Ulysses*:

> "– Goodbye, now, goodbye. Write down all I said
>
> And tell Tom, Dick and harry I rose from the dead.
>
> What's bred in the bone cannot fail me to fly
>
> And Olivet's breezy… Goodbye, now, goodbye. [143]

The eery tone of this chant is only met by its non-respect for metrics of the iambic feet, and has no other purpose but to add to the gaiety of the discussion between Stephen, Haines and Mulligan. In most occurrences, Joyce's use of poetics in *Ulysses* is a borrowing of different types of prose both from already published poems and from Irish epic narratives. It should

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[143] J. Joyce, *Ulysses*, 1: 22.

also be noted that the poem is staged rather than written in *Ulysses*, and always occurs during a conversation. The only exception maybe in *Ulysses* would be Molly's monologue, as Tymoczko confers to her stream of consciousness the poetic structure of *dúnad,* since the chapter ends on a celebration of past events in a lyrical tone. Molly praises the events in the past that rendered the beginning of the story through the positive "yes" of the female as Sovereignty that allows the union between Bloom and Molly. The book thus ends where it began, which contributes to grant *Ulysses* its own referentiality across the narrative. Tymoczko notes that this particular form of *dúnad* is called *saigid* (attainment) which was the most common form of ending used in the Old and Middle Irish period, a genre that specifically linked the beginning with the end. Therefore, Joyce's use of poetic variations in *Ulysses* can be summarized as such:

> Joyce's mixture of prose with poems, songs, and lyric elements of all types in *Ulysses* can be classed as a prosimetrum. As such, the book fits neither the form of the conventional European novel nor the mold of European epic; rather, it stands as a radical challenge to both genres. But the same mixture of formal types that differentiates *Ulysses* from the dominant European narrative genres links it to the dominant narrative pattern of early Irish hero tales[144]

Tymoczko's analysis ties up with Kiberd's comment that "there is no identifiable Joycean style". In his endeavor to work on the prose of *Ulysses*, Joyce was more of an architect than a writer, in the sense that he was not looking to create something new but to establish an order with material that already existed. Joyce's pen did not produce an Irish *Ulysses* but it assembled it through the use of different materials taken from folklore. In that sense, the "mythical method" can be applied to Joyce's work as he opens up the path for an experiment on style and poetic modes rather than blindly trusting in language. As Kiberd suggests, "Joyce was one of the first modern artists to appreciate that style was less the mark of a writer's personality than a reflection of the approved linguistics practice of a given historic period."[145] Joyce's objective was not to impose his style over others, but to propose a new convention of writing that would not only include but be shaped by a rediscovery of Irish folklore. *Ulysses* thus becomes a stylistic compromise between what is and what once was. This is also linked to the fact that the mingling of prose and poetic forms, whether Irish-inspired or not, were reminiscent of the attempt Joyce made to retrace the history of language in England, especially through the "Oxen of the Sun" chapter.

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[144] M. Tymoczko, *The Irish Ulysses*, 78.
[145] D. Kiberd, *Introduction to Ulysses*, xlvii.

2.   Presenting *Ulysses* as a mock epic: going beyond the mockery of language as "wombfruit"

Regardless of the many references to Irish epics, Joyce's use of folkloristic elements is also extremely influenced by humour. He inherited from the fantastic and sometimes macabre humour that characterizes gods and heroes in Irish myths. If Bloom has been read as a hero or a king, he does not escape the ridicule of the many situations in which he is introduced inside the narrative, such as in his feast scene at the opening of "Calypso". The presentation of tarnished heroes by Joyce was a way for him to compel his readership to re-evaluate their notions of heroism. Declan Kiberd argues that "his impulse was always to scale grandiose claims down to a human dimension, to domesticate the epic." The irony in *Ulysses*, as Kiberd argues, can be interpreted both as a way to rebuke ancient heroism and as a way to mock the concerns for a modern anti-hero. It becomes thus clear that Joyce's conception of art is not ornamental but critical, by staging a self-awareness of the society he lives in and of the way in which he uses folklore in his narrative. In other words, *Ulysses* does not pretend to be what it is not, and Joyce deliberately chooses not to opt for a classification as either a heroic or a mock-heroic vision. As his work is a mix of humour, wit and satire about serious material such as death and gods, Joyce is in complete opposition with the classical genres as he used the all-encompassing range of Irish comic devices. In a sense, Joyce is writing his own national epic, as Dr. Sigerson suggested, except this one is derived from epics and heroics.

Of course, the parodic dimension of Joyce in *Ulysses* has also a lot to do with his vision of revival aesthetics and the way in which they strived to gain authorial recognition for reviving a dead language, as it has been shown. But here, the difference is that Joyce is mocking the very act of writing. Joyce's refusal of the conventions of language is not only used as a structure in *Ulysses*, both using early Irish early literature structures and mocking them at the same time. In "Oxen of the Sun", Joyce proposes a pastiche of different styles that belong to different eras of literature. Kiberd writes that:

> The mockery of bookishness extends in the *Oxen of the Sun* chapter to the major styles in the evolution of English literature from Anglo-Saxon to the present day. One effect of juxtaposing so many styles is to demonstrate how much is left unsaid by any: in rendering an aspect of the world, it misses out many others.[146]

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[146] D. Kiberd, *Introduction to Ulysses*, xlvii.

That is the reason why in Joyce's text, the realist depiction of Dublin is to be opposed to the fictionality of the work, especially in the "Circe" chapter that introduces the reader into the magical and fantastical world of the "Irish Otherworld", ruled by a succession of dreamlike states. The "Oxen of the Sun" chapter is perhaps the strongest representation of this superimposition of different styles, from gothic aspects to religious and moralistic visions. Stuart Gilbert also provides some insight on the way in which this chapter works, as "The rationale of this sequence of imitations lies in the theme. The *technic* and the subject of this episode are both *embryonic development* and the styles of prose employed follow an exact historical order."[147] Language is

thus compared to the nine months gestation of the embryo in the womb: "In a woman's womb word is made flesh but in the spirit of the maker all flesh that passes becomes the word that shall not pass away. This is postcreation."[148] The irony of the word introduced as a "wombfruit"[149] is a way for Joyce to stress the infantile aspect of language as not being mature enough to describe the world into which it was delivered. However, Joyce's use of parodic tools in this chapter is less justified by the text than in other chapters. On the contrary, the prose poetics used by Joyce, even in its imitative-parodic aspect, compels a textual analysis of Joyce's technique in recreating style belonging to specifics eras.

One example of poetic prose can be found in "Oxen of the Sun"

> In ward wary the watcher hearing come that man mild-hearted eft rising with swire ywimpled to him her gate wide undid. Lo, levin leaping lightens in eyeblink Ireland's westward welkin! Full she dread that God the Wreaker all mankind would fordo with water for his evil sins. Christ's rood made she on breastbone and him drew that he would rather infare under her thatch. That man her will wotting worthful went in Horne's house.[150]

Kathleen Wanes sees this passage as an attempt at reproducing Saintsbury's rendition of the text in *History of English Prose Rhythm* (1912). However, Joyce would present his own version of it that is a hybrid combination between half modern and half Old English techniques. These aspects may be seen through the syntax, the vocabulary and the rhythm. The inversion of the verb and the subject as in "Full she dread" is common but not always the same. The word order of the sentences is peculiar. For instance, in the first sentence: "In ward weary {…} her gate wide undid", the verb is rejected at the end, leaving the structure

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[147] S. Gilbert, *James Joyce Ulysses, A Study*, 296.
[148] J. Joyce, *Ulysses*, 14: 511.
[149] *Ibid*. 14: 499.
[150] *Ibid*. 14: 502-503.

grammatically ambiguous. The word order also concerns subordinary clauses and nominal groups variations such as "swire ywimpled". As Wanes suggests: "Thus the WO (word order) and syntax of the passage generally illustrate the complexity of Joyce's method, to create an alien accent far removed from standard Modern English. "Anglo-Oxen" is the dynamic interplay of three varieties: Saintsbury's translationese, Old English itself, and Joycean idiolect."[151] Also, some of the terms use clearly evoke an archaic background, such as "welkin" / "levin" / "fordo" / "ywimpled", which is a way to stress the continuity of Old English in contemporaneity. Joyce's use of alliteration is also to be noted, such as the alliteration in "w" and "h" in the last sentence, thus preserving a form of orality. Therefore, Joyce's rendering is neither pure prose nor pure poetry, but it is both at the same time:

> That Joyce should wish to mock, in true parodie fashion, the current translationese of ancient literature, {…} is also highly probable. Saintsbury's pseudo-text is replaced by another, a "par-iche," which at one and the same time is both Anglo-Saxon and Modern: Joycean. In the dynamic and poetic engagement with its "sources," the dialogical principle which Bakhtin saw as the essence of language and verbal art is vividly revealed in "Anglo-Oxen." [152]

While most of the critics argue that Joyce's text in this chapter is parodic, it could also be argued that the term "pastiche" would be more appropriate to describe what is happening in this passage, since Joyce is purposefully mimicking these styles without any necessary satirical intentions. However, mimicking these styles could be a way for Joyce to show how insufficient they are. Once again, Joyce's inspiration of the Irish use of irony and humour could be applied to his own vision of literature rather than to a few selected interactions between symbolical characters. Kiberd notices that:

> Joyce made his parodies the basis of a serious case against literature itself. Cancelling one another out, the styles in Ulysses were – for all their technical flair – a chastening reminder to readers of the sense in which even the finest literature remains a parodic imitation of the real experience of life. What makes Joyce a radical writer is his willingness to question not just the expressive powers of language but also the institution of literature itself. This is the ultimate in sophistication: for, in raising doubts about the literary medium, Joyce is calling into question the very medium through which those doubts are expressed.[153]

It would then appear that Joyce's parodic imitations of style and his occasional refusal of grammar is completed by an immersion into the history of language itself. The "Oxen of the

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[151] Kathleen Wanes, "The 'Oxen of the Sun' in 'Ulysses': Joyce and Anglo-Saxon", in *James Joyce Quarterly* 26: 3, UT, Spring 1989, pp. 319-332, 325.
[152] *Ibid*. 330.
[153] D. Kiberd, *Introduction to Ulysses*, xlviii – xlix.

