Denisa Kera

**The difference between psychoanalyses wake and the Finnegans Wake in the wake of new media**

There is a special link between contemporary multimedia and Finnegans Wake. Both challenge our experience with texts via hypertext system and they also transform these traditional forms of communication into a type of futuristic and at times even prophetic experience. Simultaneous chaos and reflexivity mark this experience. We encounter FW as a narrative chaos with constant allusions to writing and reading processes; similarly the Net lacks traditional coordinates as beginning, middle or end but it is still intelligible and provides orientation. These structural similarities open an interesting question whether FW interprets new media or vice versa. For example the description of the Net as a Work in Progress is quite adequate. Conversely, in the case of FW new media media already become a unique interpretational tool: metaphors like “joyceware” (in comparison to software) or ”hypermnesiac machine” that were coined by Jacques Derrida are maybe the best known. The comparisons of FW to a machine, computer, virtual reality etc. is clarifying although not indispensable. New media implement the explicite experience of non/readability that characterize FW. They explicate the fact that understanding is no longer a matter of linear, teleological processes and that the constant flux of information, meanings, texts is the new paradigm of knowledge. But the need for readability still haunts contemporary interpretations of FW as well as in the case of many other critical topics. Very popular seem to be the psychoanalytic interpretations and especially Lacanian interpretations of almost everything. We consider important the critique of psychoanalytic interpretations because they reveal some general questions of communication, conveying meaning or message etc. We will try to open the dialog between these two very different approaches (media and psychoanalysis) on the example of the Lacanian interpretation of FW. The ultimate question is that of readability or non/readability of FW, books or any kind of medium. We are advocating the position that medium is the message in the sense that there is no transparency, no above or under meanings or goals.
The Lacanian Fake and the Victory of Phallusophist

Easyathic Phallusaphist... anarchistically respectful of the liberties of the noninvasive individual
FW, 72

The type of relation between Joyce and Lacan can only be the relation between an author and a reader. To say that Joyce anticipates Lacan in some ideas\(^1\) or that he ”succeeded in generating enormous authority without violating Lacan`s strictures”\(^2\) is to privilege one, Lacanian model of reading or, more explicit: “to tickle the speculative to all but opine” (FW,50). The impertinent aspect of this \textit{violation of the Joyce text} is also that the course of influence goes from Joyce to Lacan and not vice versa. These diachronic details of the relation were already developed in Sheldon Brivic’s book\(^3\) while we will concentrate on more relevant reasons for which the interpretations of Lacanian kind are inappropriate. The most important of them seems to be the \textit{radically transformed relation between the reader and the author in Finnegans Wake}. This transformation simply reduces everything and everyone to words and styles, challenging any interpretation or identity. Paraphrasing Derrida’s famous statement, we can say that the readers are inhabiting Joyce’s memory and that they are inscribed already in the book. This does not happen because Joyce is a deity but simply because of the language (languages) that defines us. We are inscribed in the text as language performers and we are performed exclusively through the language. Therefore, the extreme use of language (languages) in Finnegans Wake disallows any reader to become a cognitive performer that will complete the text. In fact, the reader is nothing but a witness of the authors (Joyce’s) disintegration by way of disintegrating his characters, styles, languages, which is what the reader apprehends as a continual innovation or destruction of the language.

\(^1\) Sheldon Brivic, The Oher End of Thought, p.5: Joyce was helped toward anticipating Lacan`s ideas of being and sensing as loops of language by a number of thinkers with related conceptions.

\(^2\) Sheldon Brivic, The Other End of Thought, p.17: Joyce`s maneuver of projecting himself in and beyond his work as a linguistic movement (with a personal rhythm) succeeds in generating enormous authority \textit{without violating} Lacan`s strictures.