Sun" chapter exemplifies accurately the way in which language is to be approached by Joyce, as an embryo that is about to be born. By appealing to folklore and tradition, Joyce is questioning the relevance of language as a tool to describe reality, and more specifically the reality of Ireland as it was challenged by revivalist aesthetics. The dynamics that have been explored so far show that Joyce's text is not stuck into the tradition it uses but, on the contrary, envisions its evolution and its growth. If there is no Joycean style so to speak, since his text is a web of imitations, one thing that can be said about *Ulysses* is that the novel is moving stylistically speaking, from one style to the other across a chapter or between the different episodes or characters. The fact that the novel ends on Molly's monologue, dealing mostly with her many sexual intercourses and her sexual appetite, echoes the notion of birth and fertility associated with the Sovereignty goddess. In other words, through folkloristic, linguistic and stylistic patterns, in a sense, Joyce is also giving birth to something in *Ulysses*. June W. Allison on that note establishes a relation between Joyce and Plato, notably by relying on the "Oxen of the Sun" chapter, through the maieutic. If the chapter is about procreation, it has been seen so far that Joyce's text is written as an answer to revivalists, as in "The Library" passage, and as an answer to what the English language has to propose for the transmission of folkloristic and traditional styles, as in "Oxen of the Sun". The predominant use of dialogue elsewhere in the novel also justifies the approach of the philosophical definition of maieutics:

> All they bachelors then asked of sir Leopold would he in like case so jeopard her person as risk life to save life A wariness of mind he would answer as fitted nil and, laying hand to jaw, he said dissembling, as his wont was, that as it was informed him, who had ever loved the art of physic as might a layman, and agreeing also with his experience of so seldom seen an accident it was good for that Mother Church belike at one blow had birth and death pence and in such sort dehverly he scaped their questions. That is truth, pardy, said Dixon, and, or I err, a pregnant word.[154]

As June W. Allison remarks[155], there is a comparison to be made between this passage and the way in which Socrates skillfully evades direct answers to questions, pretending to know nothing in order to make his interlocutor realize that they were wrong and that they had the knowledge sufficient to be right. It could be argued that for Joyce, the maieutic methodology is achieved in the way in which meaning is drawn from the

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[154] J.Joyce, *Ulysses*, 14: 509.

[155] Cf. June W. Allison, "A Literary Coincidence? Joyce and Plato", in *James Joyce Quarterly* 16: 3, UT, Spring 1979, pp. 267-282.

interactions between his characters. But if the "pregnant word" is truth, then the ethical value of Joyce's approach, in adopting the maieutic, justifies any interrogations on the range of *Ulysses* as to the object of this truth.

III. The ethical and historical range of folklore in *Ulysses*: depicting "Irishness" and "nationalism": an ethic of failure and redefinition

This part will act as a concretisation of the many elements that have been studied so far, including the difficult combination of Irish history and fiction, which, as we have seen, is both through folklore the focus of Irish literary revival authors in order to claim a cultural and literary independence, but also the acceptance (especially with Joyce), of the multi-cultural past of Ireland.

As a result, a study of *Ulysses* through the use of folklore also questions the role of folklore into the establishment of Ireland as its own literary and cultural authority (despite the use of English and European literature conventions). It will be interesting to see that for Joyce (and this is what separates some of his convictions from Yeats'), folklore was a way to defend the fact that the "pre-lapsarian Irishness" that saw the birth of folklore had become decadent and failed to find its echoes in contemporary Ireland. It is also the occasion to stress out the fact that folklore in *Ulysses* is also used as a political stance, not only due to the affiliation (however controversial) of the book to the Irish literary revival but because of the way in which Joyce's conceptions are put forward. Therefore, Joyce's use of folklore is to be interpreted as both aesthetic and political. In fact, the association of Joyce's text with the aesthetics of modernist movements should not overshadow the way in which Joyce, by a process of critical self-awareness and by the establishment of endless foils in *Ulysses*, wanted to get his own conception of Irish nationalism through. In that sense, Joyce's work on the notion of "Irishness" can be qualified as ethical, insofar as it provides a structure inside which folklore and modernism coexist, not as antipodes but as a coercive force. It should also be remembered that literature does not aim at being political, it may be felt like it. Also, literature and fiction are not a solution to a problem. In that sense, the vision of *Ulysses* as literature that should be adopted is the one proposed by Derek Attridge [156]who suggests that if there is anything political in literature, it is not in its project or in its content but in its form. In other words, *Ulysses* is not a political work, but choosing folklore and mythical structures as a form is a political statement, purposely choosing to use the structure of a regional but disappearing tongue rather than the use of novel conventions.

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[156] See in *The Singularity of Literature* (2004), Routledge Classics, 2017.

And yet, they are some passages in the novel that seem to specifically translate a political incentive, such as at the beginning of "Oxen of the Sun":

> For who is there who anything of some significance has apprehended but is conscious that that exterior splendour may be the surface of a downwartending lutulent reality or on the contrary anyone so is there inilluminated as not to perceive that as no nature's boon can contend against the bounty of increase so it behoves every most just citizen to become the exhortator and admonisher of his semblables and to tremble lest what had in the past been by the nation excellency commended might be in the future not with similar excellence accomplished if an inverecund habit shall have gradually traduced the honourable by ancestors transmitted customs to that thither of profundity {…}[157]

The definition of the "citizen" given here by Joyce is ironically at odds with the character of the citizen in "Cyclops". If the citizen in "Cyclops" is obsessed with the idea of preserving the ways of the past in order to keep the excellency of the nation intact, the citizen that is presented here is expected to establish a compromise between what the past holds and what the future proposes. The critical distancing that the reader takes through the use of early Irish literature and irony is applied to the citizen as a political figure. The use of the archaic adjective "inverecund" (from Latin *in-verecundus*) to qualify the passing on of these habits and customs is also relevant. It describes the shameless customs of the past to interfere with the evolution of a society, which is why the citizen must not affiliate himself to the influence of traditions. Following that logic, it could be said that folklore is an irrelevant tool to deal with the evolution of a society, and in that case, to move into modernity.

Moreover, one of the biggest issues in dealing with folklore is the fact that folklore is reputed for being associated with falsehood as Dundes suggests:

> The meaning of folklore in the phrase "That's just folklore" is similar to one of the meanings of myth, namely falsehood, error, and the like. I suspect that it is this pejorative connotation which has encouraged some folklorists to consciously avoid the term, substituting instead "verbal or spoken art", "oral or folk literature", and many others. More serious is the fact that this "folk" interpretation of the word "folklore" makes it difficult for the discipline of folklore and its practitioners to gain academic status. If folklore is error, then a Ph. D in folklore is the height of folly, and the notion of a whole discipline devoted to error is unthinkable in the academic context of the search for truth. To use the term folklore without an awareness of the folk interpretation of the term is unwise.[158]

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[157] J. Joyce, *Ulysses*, 14: 500.
[158] A. Dundes, "Metafolklore and Oral Literary Criticism", in *The Monist*, 516.

It would then appear that Joyce, in choosing to use folkloristic materials, undermined his own efforts to assert the authority of his message. How can the structure of *Ulysses* be taken seriously if the material from which it is built is considered as irrelevant for a research of truth? There are two answers to this question. The first one is that Joyce was not aiming at academic recognition for *Ulysses*, but was rather experimenting with textual and literary materials belonging to different ages from a common cultural sphere. It should never be forgotten than even though *Ulysses* was the result of a thorough research on folklorist and historical past of Ireland, the novel produced is still to be considered as fiction. Even if Eliot was the one to confer to *Ulysses* a scientific relevance by the application of the "mythical method", Stephen reminds the reader that truth is not what the novel and its author are after as "A man of genius makes no mistakes. His errors are volitional and are the portals of discovery."[159] Therefore, the second answer is that Joyce was not looking for a truth, that would have been the writing of a "national epic of Ireland" since the rendition of this project in *Ulysses* is neither national nor epic. Neither was Joyce looking backward for a authenticate restoration of folklore, as "he foresaw the pervasive strategy of modernism: the liberation of a modern sensibility by an ancient myth and the resuscitation of an ancient myth by a modern sensibility."[160] Joyce's attempt at making tradition and modernity coexist was then supposed to produce a reflexion on identity, whether cultural, societal or historical, notably through the role of the citizen as reader of his work.

- Historical mapping of folklore and the "mythical method"

Rita Felski states that "myth is culture masquerading as nature[161]", which is another way to say that myth progressively acquires the status of wisdom inherent to human history, to the point where it becomes a potential referential system. It does however pose many contradictions, since the myth is compared to history, an association difficult to defend. This is one of the many reasons why applying the "mythical method" praised by Eliot would be less problematic for folklore, which inevitably deals not only with historical and mythological material but also focuses on the historical way in which they were carried on. The project of elaborating a narrative of Irish history through folklore thus encompasses all the issues linked with Irish genres used in *Ulysses*. The historical accuracy brought about by folklore in *Ulysses*

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[159] J. Joyce, *Ulysses*, 9: 243.
[160] D. Kiberd, Introduction to *Ulysses*, xxvi.
[161] Cf. Rita Felski, "After Suspicion", in *Profession*, MLA, 2009, 28.

is echoed by geographical accuracy. The preservation of toponymy and topography were essential concepts of the revival movement, even if the geography of Dublin is not presented as optimal for the restoration of folklore inside its sphere. The depiction of Dublin in *Ulysses* is very specific, which was the result of a process of research and empirical experience. Tymoczko argues that:

> In working out his own interest in placelore in Ulysses, however James Joyce did not rely solely on the knowledge that came from his own experience or his father's tales, or the traditional oral forms of Irish placelore studies: he supplemented these traditional dispositions with bookish research.[162]

The way in which folklore may be used to concretize the historical relevance of its use in *Ulysses* is strengthened by Joyce's own endeavour at investigating folklore further as one does with history. On that point, Joyce was then more focusing on an urban object rather than a rural one. Diarmuid Ó Giolláin also underscores the use of geography as a legitimation of folklore's social potential as he "looks at folklorists as nation-builders, who 'map' the nation through the project of intensive folklore-collecting throughout its territory, and who use folklore as a national resource, whether for national history or for the construction of a national high culture."[163] In Joyce's case, the mapping is reduced to a single city, Dublin presented as the city of common people by opposition to the Irish heroes that Joyce enjoys mocking. In doing so, Joyce dislocated the logic of placelore which "was so central to early Irish literature that a separate genre was to be devoted to it, the category called *dindsenchas*, literally placelore."[164] Even if the material, both in geographical reference and in language were essentially non-traditional materials, Tymoczko's proposal of reading *Ulysses* as a *dindsenchas* can be justified by Joyce himself. He manifests his interest to preserve geographical knowledge and local history from extinction as he says: "I want… to give a picture of Dublin so complete that if the city one day suddenly disappeared from the earth it would be reconstructed out of my book."[165] As a result, Joyce's nationalist view appears to be more historical than it is fictional, which means that reinstating Irish genres or literary method is not the ultimate goal of Joyce in *Ulysses*. The ethos of *Ulysses* cannot be reduced to a mere

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[162] M. Tymoczko, *The Irish Ulysses*, 154.
[163] D.Ó Giolláin, *Locating Irish Folklore, Tradition, Modernity, Identity*, 63.
[164] M. Tymoczko, *The Irish Ulysses*, 156.
[165] Frank Budgen, *James Joyce and The Making of "Ulysses"*, OUP, 1972, 67-68.

depiction of a style that is being reinvested in a new context. However, it would seem that Joyce's project aims at the preservation of 1904 Dublin.

Joyce's intertextual references to Irish folklore, at least according to Maria Tymoczko, then seem to have more to do with a historical dimension rather than creating a fictional web of early Irish literature connection. According to her, "lore, or senchas, grounds the narrative in time and space; it historicizes the narrative – a function particularly of genealogical, historical, natural, and geographical lore – thus contributing to the sense of verisimilitude". [166] In other words, through myth, Joyce projects an illusion of reality. If the use of Irish folklore genres is supposed to assert the accuracy of the narrative, Tristan Todorov reminds us of the importance of distinguishing what he calls the "genres historiques" from the "genres théoriques": "on devrait poser d'une part les genres historiques, de l'autre, les genres théoriques. Les premiers résulteraient d'une observation de la réalité littéraire ; les seconds, d'une déduction d'ordre théorique." [167] In other words, the first "genre" resides in the recognition of what has already been seen and studied while the other specifies the opening of possible and theoretical genres by a process of narrative combination and speculations. In *Ulysses*, it would appear that Joyce switches from one genre to the other, by first using literary material and technique that existed even though they had been forgotten and then creating a web of association between these genres. In other words, the qualification of Joyce's approach of folklore as historical through the use of *dindsenchas* for instance, even though it differs from the traditional setting of folklore, is not shocking, at least for the way in which Todorov's may be applied to this reasoning:

> On devrait dire qu'une œuvre manifeste tel genre, non qu'il existe dans cette œuvre. Mais cette relation de manifestation entre l'abstrait et le concret est de nature probabiliste ; autrement dit, il n'y a aucune nécessité qu'une œuvre incarne fidèlement son genre, il n'y en a qu'une probabilité. Ce qui revient à dire qu'aucune observation des œuvres ne peut en rigueur ni confirmer ni infirmer une théorie des genres. [168]

Therefore, *Ulysses* is not historical, folkloristic, romantic, modernist or realist. These are only genres that can be read across the narrative, the same way Tymoczko, using the structure of *The Book of Invasions*, establishes a list of early Irish literature techniques that can be read

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[166] *Ibid*. 152.

[167] Tristan Todorov (1970), *Introduction à la littérature fantastique*, Éditions du Seuil, 18.

[168] Tristan Todorov, *Introduction à la littérature fantastique*, 26.

inside the novel. As a result, considering a historical vision of *Ulysses* would not mean that the novel would have to be historically accurate in terms of content (especially due to the use of mythological references to folklore).

A. Writing history through fiction: a teleological approach of a "Joycean pseudohistory"

At this stage of the thesis, Tymoczko's argumentation regarding the structural inspiration of *The Book of Invasion* in the elaboration of *Ulysses* as mythical correlate for Joyce's fiction about Ireland needs to be addressed in the historical sense of the term. Until then, the object of the discussion was focused around the Irish mythical and folkloristic elements that were brought in the narrative and how they were brought in the narrative in term of genres, stylistic devices but also in terms of intertextual inspirations.

However, another point that needs to be taken into account is the use of history as a teleological way to get a message across the narrative regarding Joyce's use of Irish folklore, an analysis that is all the more justified by the ties that Joyce shares with the emergence of the Irish revival movement. However, as established previously, the agenda of Joyce was quite different from the ones of his contemporaries partaking from the same movement. Joyce's use of folklore is often studied through its political dimension in asserting an Irish identity despite the English cultural sphere in which it was written. What Tymoczko is trying to do in *The Irish Ulysses* is explain that the mythic correlates used serve this political dimension, but in a different way than the other authors from the same movement were doing. Joyce's objective was to explore the roots of Ireland through its already "multicultural" roots hinted at by *The Book of Invasions* narrative frame that present the territory as a place of emigration at first, which is later on furthered by the presentation of the main characters in *Ulysses* such as Leopold Bloom and Molly. However, the history of Ireland itself insofar as a folkloristic view of Ireland is concerned, cannot be secluded from its ties with the mythical universe of folklore and fantastic, which hardly respects the definition of "historicity" [169]of events.

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[169] The term "historicity" here should be understood as both the notions of historical authenticity, which here is present through the reference to *The Book of Invasions* in *Ulysses* but also in the sense of historical actuality, which implies the accurateness and relevance of these historical facts in the present of Joyce's writings.

It becomes thus difficult to establish with precision the role to be attributed to Joyce. The realistic depiction of Dublin and its inhabitants reinforces verisimilitude in the novel which appears to be in contradiction with the fictional essence of the book as a novel mingling different genres inherited from Irish tradition. The final product is thus as much fictional as it is historical and the element that binds these two notions together is folklore, presenting Joyce as a folklorist first who uses the knowledge he acquired in a historical perspective and exploited its potential through fiction. In other words, folklore is not the end of the novel, meaning that the objective was not to explore back folklore and only "revive" the literary past of Ireland. As a result, Joyce goes beyond the movement of literary "revival" by making a work which is made of folklore but which is not meant to be folkloristic. The folklore layered across *Ulysses* has to be understood as a means to an end. Joyce's use of folklore is not to be associated with a praising of the past of Ireland or as a return to the sources of the country, but rather as a representation of this past in order to understand, deconstruct and debunk the present of Ireland and project Irish society into a potential future. What is really interesting is the fact that folklore is invested with a performative role for Joyce. And as it has been established, the ethos conferred to folklore is of a different nature than the one envisaged by revivalists' writers. Joyce uses folklore as a projection into the future and not to stick to the glorious past evoked by the citizen.

In that sense, Joyce's project fits the definition given by Diarmuid Ó Giolláin regarding the folklorist: "It looks at folklorists as nation-builders, who 'map' the nation through the project of intensive folklore-collecting throughout its territory, and who use folklore as a national resource, whether for national history or for the construction of a national high culture."[170]

Presenting folklorist as nation-builders reinforces the agency of folklore, and it is interesting that the notion of "mapping" should be used, especially in the case of the extensive mapping of Dublin put in place in *Ulysses*. It could then also be argued that Joyce goes beyond Yeats on that point. Yeats' main objective was to recollect as many stories as possible taken from folklore in order to adapt them into his own version of romanticism, a movement that already existed across Europe. The lyrical nature of the romantic movement coincided with Yeats' ambition to revalorize the past of Ireland through its characteristic features: folkloric tales, Gaelic and Celtic language and traditions and most of all the pervading use of fantastic and fairy-tale-like structures.

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[170] D. Ó Giolláin, *Locating Irish folklore, Tradition, Modernity, Identity*, 63.

Joyce's objective differs in the sense that he shows how Irish folklore concretizes into the social present of Ireland by ingeniously canalizing the potential of folklore in Dublin, where Yeats sought to rediscover folklore at its source in the countryside. As a matter of fact, Joyce's use of folklore is very reminiscent of Simon J. Bronner's view regarding the establishment of Dundes' conception of folklore studies: "The folklorist, to Dundes, was a scholarly identity that signaled an overarching concern for the study of tradition and emphasized the study of 'text within context', past and present." [171]. Not only is the role of folklorist given the status of an academic process of research but it also crystallizes the echoes of tradition into the present of the text as it is written.

However, the problem stands that fiction is seen as a lie because it is meant to be a representation, and this has been a common belief since Plato who wanted to kick the poets out of the polis, because they were seen as challenging the authority of the philosophers but also as spreading falseness inside the polis. As a result, the issue of truth, especially in the use of historical elements in correlation with a mythical and folkloristic structure, is problematic. In order to get by this obstacle and get to the essence of what Joyce is doing in *Ulysses*, but also what role Joyce plays as the emissary of folkloric knowledge, one may have to approach *Ulysses* through Coleridge's conception of fiction. The "suspension of disbelief" is all the more difficult to achieve in *Ulysses*, since the novel was meant to map Dublin as realistically as possible. And yet, Coleridge's approach would allow the reader to deviate the issue of verisimilitude by acknowledging that *Ulysses* is first of all a fictitious work. One could extend Coleridge's concept in order to set aside the question of likeliness and assimilation with the story of Homer in the *Odyssey*. With these angles of analysis out of the way, *Ulysses* becomes a much richer historical and folkloristic database because the debate around truth does not revolve around the expectation the reader might have regarding historical faithfulness and referential accuracy. As a result, the kind of truth that we should be looking for is more ethical than historical according to Sidney[172], in the sense that the truth is what can be understood by the debate raised, regardless of the accuracy of the historical discourse in fiction. As a consequence, truth for Sidney seems to reside in what is being said. In other words, one should not be focusing on truth as a source in fiction but rather in truth as an endpoint. Sidney's theory allows us to completely overrule the debate on verisimilitude in *Ulysses*, especially through the prism of folkloristic references which do not hold the same value as

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[171] Simon J. Bronner, *The Meaning of Folklore, The Analytical essays of Alan Dundes*, 67.
[172] Cf. Sidney, "On Poetry and History" in *A Defence of Poetry.*

historical facts. Instead, it becomes a way to contemplate the ethical and political range of *Ulysses* through its use of folklore.