\(^3\) Sheldon Brivic, The Other End of Thought, p.18-21.
We are trying to prove on Lacan the initial thesis that Joyce’s text cannot be explained in terms of some reader or subsumed under theories (Lacan is the paradigmatic case of such endeavor in recent years). In the preceding paragraph we explained what is the position of a reader in Finnegans Wake and now will continue to develop more concrete justifications of the critique of ”Lacanism”. Joyce cannot be interpreted in Lacanian terms since he is using some of Lacan’s prominent terms, topics and strategies (phallus, subject, problems with the identity and translation of theological discourse) in more abundant and interesting way. From the perspective of Finnegans Wake the Lacanian theories are nothing but a privilege of a few words (The Other, object a, the subject) over the whole discourse or even language. This privilege of a few words cannot make more explicit something in Joyce’s writings for there is nothing implicit or waiting to be discovered in Joyce’s endless ”translation game”. We dismiss all these interpretations that are using Lacan simply by saying that they degrade Finnegans Wake to Lacanian Fake. The difference between the Wake and the Fake is then reflected in the use of language by Joyce and Lacan and is analogous to the difference between the semiotic (deconstructionist, structuralist) and ontological (antistructuralist, psychoanalytic) ambitions. Most psychoanalytical terms are still ontological, even when they avoid essentialism, in the sense that the terms are all connected with the pivot, the fundamental topic that will explain the rest of the ”(textual) world”. Also, whereas Finnegans Wake equalizes the processes of reading, writing and listening, so that they all occur simultaneously in the text to contrast or challenge each other, the Lacanian Fake still conceives the written text as a medium for conveying ideas about important psychoanalytical topics (the identity and evolution of the subject, feminine identity etc.). For Joyce psychoanalysis is only one of the many sociolects that he uses, or better plays with and experiments in Finnegans Wake. We can deliberate on several examples from Finnegans Wake the involvement of psychoanalytical terms by Joyce. The important psychoanalytic term “consciousness”, the whole circus of ego, his desires, memories and identities, or the strange architecture of sub/consciousness were deconstructed in the puns like: ”in that limbopool which was his subnecuousness”\footnote{FW, p.224: So that Glugg, the poor one, in that limbopool which was his subnecuousness he could scares of all knotknow whither his morder had bourst a blabber or if the vogalstones that hit his tympan was that mearly his skoll missed her.} or ”reconnoitering through his semisubconscous”\footnote{FW, p.224: So that Glugg, the poor one, in that limbopool which was his subnecuousness he could scares of all knotknow whither his morder had bourst a blabber or if the vogalstones that hit his tympan was that mearly his skoll missed her.}. The psychoanalytic
theories about the early experiences and traumas are called "Me dramas" and the Lacanian super-
term desire become a simple "engorge" (Lacanian translators into English can be inspired by
Joyce):

Me dramas, O’Loughlins, has come through! Now let the centuple celves of my engorge as
Micholas de Cusack calls them, - of all of whose I in my hereinafter of course by recourse
demission me – by the coincidence of their contraries reamalgamerge in that identity of
undiscernibles...⁶

The problem of identity in Joyce is simple word play with abbreviations and capital
letters or, as we could see from the last quotation, the confusion of adverbs and pronouns (of all
of whose I in my hereinafter of course by recourse demission me). HCE or ALP as characters
represent the usage of names that typically designates institutions, that part of our social reality
that is completely antiindividual and that reduce identity of the individual to a number in some
system. These abbreviations are closer to the written than to the spoken language and they proffer
a kind of metalanguage; first we must recognise the words beyond the letters to understand the
meaning, but this is impossible in Finnegans Wake because the abbreviations represent different
words every time they occur. Words and names in Finnegans Wake are not about identity,
meaning or truth. The difference between meaning and nonsense, between truth and non-truth
becomes relative since every word or name can be easily reduced to "meaningless” letters
(something like epitaphs of the word), to the system of signs that does not serve identity, meaning
or truth but serves difference. One of the most provoking passages in this respect is about
(psycho)analysts and their "woman theories” (their anschluss about her whosebefore and his
whereafter and how she was lost away away in the fern and how he was founded deep on deep in
anear):

⁵ FW.p. 72: That more than considerably unpleasant bullocky before he rang off drunkishly pegged a few glatt
stones... at the wicket in support of his words that he was not guilphly but, after he had so slaunga vollayed,
reconnoitring through his semisubconscious the seriousness of what he might have done had he really polished off
his terrible intentions finally caused him to change the bawling...

⁶ FW.p.49.
And so they went on, the fourbottle men, the analysts, unguam and nunguam and lunguam again, their anschluss about her whosebefore and his whereafters and how she was lost away in the fern and how he was founded deep on deep in anear, and the rustlings and the twitterings and the rasplings and the snapings and the sighings and the paintings and the ukukuings and the (hist!) the springapartings and the (hast!) the bybyscuttlings and all the scandalmunkers and the pure craigs that used to be (up) that time living and lying and rating and riding round Nunsbelly Square.  