1.   Joyce as an historian or as a keeper of history: the use of historical debate

Even if Joyce's approach mimics the historian's approach of facts, events and stories regarding all his research on folklore before he redacted his work, Joyce's classification as an historian does not come without certain issues. The first issue in regards to historical conceptions is surprisingly linked to narratology questions and the subject of this narration, in other words, it is linked to the correlation between form and content. This relationship is also to be questioned, since the presence of historical elements taken from Irish folklore is undeniable and yet not obvious. Thus, in terms of content, *Ulysses* is not an historical book but a book about history, and in terms of form it is a fictitious work dealing with a mythological past of Ireland. In her analysis of the role of Joyce in the interpretation of tradition into fiction, Tymoczko tries to find a correlation between these two antagonistic views: "In these varied ways, then, Joyce fulfills the function of Irish *sensaid* as historian, writing the history of his city and his nation, creating a pseudohistory where it is needed, writing in a form that integrates the historical and the fictitious."[173]

Tymoczko's analysis goes even beyond the ways of the folklorist by presenting Joyce himself as a mythical figure of the folklore he was studying. If Dundes attributed to the folklorist the role of developing folklore as an analytical tool in fiction, Tymoczko's conception gives to Joyce another role, which is the one of keeping and passing on the heritage of the Irish mythos. Many critics commented upon the encyclopedic aspect of *Ulysses*, but as Tymoczko reminds us, the role of the senchaid was both to provide entertainment to the tribe and to safeguard the history of the tribe. Joyce's use of historical and erudite passages often occurs in the shape of lists, as for instance the enumeration of the names of Irish heroes in "Cyclops".[174]

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[173] M. Tymoczko, *The Irish Ulysses*, 171.
[174] See J. Joyce, *Ulysses*, 12: 382-383.

A closer look upon this list of heroes however does question the role of Joyce as an historian. The "Cyclops" chapter introduces the character of the citizen, which is an interesting character insofar as he acts as a foil to the actual conception of nationalism that Joyce tries to convey Joyce praises the European roots of Ireland instead of focusing on a national epic, which is in fact turned into derision throughout the novel. The character of the citizen represents the strongest nationalistic core of Ireland and is invested with a strong sense of secularism and Irish exceptionalism[175]. The list of heroes, supposedly written to promote the iconographic and historical strength of Ireland, is scattered with references to historical characters that have nothing to do with the strict history of Ireland such as Dante, Charlemagne, Cleopatra and even W. Shakespeare, whilst referring to the "catalogue verse" technique[176] .

> Goliath, Horace Wheatley, Thomas Conneff, Peg Woffington, the Village Blacksmith, Captain Moonlight, Captain Boycott, Dante Alighieri, Christopher Columbus, S. Fursa, S. Brendan, Marshal MacMahon, Charlemagne, Theobald Wolfe Tone, the Mother of the Maccabees, the Last of the Mohicans, the Rose of Castile, the Man for Galway, The Man that Broke the Bank at Monte Carlo, The Man in the Gap, The Woman Who Didn't, Benjamin Franklin, Napoleon Bonaparte, John L. Sullivan, Cleopatra, Savourneen Deelish, Julius Caesar, Paracelsus, sir Thomas Lipton, William Tell, Michelangelo Hayes, Muhammad, the Bride of Lammermoor, Peter the Hermit, Peter the Packer, Dark Rosaleen, Patrick W. Shakespeare, Brian Confucius, Murtagh Gutenberg, Patricio Velasquez, Captain Nemo, Tristan and Isolde, the first Prince of Wales, Thomas Cook and Son, the Bold Soldier Boy, Arrah na Pogue, Dick Turpin, Ludwig Beethoven, the Colleen Bawn, Waddler Healy, Angus the Culdee, Dolly Mount, Sidney Parade, Ben Howth, Valentine Greatrakes, Adam and Eve, Arthur Wellesley, Boss Croker, Herodotus, Jack the Giantkiller, Gautama Buddha, Lady Godiva, The Lily of Killarney, Balor of the Evil Eye, the Queen of Sheba, Acky Nagle, Joe Nagle, Alessandro Volta, Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa, Don Philip O'Sullivan Beare. [177]

This has two effects. The first one is linked to the whole mock epic narrative in general because it acts a sort of double-consciousness regarding Irish tradition as Tymoczko

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[175] "No music and no art and no literature worthy of the name. Any civilization they have they stole from us. Tonguetied sons of bastards' ghosts.", *Ulysses*, 12:421.

[176] "This list of '*Irish* heroes and heroines of antiquity' is an example of a specific form of writing: that of a 'catalogue verse' wherein a list of entities is used to show progression, generation or, in this case, commonality. The genre can be traced back to two of Western civilization's canonical works: the genealogical list in the *Book of Genesis* and the list of Trojan War heroes in Homer's *Iliad*." Eugene O'Brien, *The Question of Irish Identity in the Writings of William Butler Yeats and James Joyce*, 235.

[177] J.Joyce, *Ulysses*, 12: 383.

comments by referring to other examples in the narrative[178]. It acts as a parody of certain medieval Irish list, criticized here for their symmetrical aspect at the detriment of the consistency of the list. The second one is that it invests the deliberate integration of these figures inside the Irish narrative with an ethical and political value, introducing the notion of the alterity of Irish identity inside a chapter strongly dominated by the citizen's essentialist and openly nationalistic viewpoint.

The citizen's example, insofar as the use of historical accuracy towards an ethical truth, is questionable. Indeed, by associating different historical figures in a frame where they don't all fit, being called "Irish heroes", is twisting the truthfulness of the past in order to present a modified version in the present, appoint that is discussed Eugene OBrien:

> By placing people who are demonstrably *not* part of 'tribal images of many Irish heroes and heroines of antiquity', in this catalogue, Joyce is reinventing the definitions of Irishness, and by extension, of identity as we know it. He creates, through a protreptic discourse, an *Auseinandersetzung* which brings out the alterity that is central to a negative definition of Irishness as he hopes to express it.[179]

This is why the depiction of Joyce as an historian is questionable, since he is driven by the ethos of deconstructing the vision of Irish society, politics and culture by revalorizing but going beyond both the mythical and historical past of Ireland. Therefore, the objectivity required from the historian as a researcher is not respected. Moreover, Joyce's voice in the text is drowned into the several layers of narration between the different characters, which poses the issue of the trustworthiness of the historical facts evoked.

And yet, the link between Joyce's agenda and his use of history is not contradictory in *Ulysses*, but rather complementary because of the way Joyce uses folklore, without impeding the verisimilitude nor the historicity of the narrative: "Lore, or senchas, grounds the narrative in time and space; it historicizes the narrative – a function particularly of genealogical, historical, natural, and geographical lore – thus contributing to the sense of verisimilitude." [180]

Surprisingly, the folklore helps justify Joyce's role as an historian and thus establish a certain sense of historical authenticity to both his work and his figure, while one could have expected to read the contrary, especially when Tymoczko developed the idea that Joyce uses the pattern of *The Book of Invasions* in order to structure his narrative. It also creates a link between the

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[178] "Joyce's catalogue in 'Ithaca' reads exactly this way; it represents, in fact, an archaic way of preserving knowledge and for this reason can be read as a parody of all modern systems of ordering.", M. Tymoczko, *The Irish Ulysses*, 145-46.

[179] Eugene Obrien, *The Question of Irish Identity in the Writings of William Butler Yeats and James Joyce*, 236.

[180] Maria Tymoczko, *The Irish Ulysses*, 152.

past and present by investing the figure of Joyce as senchaid with the motivation to pass on antique knowledge and protect it from disappearance through his narrative.

However, it would be a mistake to interpret Joyce's work as propagandist fiction, since the logic of his writing is not about the replacement of the societal system in place by a former version of "Irishness" but rather about the acceptance of the "Irishness" as it is and has always been since the mythological conquests and invasion of Ireland. By passing on this knowledge and reestablishing the importance of Irish history in accordance to Joyce's role as *senchaid*, Joyce becomes more an emissary than an activist historian or writer in that matter, which is another marker of distinction from other writers of the Irish revival movement.

But through the character of Stephen, Joyce is also denying his ties to history, as Stephen declares: "History, Stephen said, is a nightmare from which I am trying to awake."[181] This sentence can be interpreted in many ways. It is first meant to portray Stephen's unenthusiastic position as a teacher, a remark that his interlocutor Mr. Deasy makes to him:

–I foresee, Mr Deasy said, that you will not remain here very long at this work. You were not born to be a teacher, I think. Perhaps I am wrong.
–A learner rather, Stephen said.
And here what will you learn more?
Mr Deasy shook his head.
–Who knows? He said. To learn one must be humble. But life is the great teacher.[182]

In that situation, Stephen may be read as Joyce in his research work in folklore, literature, history and other domains before writing *Ulysses*. This statement, reminiscent of Socrates "I know that I know nothing" also emphasizes the humbleness of the knowledge passed on in the novel as not something invested with historical authority but rather a knowledge that would have been tested by life's experience. It is also an admittance that both history and historians do not hold all the knowledge of the world. Stephen's point is also made in opposition to Mr Deasy's view of history which is linked to God's plans: "The ways of the Creator are not our ways, Mr Deasy said. All history moves towards one great goal, the manifestation of God."[183] Stephen, by refusing this divine teleological approach of history, is thus presenting history as something imperfect that can be, and has to be, rethought under a new prism.

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[181] J.Joyce, *Ulysses*, 2: 42.
[182] *Ibid*. 2: 43.
[183] *Ibid*. 2: 42.

2.   "Rewriting" Irish pseudohistory through fiction

If the Irish *fili* was the guardian of the knowledge of the past, history primarily took the form of tales and anecdotes. Therefore, not only was it affected by the teller himself but also by the variety of tales that were used in order to describe it. The point made here is that the history of *The Book of Invasions* on which Tymoczko commented was as much fictitious as it was historical.

> The Book of Invasions contains the pseudo-history of Ireland: the traditional history of Ireland before 432 (the usual date for the coming of Patrick and the beginning of written history of Ireland). Its prototype was probably composed in the seventh century to fill in the gap for Ireland in such standard classical histories as those by Origen and Eusebius. Though the story apparently was originally restricted to the account of the history of the Milesians, supposed ancestors of the Goidelic stock in Ireland, it was opened up at an early period to include bits of cosmogony and old myth.[184]

The Book of Invasions, from which Tymoczko draws the Irish mythical structure of *Ulysses*, is itself a construction that was first aimed at the description of a part of Irish history. Later on, cosmological and mythological elements became attached to it. And soon, the book became the matrix of Irish history and a reference in this domain for the story of the Milesians that would soon be studied in academic spheres by the 19th century. It is important to bear in mind that *The Book of Invasions* only portrays one part of the histories of invasions and conquests of Ireland, whether considered as historical or mythological. Maria Tymoczko proposes in that sense a short summary of the main phases of conquest in Ireland:

> There are six invasions of Ireland. The first two are wiped out and essentially leave no survivors. The third, fourth and fifth-those of Nemed, the Fir Bolg, and the Tuatha De Danann respectively come from Scythian stock. The Nemedian invasion is eventually abandoned because of opposition and difficulties from the Fomorians, a chaotic and oppressive race of marauders. The Nemedian invasion is succeeded by that of the Fir Bolgs, and they in turn are overcome by the Tuatha De Danann. Though these three groups are related genealogically, their characters and experiences differ widely. The Fir Bolg are subjugated and become laborers in Greece, while the Tuatha De Danann become skilled in lore, crafts and hidden knowledge. The Tuatha De Danann become allies of the Athenians before departing for Ireland. Meanwhile the Goidels, genealogically related to their predecessors in Ireland, settle in Egypt at the time of the Pharaohs. They become sympathizers of Moses and aid the Israelites in their flight from Egypt. Moses is grateful for their help and offers the Goidels a place in the Promised Land should they care to accompany the Hebrews. However, the Goidels decline Moses's offer. After some years the Goidels are expelled from Egypt in revenge for aiding the Israelites. They undertake various travels (including a second

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sojourn in Egypt during which their leader Mil marries the Pharaoh's daughter). Eventually they go to Spain where they make conquests, settle down, take wives. While in Spain the Goidels see Ireland from a high tower and decide to go there. After various struggles with their predecessors in Ireland (the Tuatha De Danann), the Goidels (or Milesians) defeat the Tuatha De and arrange a settlement with them-the Milesians get the upper half of Ireland, and the Tuatha De get the half below ground. [185]

If Tymoczko's analysis in *The Irish Ulysses* focalizes on the use of the structure provided by *The Book of Invasions*, she recognizes that Joyce's inspiration and readings of historical material went beyond this book. Moreover, she stresses that Joyce chose to develop some typologies of *The Book of Invasions*, rather than preserving the whole structure. As Todorov showed, *Ulysses*, such as any other literary work, is not beholden by the categorization into the genres it tries to use. In other words, the material of folklore, even as it was extracted from a historical context, becomes malleable in fiction. The tales narrated by the *fili* were not exempted, across posterity, from being reshaped when political change occurred and when new interpretations of the past were necessary. Of course, folklore was even more malleable, due to the oral tradition that qualified its essence. Diarmuid Ó Giolláin commented on the way in which folklore, as a representative of tradition, was so important for the notion of social authority:

> There is a prescriptive and authoritative aspect to tradition and in the same way tradition legitimizes authority. The criteria for authenticity in tradition, according to David Gross, are the linking of a minimum of three generations, the carrying of spiritual or moral prestige and the communication of a sense of continuity between past and present.[186]

The passage from history into pseudo-history resides in this "communication of a sense of continuity". Pseudohistory is another genre of (Irish) historical literature from which *The Book of Invasions* is the perfect example. Maria Tymoczko notes that "the mass of floating mythological and historical *senchas* came to be organized around the pseudohistorical time line of *The Book of Invasions*."[187] Such an association can be justified by oral history. First, the variants of history were the privilege of the learned classes. Then Irish poets turned to folk audiences (as did Yeats[188]). Therefore, folk storytellers became the bearers of Irish traditional history, to the point where even wonder tales in Irish folklore were historicized. In other

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[185] *Ibid.* 219.

[186] D.Ó Giolláin, *Location Irish Folklore, Tradition, Modernity, Identity*, 8.

[187] M. Tymoczko, *The Irish Ulysses*, 168.

[188] Cf. W. B. Yeats (1993*), Writings on Irish Folklore, Legend and Myth*, edited with an introduction and notes by Robert Welch, Penguin Books ltd.

words, the relationship that has been established so far between folklore and history is not natural, but is the result of a process of assimilation through years of oral exchanges, to the point where a myth became historicized. *Ulysses*, in that sense, is the result of these multi-layered historical references. Therefore, *Ulysses* is a work that uses historical references and material that are deeply linked with folklore, without using a historical method in its approach. In attempting at preserving historical tradition, Joyce is contributing to the historization of Irish myths and folklore in *Ulysses*, as they are being used as both folkloristic and historical references in the narrative.

Moreover, Tymoczko also notices that this particular way of narrating history from Joyce was also influenced by his own personal preferences. To the question "why Joyce would choose a Jew character as the hero of an Irish nationalist text?", she answers:

> Joyce's choice of typologies from *The Book of Invasions*, particularly his decision to make the main character in *Ulysses* a Jew, was not entirely arbitrary or simply literary. The question of national traits was of great interest to him. He felt personal affinities to the Jews, and he felt that in general the Irish and the Jews were similar and their destinies alike. [189]

In other words, not only Joyce is not binding himself to the rules of historical narration or traditional European literature, but he also presents some of his own visions as historical materials for his characters. Another example can be found in *Ulysses* in the Martello Tower episode. The symbol of the tower, as explored earlier, was meant to be read as a multi-symbolical object of Irish folklore that echoed aspects of *The Book of Invasions*. Joyce actually went to spend six nights in the Martello Tower in 1904, and the tower is now still known as the James Joyce tower and Museum in Sandycove, Dublin. Ó Giolláin goes as far as to describe this process as a form of globalization of folklore and tradition, notably through museums that are a way to preserve these elements: "Inevitably, a loss of identity with place and a loss of historical continuity ensue. The golden age of museums and of folklore-collecting are examples of attempts to re-establish continuity through the re-articulation of significant cultural elements in new forms ('the invention of tradition')."[190] This is a point that is arguable in the case of Joyce. Joyce's project was not to establish continuity in historical folklore but rather to propose his own narrative version of it that would be as much inspired from the texts he read than from his personal experience as an Irish citizen.

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[189] M. Tymoczko, « Symbolic Structure in 'Ulysses' from Early Irish Literature, 224.
[190] D. Ó Giolláin, *Locating Irish Folklore, Tradition, Modernity, Identity*, 171.

Therefore, the tower could also be read as a reference to the Martello Towers which were a set of small defensive forts that were built during the 19th century across the British Empire. Now they are considered as historical monuments. Most of these towers were built around the Irish coastline but the most famous one is the Martello tower around Sandycove, near *Dun Laoghaire* in which James Joyce actually lived for a while in the company of a student in medicine called Oliver St. John who became a renowned surgeon, politician and writer. And the fact that Stephen is sharing a room in the tower with a medical student named Buck Mulligan is no coincidence. The tower has now become a museum dedicated to Joyce. In a sense, Joyce is investing his own experience with Irish history as a part of the "synthesis of all Irish myth" Kiberd was talking about. It is another way for him to symbolically rehabilitate the Irish folklore into the present of his writing, thus introducing the question of the modernisation of Irish folklore as a key element for the interpretation of the use of folklore in the text.

Emerson Rogers also emphasizes the possible analogies to the towers with the *Book of Leinster* which narrates the story of the Fomorians[191] against the *Nemedians*. These stories refer to a more mythological past of Ireland. The tower in question is the *Tuatha* which is located in the *Brugh* (*Tir na Nog*) which stand for the Irish happy Otherworld presented in legends as a place of plentiness and sustenance where no one ever died. It is interesting to note that the question of an Irish Otherworld was not present straightaway in the first folkloric texts. The multi-referentiality of the tower makes a good example of the way in which myth, both in its cultural and historical shape, is not only quoted by Joyce but reinvested and transformed.

In a sense, one could even argue that *Ulysses* went beyond the myth it proposed, as fiction soon replaced the historical aspect of the novel's structure. The strongest manifestation of this aspect is the instauration of Bloomsday on June 16th, which was not only the date of his first outing with Joyce's wife to-be, Nora Barnacle but also the day on which the novel was written. Also, the celebration was named after Leopold Bloom, one of the main protagonists of the novel. The day is composed of many cultural activities and also stages a pilgrimage of people disguised as Bloom retracing his itinerary across Dublin. Therefore, Joyce's novel became its own reference and became an historical object. It also, in a way, helped to reshape the identity of Ireland, at least at the cultural level.

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[191] The Fomorians were a race of goat-headed giants that were supposed to represent the evil principle of Irish myth. In that sense, they were opposed to the Tuathan Dé Danann that stood for the good principles of Ireland.

B. Folklore and nationalism, from failure of the traditional to the proposal of a new identity

Even if the way in which the interpretation of *Ulysses* may have escaped or overgrown Joyce's intentions, the argumentative logic that has been followed so far is that Joyce's text is written in binary dynamics of opposition. First, it was an opposition to the Irish revival project to reinstate Irish folklore. Ó Giolláin also underscores the futility of such a project: "Folklore was important to the Gaelic League because the spoken Irish language was important. The League wished to restore the language, but Irish had more or less ceased to be a vehicle for literature and had been a predominantly peasant language for two centuries."[192] Then, it became an opposition to language itself, having failed to become the medium of oral literary tradition. All these elements combined together hint at the fact that Joyce refutes the vision of Anglo-Irish revivalists. In other words, Joyce's text is tainted with political and nationalistic dimensions by its form. It is an affirmation of "Irishness" but also a formal rejection of the participation in English poetic, as he writes with Irish techniques. As a result, there is another system to be understood in Joyce's text, which is the system of alterity. Joyce's project is to shed light on the insufficiency of one model, whether historical, social or literary, in order to introduce his own vision, which is, in a sense, a very argumentative approach of the use of folklore by Joyce: "By voicing an alternative Irishness, Yeats and Joyce were taking an ethical stand by introducing an alterity into Irishness as it was defined in terms of 'sameness', as well as offering an implied critique of essentialist conceptions of identity."[193] This summarizes accurately the way in which Joyce's depiction of the past is used as a way to promote a form of "Irishness" insofar as it differs from what has been proposed so far.