Psychoanalysis poses questions and gives answers, Joyce promotes experiments. The first exploits the language while Joyce explores it. The exploitation of language in psychoanalysis has the form of an attempt to find something beyond the language, something inexpressible that rules and transcends the system of signification. Joyce manipulates, mutates and invents the language within the framework of tradition and, what is more important, these experiments have only linguistic aims. The revolution is made possible only through tradition and Joyce - the inventor of the language - uses the traditional knowledge of the code in the readers mind to transform it into a new form of signification. For these reasons we call it "translation game" because it describes the relation between different languages or systems of signification and not a "language game" describing the relation between language and what is not language (the form of life, world etc.). The important term phallus in Lacan shows us how it is easy to transcend from talking about language and text to talking about things (to ontology), from sign to organ. Lacan uses the term phallus in his well-known article "The meaning of the phallus" in which he questions the status of the phallus in the psychoanalytic account of sexuality and conjoins this concept with the symbolic order that determines human subjectivity. He places the phallus within the symbolic order as a signifier within language. The analogy between phallus and signifier helps him to explain the concept of desire as a fundamental incompleteness of the subject, which characterises also the subject's relation to language. The phallus then is an abbreviation for various experiences of misrecognition in early childhood (problems with the castration of the mother - phallic mother,
problems with the castration of the girl, etc.) that should show us that we cannot aim at being whole:

For the phallus is a signifier, a signifier whose function in the intrasubjective economy of analysis might lift the veil from that which it served in the mysteries. For it is to this signified that is given to designate as a whole the effect of there being a signified, inasmuch as it conditions any such effect by its presence as signifier.8

The term phallus occasionally has a meaning that is not dependent upon other words but becomes a central concept that can even explain our use of language (the use of language is then like coitus – search for oneness between things and words, the emergence of original, transparent meaning):

The phallus is the privileged signifier of that mark where the share of the logos is wedded to the advent of desire. One might say that this signifier is chosen as what standout as most easily seized upon in the real of sexual copulation, and also as the most symbolic in the literal (typographical) sense of the term, since it is the equivalent in that relation of the (logical) copula. One might also say that by virtue of its turgidity, it is the image of the vital flow as it is transmitted in generation.9

This cannot happen in Joyce where the term phallus is one of the many terms that can show the "translation game” in which the written and the spoken, the words and things are easily interchanged through the language self-parody. For these reasons we named Joyce Phallosophist since he is sophist in the case of every term, he does not privilege anyone of them. The passage that describes HCE being erotically aroused is a good example of his "sophistry” with the term phallus:

He was braising red in the toast face with loven soft eyebulbs his kiddledrum steeming and rattling like roasties in my mockamill.10

9 J.Lacan, The Meaning of the Phallus, in "Feminine Sexuality”, p.82.
10 FW, p.531.
The word "kiddledrum" can first be understood as a modification of "kettle drum" were "kiddle" calls to mind kettle, kittle (child) and kitty cat and drum denotes a round cylinder with flat ends of various types (musical drums, storage drums for liquids). These association with other words would mean nothing if there were not very strong syntagmatic connections, the context:

Thus the "kiddledrum" in question clearly becomes the male sex organ through its syntagmatic relationships. In this signification, nearly all of the paradigmatic associations have a place. A "kiddle" may be drummed out of the instrument (kettle drum); a kitty (pussy) is rhythmically beaten by persistent repetition; the cylindrical drum is a storage place for H.C.E.'s liquid (sperm)... Paraplasmic integrity is also achieved in this invention, for although it may be argued that "kiddledrum" is simply a modification of "kettle drum", its signification is not at all substantive for "kettle drum". Instead, "kittledrum" rivals "penis", a clear case in the Saussurian sense, of a paraplasm

The most striking example of the differences between Joyce and Lacan is their relation to theological discourse. Whereas Lacan is using theology, especially some mystics to explain his "deep" concept of jouissance and feminine sexuality as well as the connection between the concept of jouissance and significance, Joyce is using religious phrases as a common knowledge suitable for satire. Joyce does not "make psychological use of theological ideas" but he does counterfeit the religious as well as the psychological language to create satiric effects.

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12 Sheldon Brivic, The Other End of Thought, p.17.