1. The failure of the "old" and traditional Ireland in *Ulysses*

It should be mentioned that even though the novel ends up with the assertive "Yes" of Molly, opening up the possibilities for the future of Ireland, the novel starts with an idea of decay with the figure of the hag or the old crone. Tymoczko presents the figure of the hag as

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[192] D. Ó Giolláin, *Locating Irish Folklore, Tradition, Modernity, Identity*, 123.
[193] Eugene Obrien, *The Question of Irish Identity in the Writings of William Butler Yeats and James Joyce*, 122.

to be opposed with the Sovereignty figure of Molly. Sovereignty figures are able to metamorphose themselves from an old crone into a beautiful maiden, a transformation that fails to happen to the old woman trying to sell her milk at the Martello Tower. Milk is invested with a realistic value as well in *Ulysses*, as the most common alimentation of Irish peasantry. Milk is also invested with a magical dimension, as Irish goddesses have a special dominion on cows, an animal linked to the earth and the territory they represent. For example, the goddess *Táin Bó Cúailgne* disguised herself as an old woman milking a cow to later offer a drink to the hero *Cuchulainn*.

However, the way in which Joyce depicts her interaction with Buck and Stephen at the Martello Tower shows that this aspect of Irish peasantry (represented by the symbolism of milk) is beyond reviving. The old woman does not speak Gaelic:

–Do you understand what he says? Stephen asked her.
–Is it French you are talking, sir? The old woman said to Haines.
Haines spoke to her again a longer speech, confidently.
–Irish, Buck Mulligan said. Is there Gaelic on you?
–I thought it was Irish, she said, by the sound of it. Are you from west, sir?
–I am an Englishman, Haines answered.
–He's English, Buck Mulligan said, and he thinks we ought to speak Irish in Ireland.
–Sure we ought to, the old woman said, and I'm ashamed I don't speak the language myself. I'm told it's a grand language by them that knows.[194]

Her first failure is thus linguistic since she is unable to communicate in the language of her nationality, exposing the fact that the peasant tradition of Ireland is disappearing. She is also presented as asexual and infertile, the same way as the landscape is being described, especially the sea: "Isn't the sea what Aly calls it: a grey sweet mother? The snotgreen tea. The scrotumtightening sea."[195] The contrast with Molly's blooming references to her love for flowers is notable here. The old woman also fails to sell appropriately her milk to Stephen, Haines and Mulligan as he only gets one florin from it. Also, she pours a milk that is "not hers". In other words, this old crone is incapable of providing nourishment, which means that she is bound to decay, without any hope of renewal. Caitriona Moloney also proposes a vision of the figure of the hag:

> The hag is a deeply conflicted figure in all cultures, but she is especially so in Ireland. While, on the one hand, she is clearly the site of male displaced abjection, on the other she is a powerful

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[194] J. Joyce, *Ulysses*, 1: 16.
[195] *Ibid*. 1: 3.

creature who creates poetry, foretells the future, and controls male actions. At times, she is transformed into a beautiful young girl whose love confers sovereignty.[196]

Therefore, the old crone at the beginning of *Ulysses* is unable to transform back into a Sovereignty goddess. This has a symbolical meaning, stating that peasant Ireland traditions are doomed to decay and extinction. It could be said that the old crone represents the part of peasantry that was not able to shift from tradition to modernity as Ó Giolláin describes it:

> The modernization of agriculture, the concomitant destruction of the traditional agrarian world, industrialization and urbanization – through internal and international migration – happened on an unprecedented scale. Millions of ordinary people could no longer be defined within a traditional social structure and they began to participate in politics for the first time. The changing relationship between the two "ordering systems" which have co-ordinated everyday life in the modern era – agrarian popular culture in late feudal society and urban popular culture in the age of industrial capitalism – did not simply evolve the replacement of the former by the latter.[197]

The old crone's failure to assimilate to the structure of *Ulysses* is symbolical of the impossibility of what she represents to hold any political representativeness in Joyce's vision for Ireland. Yet, Ó Giolláin does suggest that the dynamics between tradition and modernity were not to be approached as the replacement of one by the other, but rather as a sort of assimilation.

However, as the critic John Eglinton puts it, the question stands as to "how a 'pastoral' movement could be in any sense national since the interest of the whole nation lay in extirpating the conditions which produced it."[198] This is the whole point of Joyce's project as he uses the structure of *The Book of Invasions*, especially through his characters, to signify the European aspect of Irish identity. Not only does it open up the borders of the country to a reinstatement of folklore as a universal (at least European) human characteristic, but it also shows that the use of folklore as a way of reinforcing the insularity of Ireland is not a good option either.

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[196] Caitriona Moloney, "The Hag of 'Ulysses': The 'Poor Old Woman', Cathleen Ni Houlihan, and the Phallic Mother", in *James Joyce Quarterly*, 34: ½, Joyce's Women, Fall 1996- Winter 1997, pp. 103-120, 106.
[197] D. Ó Giolláin, *Locating Irish Folklore, Tradition, Modernity, Identity*, 166.
[198] D. Kiberd, *Introduction to Ulysses*, lxxiii.

Joyce's "prophetic" vision conferred by his status of *fili* can also be extended a little further, as the social and cultural dynamics evoked in *Ulysses* through his depiction of nationalism as imprinted by folklore is extremely reminiscent of still current problematics. For instance, the citizen's xenophobic views are already completely countered by Joyce, as the "strangers" are blamed for all the afflictions the citizen deemed happened to Ireland: "The strangers, says the citizen. Our own fault, we let them come in. We brought them. The adulteress and her paramour brought the Saxon Robbers here."[199] In this sentence, according to Joyce, the citizen is accusing the fact that the arrival of strangers in Ireland brought about the denaturalization of Irish identity. On the contrary, Joyce tends to prove that Irish identity cannot be considered outside of the conquest of Ireland by other cultural influences.

2.   The creation of a "Negative identity" of Ireland

Therefore, according to the work of Ó Giolláin, folklore and tradition were in a prime position in order to define a notion of identity for Ireland as a community and later on as a nation. Joyce himself asks the question of the definition of nation in the "Cyclops" chapter: "But do you know what a nation means?", a question to which Bloom provides a very simplistic answer: "A nation? says Bloom. A nation is the same people living in the same place." Bloom's definition of "nation" is based on ideas of assimilation in order to achieve a "sameness". As Bloom's definition is mocked by John Wyse and the citizen, he stands corrected and specifies "Or also in different places." Nation is thus a definition that is strongly influenced by a sense of place. However, if Bloom is a character that was supposed to represent one part of the early immigrations to Ireland, his nation is justified as being Ireland by the right of birth:

"–What is your nation if I may ask, says the citizen.
–Ireland, says Bloom. I was born here. Ireland."[200]

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[199] J. Joyce, *Ulysses*, 12: 420.
[200] All the excerpts of dialogue presented are from *Ulysses*, 12: 430.

Eugene OBrien used the theories of Derrida and Adorno in order to explain the relevance of the emigrant point of view in relation to folklore:

> In Adorno's dialectical notion of cultural criticism, the emigrant while culturally rooted in Ireland, achieves a quasi-transcendent position with respect to Irishness through the spatial and temporal separations of the emigrant experience. Epistemologically, emigration allows for an Irishness that is at the same time different from itself, and from an ethical standpoint, notions of alterity are included within this negative definition of Irishness. Hence, ethically, emigration defines identity in terms of a community that is both present and absent; emigration allows for the irrepressible desire for a community to form 'but also for it to know its limit – and for its limit to be its *opening*' (Derrida: 1995; 355) [201]

Obrien argues that literature is to be presented as the perfect vector in order to propose a critique of national identities through Adorno's negative dialectics:

> Theodore Adorno's negative dialectics in the following way. Adorno's use of negative dialectics entailed the critique of reason by reason; of instrumental reason by a more generous type of reason. The negative aspect of his theory meant that what is being done is a process of immanent, self-reflexive critique of the genre within which the critique itself is situated.[202]

In other words, Joyce is proposing a definition of "Irishness" by relying on elements that would not have been thought to be used as a factor for a definition of national identity. Not only does it go against the trend of the revivalists, but it also suggests that in order to think the identity of Ireland, one should look outward and not inward. Joyce' reasoning is at the antipodes of the revivalists, since he praises that a definition of Ireland should be based on self-reflexivity rather than self-preservation. For that reason, indeed, it could be argued that Joyce' vision of an identity in Ireland is a negative identity. This idea also goes against the notion of a repetitive pattern of myth from which sameness was to be drawn, since myth is a well of symbolic patterns that are to be universally recognized. This is especially prevalent in *Ulysses* through the use of the Greek mythos. However, the vision of literature proposed by OBrien, inspired from Adorno, tends to emancipate literature and its use of mythological and folklorist structure from the confinement to repetitive patterns:

> Hence, literature, as negative epistemology, is ideally placed to proffer a critique of other aspects of literature, and of literary uses of language. It can be both creative of, and critical of, the use or misuse of myth and language as offering transcendental significations of identity as sameness and

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[201] Eugene OBrien, *The Question of Irish Identity in the Writings of William Butler Yeats and James Joyce*, 225.
[202] *Ibid*. 7.

presence. As part of the process of suggesting myths and legends which stress the purity of the tribe and race, literature is perfectly placed to offer a cultural critique of such notions, in terms of what Adorno has termed a dialectical criticism. [203]

If the medium of literature is presented as so important in order to provide a counter-reflection on identity and the presentation of essentialist doctrines, Alan Dundes shows that even folklore is a mirror of culture meant to convey a distorted image of the self:

> For folklore is autobiographical ethnography—that is, it is a people's own description of themselves. This is in contrast to other descriptions of that people, descriptions made by social workers, sociologists, political scientists or anthropologists. It may be that there is distortion in a people's self-image as it is expressed in that people's songs, proverbs, and the like, but one must admit that there is often as much, if not more, distortion in the supposedly objective descriptions made by professional social scientists who in fact see the culture under study through the culturally relative and culturally determined categories of their own culture. Moreover, even the distortion in a people's self-image can tell the trained observer something about that people's values. Out of all the elements of culture, which ones are singled out for distortion, for special emphasis? [204]

Therefore, Joyce makes use of this distorted image provided by folklore. The mirror image may be interpreted as the all-encompassing symbol of *Ulysses*, as Stephen declares that "It is a symbol of Irish art. The cracked looking-glass of a servant."[205] The cracked mirror thus stands for the broken image of Ireland as a nation, shattered by the disillusion of the revivalist movement in the negotiation of folklore in modernity. Irish art is as much linguistically shattered between an emphasis on its linguistic contradiction than it is culturally. If Eliot wanted to make Joyce the healer of contemporaneity through myth by a structural redefinition of social and literary norms, this definition was approached by Joyce as an anti-definition. In that sense, Obrien warns his readers about the permeability of such an approach, since the negative identity could easily be switched with the identity that would have to be elaborated:

> He makes the point that the notion of identity is central to all previous philosophical projects: as he puts it to 'think is to identify'; however, the difficulty here is that heterogeneity can be the loser in such an epistemology. This means that our view of contradiction can often be defined by the difference of the other from our own perspective on identity, with contradiction becoming 'nonidentity under the aspect of identity', and the thought of unity becoming the measure of heterogeneity (Adorno: 1973; 5). [206]

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[203] *Ibid*. 9.
[204] A. Dundes, "Folklore as Mirror of Culture", 55.
[205] J. Joyce, *Ulysses*, 1 : 6.
[206] E. Obrien, *The Question of Irish Identity in the Writings of William Butler Yeats and James Joyce*, 10.

In the case of Joyce, it would appear that heterogeneity is the ultimate ambition of Joyce's demonstration. Eventually, even the ethical dimension of Joyce's text is put at stake in this analysis of negative identity, since Joyce proposes, alongside Yeats according to OBrien, a renegotiation of the terms of this definition as part of an ethical project:

> In this context, the identity that is being put forward in the writings of Yeats and Joyce, has little enough to do with the socio-political present, the 'real' Ireland of their respective times. Instead, their texts refuse to 'reply for one's thought or writing to constituted powers' and hence, according to Derrida, they participate in one of literature's primary responsibilities, namely that their 'concept is linked to the to-come [*à-venir*, *cf. avenir*, future], to the experience of a promise engaged, that is always an endless promise' (Derrida: 1992a; 38). [207]

Indeed, the most prominent figure of folkloristic identity in the novel closes the novel in the ethical promise of a new blooming of Ireland, whether cultural, social, linguistic or political. By exploring the contraries however, it could be argued that Joyce is not only proposing a negative identity of Ireland, but a retroactive one. The retro-activeness of his use of folklore is not to be understood as a return to ancient traditions in modernity, but rather as the invitation into a critical thinking as to the roots of folklore itself. In fact, Joyce's text is openly written as an anti-monologic presentation of Irish identity:

> After an instructive discourse by the chairman, a magnificent oration eloquently and forcibly expressed, a most interesting and instructive discussion of the usual high standard of excellence ensued as to the desirability of the revivability of the ancient games and sports of our ancient Panceltic forefathers. The wellknown and highly respected worker in the cause of our old tongue, Mr Joseph M'Carthy Hynes, made an eloquent appeal for the resuscitation of the ancient Gaelic sports and pastimes, practised morning and evening by Finn MacCool, as calculated to revive the best traditions of manly strength and prowess handed down to us from ancient ages. [208]

This passage underscores adequately the self-referentiality of Irish identity that leaves no room for alterity in its definition, and which is completely bound to the past. It encompasses all the aspects that Joyce fought off in *Ulysses* by introducing Leopold and Molly Bloom and Stephen Dedalus:

> In contradistinction to this neo-revivalist perspective, much of the rest of the book posits a negative notion of Irish identity; the book as a whole features Leopold Bloom, a Hungarian Jewish

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[207] *Ibid*. 19.
[208] J. Joyce, *Ulysses*, 12: 410-11.

hero, Molly Bloom, a British heroine born in Gibraltar, and Stephen Dedalus, Irish, but whose name certainly betokens a pluralist vision of identity in itself, as we have seen. [209]

The "manly strength" that was praised has been replaced by Molly's Sovereignty features and Bloom's androgyny. But most importantly, the leadership of the country has been taken up by Bloom himself in parodic fashion in the "Circe" episode, as he announces a new era for Ireland: "My beloved subjects, a new era is about to dawn. I, Bloom, tell you verily it is even now at hand. Yea, on my word of a Bloom, ye shall ere long enter into the golden city which is to be, the new Bloomusalem in the Nova Hibernia of the future."[210] Even if the presentation of Bloom as the new mayor of Dublin was supposed to be ironic, his arrival to the top would bring about a complete transformation of the city that would symbolize a place of alterity. However, this new era of Ireland can only be achieved by the consumption of the nation's previous identity first. As Molly fed on the vital strength of her partners through sexual intercourse, Bloom's character as a Jew feeds on the vitality of the nation, and his feast in *Ulysses* marks the end of an era. Mr Deasy announces this turn of events in "Nestor":

"Mark my words, Mr Dedalus, he said. England is in the hands of the jews. In all the highest places: her finance, her press. And they are the signs of a nation's decay. Wherever they gather they eat up the nation's vital strength. I have seen it coming these years. As sure as we are standing here the jew merchants are already at their work of destruction. Old England is dying."[211]

Therefore, by presenting immigrant characters as the protagonists of *Ulysses*, Joyce is vouching for the destruction of the Old England that would be replaced by the fruit of the union between Molly and Leopold Bloom. Joyce also shows that, for the character of Leopold Bloom to be considered Irish, one would have to consider a complete redefinition of "Irishness" by including all the aspects of alterity that contradicted the way in which nationalists and revivalists saw Ireland's identity and history. However, the fact that the triumph of Bloom in becoming mayor is an hallucination, the requirement for this transformation in the narrative is not achieved, but is only presented as a phantasmagorical opportunity. Eugene Obrien argues then that it is in this absence that alterity is rendered possible:

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[209] E. OBrien, *The Question of Irish Identity in the Writings of William Butler Yeats and James Joyce*, 241.
[210] J. Joyce, *Ulysses*, 15: 606.
[211] *Ibid*. 2: 41.

> Bloom's reply transforms the essentialism of MacMorris into the ethics of the future. His notion of Irishness is necessarily negative in that it must leave *gnomonic* space for an Irishness, like his own, which is to come. Such Irishness is indefinable as a set of fixed presences; rather is it a series of traces, traces like the spectre of Shakespeare in the writings of Joyce. The Joycean notion of a community is Levinasian in that at its centre is 'an empty place, the anarchy of an absence at the heart of a community' (Critchley: 1992; 228).[212]

Therefore, "For Bloom to be Irish, then Irishness must be redefinable in such a way as to include him."[213] Joyce in *Ulysses* opened up this possibility without really fulfilling it. The promotion of "Bloomusalem" would mean the ruin of Irish identity revolving only around the resources of folklore.

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[212] E. Obrien, *The Question of Irish Identity in the Writings of William Butler Yeats and James Joyce*, 249.
[213] *Ibid*. 249.

Conclusion:

Eventually, as Ó Giolláin said, there is no ready-made concept of folklore to be explored, because folklore is a piecemeal of different elements that are interpreted and artificially put together as a tool of analysis, which is the approach of the folklorist: "There is no concept of folklore; it is 'neither noticed, recognized or emphasized'. The folklore of the community is discovered by strangers and the self-consciousness brought in by the 'external discoverers of folklore', inevitably changes the way in which the community sees its own culture and heritage."[214] In that sense, Joyce inscribes himself as a figure of the *fili*, since he reminds his readership of the multi-cultural aspect of folklore. His refusal of a determinist, naturalistic and essentialist view of folklore nourishes the structure of his work. Eventually, Joyce writes his own version of a "negative folklore" which implies a denaturalization of the folklore concept in order to re-naturalize the definition of Ireland on the side of alterity rather than sameness.

An analysis of folklore in the work of *Ulysses* not only provides a critical depth as to its relevance in the domains of art and literature, but it also underscores its relevance in terms of historical, national, cultural and political symbolism. In other words, the study of folklore as a literary object leads to the conclusion that folklore goes beyond the work inside which it was used, becoming the technique of its analysis. Even if *Ulysses* is not the work that brought about the emergence of folklorist studies as a response to the way in which folklore was treated by revivalists, it certainly offers a profound field of analysis for folklorists that never ceases to surprise. The reason behind this never-ending proposal of connections to folklore in *Ulysses* is due to the fact that folklore is already used as a critical tool in *Ulysses* rather than a mere ornamental decoration, as Eliot suggested. By analysing *Ulysses* under the angle of the "mythical method" combined with the "folklorist method", it can easily be proved that Joyce was the visionary Tymoczko and others claimed him to be. Paradoxically, his labelling as a modernist author can be credited to the way in which he uses old material and revolutionizes the general vision of style. These new conceptions that were to be linked with an attempt at restructuring contemporaneity were the elements that made him a "modernist" in the first place.

Declan Kiberd goes even further as he comments Joyce's clairvoyance as to how literature should be used:

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[214] D. Ó Giolláin, *Locating Irish Folklore, Tradition, Modernity, Identity*, 174.

> What all this proves is clear enough: the best literature is an act of profound criticism, and the finest criticism is literature in the highest sense. Far from sterilizing the creative art, a self-reflexive mind like Joyce's enriches and illuminates it. After Joyce, criticism has grown more and more solemn, even as literature has learned increasingly to laugh at itself. In consequence, *Ulysses* is one of the few works to survive the transition from modern to post-modern without diminishment. Modernism asserted the magnificent self-sufficiency of art, and so does *Ulysses* by its comprehensive self-criticism; but post-modernism asserts the liberating insignificance of art, and so does *Ulysses* by its comprehensive self-mockery.[215]

There are several points of interest in what Kiberd asserts in this comment. The strongest one is the fact that he recognizes the idea that *Ulysses* is to be approached under the lights of its posterity rather than by its contextual atmosphere. The way in which Joyce used folklore and mythological structures influenced the critical tradition. Tymoczko helped to show that this criticism was to be linked with Irish folklore. The folkloristic structure is both the object that is laughed at in *Ulysses* (the "revival" aesthetics of dead Irish language and traditions) but also the "scientific discovery" that proposes a self-reflexion on its own material. Not only does folklore pass the test of modernity, but it also, according to Kiberd, fits the post-modernist aesthetics. Analysing Irish folklore as a sub-reading in Joyce's work shows that identifying folklore was not enough in order to approach *Ulysses*. Joyce brought Irish folklore in *Ulysses* so that it might be questioned, analysed and eventually reinvented rather than resurrected, by depriving it from the pedestal on which the Irish literary revival movement had put it.

The critique of language for Joyce does not only stop at the transition from oral to written. It also includes the visual aspect of folklore. Declan Kiberd's comments on Joyce's awareness of the progress made in his time insofar as visual arts, such as cinema, are concerned: "He foresaw that the written word was doomed to decline in an age of electronic communications (which he himself had helped to usher in by opening the first cinemas in Dublin)."[216] Joyce's visionary aspect as a *fili* not only extends to the communication of folklore but also to the visualization of folklore. Maria DiBattista specifies the way in which Joyce brough this art to Dublin:

> In October of 1909, Joyce approached the four owners of two thriving cinema houses in Trieste with information to barter: the name of a city of 500,000 inhabitants that as yet had no movie theatre (JJ 300). The city, of course, was Dublin. The film exhibitors were intrigued and agreed to

[215] D. Kiberd, *Introduction to Ulysses*, xxxiv.
[216] *Ibid*. xxxv.

terms. Joyce left for Dublin on 18 October. By Monday 20 December 1909 the Volta, 45 Mary Street, was ready to project its first programme. [217]

In that sense, Joyce's experiments with style were often associated with the way in which cinematography portrayed reality. Therefore, it could be argued, following Tymoczko's logic, that Joyce is re-defining his own version of the senchaid that would include visual foresight as one of the qualities of the modern artist:

> Joyce, one of the sighted elect, believed that the artist's mission was not to stimulate or preserve sight, but to achieve and proclaim vision. Whether cinema, which enfolds us in a darkness riddled with rays of light, can induce us to look not only with, but beyond the eye, is the challenge posed by Joyce's epiphanic modernism.

Joyce's vision of cinema can complete Joyce's project that has been established so far in going beyond the definition of nationalism. Joyce's project was not to display folklore but to see beyond folklore. The visual dimension that Joyce wishes to express shows that Joyce considers the movement of folklore, rather than proposing a museography of folkloristic tales and myths. Folklore was to be thought in movement.

There have been some cinematographic works inspired from *Ulysses*. The first one, called *Ulysses*, was released in 1967 by the American director Joseph Strick who proposed what could be called an "update" of *Ulysses* into a motion picture. The movie did not seek much for innovations and remained very close to the novel in terms of structure. However, the first filmic adaptation of *Ulysses* does question the legacy of the folklore suffusing *Ulysses* inside the movie. When it came to the choice of the elements that had to be included in the movie, it would appear that style prevailed over explicit inclusions of folklore: "Another area where an adaptation of *Ulysses* needs to be selective is the great variety of themes Joyce explores in this novel. One dimension that is completely missing from the films is the mythological underpinnings of *Ulysses*."[218] Strick's version was extremely adamant at attempting to render the different styles of writing used in the chapters of the novel, such as internal monologue that is often portrayed through the use of the voiceover technique (in the "Circe" corresponding sequence and in Molly's monologue). The text, and thus the word of Joyce is also preserved.

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[217] Maria DiBattista, "Cinema", in *James Joyce in Context*, John McCourt, 355.

[218] Maximilian Feldner, "Bringing Bloom to the Screen: Challenges and Possibilities of Adapting James Joyce's 'Ulysses' ", in *AAA: Arbeiten aus Anglistik und Amerikanistik* 40: 1 / 2, Narr Francke Attempto Verlag GmbH. KG, 2015, 204.

Ruth Pelmutter's take on the way in which the complexity of Joyce's technique and structure are adapted into cinema, hints at the fact that these textual references are allegorical rather than direct:

> In Ulysses, the intersection of thoughts and feelings with a city's life manifests "the bond between subject and others." Dublin, in all its social stability and spatial integrity, is invaded by poetic musings, chaotic inner speech, a highly allusive system of cross-references and leitmotifs, and the wrenching of traditional narrative modes. The monumental rhetorical schema is built up through metaphor/metonymy drifts, and through shifts in narrative reflectors (discourse shifts).[219]

In the case of the cinematographic interpretation of *Ulysses*, the question of the referentiality of folklore is drowned into that of style. It once again shows that *Ulysses*, whether as a novel or a film, was never meant to be a documentary of folklore, despite the encyclopedic aspect of its content. Folklore is not a subject but an object, an object of style, of study or interpretation. Joyce's ethics was focused on the way in which folklore was to be transmitted and not on what folklore would be transmitted.

It should also be noted that the first attempt at a cinematographic version of *Ulysses* is not Irish, which shouldn't come as a surprise, since the first publication of some of the novel's pages were to be found in an American magazine. Ruth Barton provides an interesting insight on where Irish cinema was headed, emphasizing its undeniable ties with history and nostalgia. What she calls "heritage film" or "heritage cinema" is the fact that Irish cinema seems to be revolving around historical issues of the country's past, often staging narratives inspired by the same events and characters. Of course, this historical nostalgia in dealing with "unresolved" issues of Irish historical identity is to be linked with the return to an "imaginary past" of Ireland, notably inspired by a glorious Celtic mythological past. She notes:

> The appeal to an imaginary past is obviously linked to a universal mood of nostalgia. Again, in Ireland, this is complicated by our relationship with our colonial past. Whilst on the one hand, neo-Georgian architecture is industriously assimilating and de-politicising the remnants of the colonial past, cinema and other popular arts are engaged in disinterring the de Valera age and re-presenting it as a time of halcyon innocence. [220]

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[219] Ruth Perlmutter, "Joyce and Cinema", in *boundary 2*, 6: 2, DUP, Winter 1978, 483.

[220] Ruth Barton, From History to Heritage Some Recent Developments in Irish Cinema, in The Irish Review, 21, CUP, Autumn-Winter 1997, 43.

Joyce's novel, and its cinematographic version of 1967, do not present this aspect, which may be why the novel could not have been adapted first by an Irish director. However, folkloristic elements that link the novel with folklore are stripped from the scenario of the movie. For instance, the old crone of the Martello Tower never appears, no more than the chamber pot scene of Molly. Joyce's humor in *Ulysses* that he borrowed from Irish tradition is rendered by cinematographic adaptation of stylistics rather than imagery. In the movie, folklore is put even more in the background than it was in the novel. On the contrary, Strick decides to focus on the obvious which is the realism displayed by Joyce in his depiction of Dublin and of everyday moments. The Martello Tower in the movie is thus deprived of its folkloric potential. A debate could be raised as to the reason why folklore was set aside. It may have been because it was deemed unnecessary in rendering the scenes of *Ulysses*, or because it was too difficult to transfer it from oral and written to visual form. Or maybe was it because folklore would have to be the focus of the movie, instead of a pattern to be unveiled?

In any case, it is clear that the cinematographic interpretation of *Ulysses* is intrinsically linked with the notion of postmodernism, especially through the eyes of Linda Hutcheon who proposes her own definition of postmodernism cinema and its relation to history:

> Postmodernism's aims are ... to make us look to the past from the acknowledged distance of the present, a distance which inevitably conditions our ability to know that past. The ironies produced by that distancing are what prevent the postmodern from being nostalgic: there is no desire to return to that past as a time of simpler or more worthy values. These ironies also prevent antiquarianism: there is no value to the past in and of itself. It is the conjunction of the present and the past that is intended to make us question - analyze, try to understand - both how we make and make sense of our culture. [221]

This is exactly what is at stake in *Ulysses*, which is why Joyce's text does not indulge in any sense of nostalgia. On the contrary, it opens up the possibility of folklore to other mediums such as visual arts. However, folkloric studies have proven that folklore is a very difficult object to deal with, notably because the very existence of the concept itself is to be questioned. And if folklore was not meant to be written, as Joyce showed (or at least not in English), it was not meant to be depicted either. Nor is it supposed to be approached as a structured concept. If Joyce attempted to use folklore as a structure for *Ulysses*, it was to show how inefficient the common definition of folklore was to define contemporaneity.

Juwen Zhang goes even further in his definition of "filmic folklore":

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[221] Linda Hutcheon, *A Poetics of Postmodernism, History, Theory, Fiction* (1988), 230.

> Filmic folklore, by definition, is an imagined folklore that exists only in films, and is a folklore or folklore-like performance that is represented, created, or hybridized in fictional film. Taken out of the original (social, historic, geographic, and cultural) contexts, it functions in similar ways to that of folkloristic films. Filmic folklore imposes or reinforces certain stereotypes (ideologies), and signifies certain meanings identified and consumed (as "the truth") by a certain group of people. The folklore in filmic folklore may appear as a scene, an action, an event, or a storyline (plot), and in verbal or non-verbal form. [222]

Zhang's conception shows that the folklore used in the novel could never be adapted into cinema for several reasons. First, folklore is a term in constant redefinition since it is narrated in pieces. In other words, folklore is never a complete concept and depends on the elements that the teller wishes to mention or silence. Secondly, folklore in cinema is denaturalized because the film invents its own folklore, and as it has been said, Joyce also used the folkloristic material he had in order to create his own version. In Zhang's definitions, the plausible appearances of folklore are not far off from the manifestation of folklore in written narratives.

Therefore, the relation of folklore to truth is also questioned, and where cinema reinforces the use of folklore as a way to assert a meaning, Joyce shows that folklore is a tool of distancing, whether temporal, geographical or critical. Joyce not only inserts folklore in his work he makes use of it as a "the cracked looking-glass of a servant"[223], from which each piece spread across the narrative is able to reconstruct an idea of Irish identity. Through folklore, Joyce shows that the broken mirror, as a symbol of Irish art, can be the image of folklore as well, in the sense that it gives an incomplete and reflected vision of Ireland.

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[222] Zhang Juwen, 2005, "Filmic Folklore and Chinese Cultural Identity", in *Western Folk-lore* 64: 3 /4, 67.
[223] J. Joyce, *Ulysses*, 1 : 6.

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