

FW 306.13 - 308.04

Titles, authors, facts

by

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In this passage we find basically a long sequence of captions, or titles, linked to authors or characters shown on the left margin. The temptation to limit oneself and to be satisfied in finding the correspondences between each title and its specific character is great, but that would be indeed a reductive approach -- in fact Kev's (author of the left margin notes) approach. Instead of investigating the possible meaning and function of the events expressed by the titles, Kev, the scholar, prefers to make known to the world his academic erudition.

I am of the opinion and shall try to prove that the titles refer to specific (although often not easily discernible) circumstances related to Joyce's biography. It is not a coincidence that the acrostic of the named subjects (**a**rt, **l**iterature, **p**olitics, **e**conomy, **c**hemistry, **h**umanity) form ALP and ECH (mirror image of HCE), the primal couple fronting each other.



And it is not a coincidence that the acrostic of Dolph's right margin note

ENTER THE
COP AND
HOW.
SECURES
GUBERNANT
URBIS
TERROREM.

is also very indicative: **ECH'S GUT** (a sort of an inside out **HCE**).

In my tentative interpretation I shall group the titles into consistent existential blocks related to Joyce's specific biographical events, showing that the sequence follows a well defined chronological course. And I will touch only cursorily the correspondences with the authors, since they have already been treated at large by McHugh and Fweet.

I. School, religious education, career expectancies

1. **Duty, the daughter of discipline** [CATO]
2. **The Great Fire at the South City Markets** [NERO]
3. **Belief in Giants and the Banshee** [SAUL]
4. **A Place for Everything and Everything in its Place**[ARISTOTLE]
5. **Is the Pen Mightier than the Sword?** [JULIUS CAESAR]
6. **A Successful Career in the Civil Service** [PERICLES]

The first six titles deal with young Joyce's education, scholastic and religious; and the expected plans for his future. What stands out clearly is the opposition between a suggested conduct and an independent choice.

[1] invites to duty and discipline.

[2] is a rebellious act (against Christian teachings → Nero), with possible painful consequences (whipping [great fire] on the buttocks [south city markets]).

[3] alludes to religious beliefs (Saul - soul), in fact a bunch of fantastic legends, superseded by

[4] which is not obedience (to stay where one is commanded to), but the rational approach of a free philosophical mind.

In **[5]** we find the young man who decides to become a writer, convinced that culture may change the world more than the sword (violence and constriction) can do. A choice that is opposed to

[6] a bourgeois and more comfortable career in the civil service, the one possibly expected by his family and his social milieu.

II: The emergence of sexual drives

7. **The Voice of Nature in the Forest** [OVID]

8. **Your Favorite Hero or Heroine** [ADAM,EVE]

9. **On the Benefits of Recreation** [DOMITIAN]

10. **If Standing Stones Could Speak** [EDIPUS]

11. **Devotion to the Feast of the Indulgence of Portiuncula**
[SOCRATES]

Here we can find relatively explicit references to the emergence of sexual drives and the young man's psychological approach to it.

[7] is the physiological impulse.

[8] the psychological attitude to find a male example to emulate (hero) and a female object of desire (heroine). The reference to

Adam (father) and Eve (mother) is probably an anticipation of the Oedipus complex.

[9] alludes to sexual gratification, both masturbation and copulation;

[10] to unmentionable acts or incest phantasies.

[11] hints at the young man's sense of guilt and his wish to get plenary indulgence for his sins. Although it would be only a temporary repentance, since the Indulgence of the Portiuncola was given only on a specific day. (*The Porziuncola Indulgence could at first be gained only in the Porziuncola chapel between the afternoon of 1 August and sunset of 2 August --WP*)

III. Hesitancy and flight to Europe

12. **The Dublin Metropolitan Police Sports at Ballsbridge** [AJAX]

13. **Describe in Homely Anglian Monosyllables the Wreck of the Hesperus** [HOMER]

14. **What Morals, if any, can be drawn from Diarmuid and Grania?** [MARCUS AURELIUS]

15. **Do you Approve of our Existing Parliamentary System?** [ALCIBIADES]

These four titles are not so easily interpreted and need some elucidations. The *Dublin Metropolitan Police* team



became the “World Champions” of Tug-of-War by overcoming the Liverpool Police at **Ballsbridge** during the August Bank Holiday in 1908. In our case what is important is the reference to "*tug-of-war*", thus the contrasting forces inside Joyce's soul: the centrifugal drive to leave Dublin and its centripetal counter-drive.

[12] is thus Joyce's hesitancy and indecision leading him on the verge of folly (Ajax).

[13] poses indeed many interpretive problems. The relation between "The Wreck of the Hesperus" and Homer and the meaning of "Homely Anglian Monosyllables" are quite cryptic. Longfellow's poem talks about a sailor, who, by his temerity and foolhardiness, causes the death of his daughter, drowned in a wreck. Now this may be a possible reference to the episode of Joyce's and Nora's flight to Europe. Joyce would be the temerarious captain who persuades the young girl (with her hesitant monosyllabic “yes” and “no”) to sail with him "*more uxorio*" (common-law marriage), causing thus the **wreck** of her reputation. The reference to Homer could hint at the Calypso episode of the Odyssey and to Ulysses/Joyce leaving the island of Ogygia (which Strabo and Plutarch located in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean - and Ireland is in the Atlantic Ocean, though not in the middle of it!).

[14] underlines the *more uxorio* flight and the scandal it gave vent to.

[15] describes the reaction of Joyce's countrymen who condemn his moral transgression and his defying attitude towards his country's civil laws. The reference to Alcibiades seems a clear image of the "*ostracized*" Joyce.

IV. Portrait of the artist as a Bohemian

16. **The Uses and Abuses of Insects** [LUCRETIUS]

17. **A Visit to Guinness' Brewery** [NOAH]

18. **Clubs** [PLATO]

19. **Advantages of the Penny Post** [HORACE]

20. **When is a Pun not a Pun?** [ISAAC]

21. **Is the Co-Education of Animus and Anima Wholly Desirable?**
[TIRESIAS]

22. **What Happened at Clontarf?** [MARIUS]

These titles refer more or less openly to Joyce's bohemian life in Europe.

[16] alludes probably to debauchery and resulting venereal diseases;

[17] to the frequent visitations of taverns and drunkenness;

[18] to discussions about love and sexual behavior (Plato's Symposium);

[19] to Joyce's many letters and mail exchanges with friends, possibly with Pound, since the Penny Post had a *uniform rate of one old penny for delivery of letters and packets weighing up to one pound* [WP]. And if we consider the dichotomy Shem the *Penman* vs. Shaun the *Post* we may find mail exchanges with his brother Stanislaus, definitely a Shaunian type. And the "*advantage*" may hint at the frequent requests of small sums of money to relieve his indigence.

[20] is quite ambiguous. There is a clear reference to the first riddle of the universe (*when is a man not a man*); but "pun" is pronounced like Triestine "pan" (bread); thus "puns" (Joyce's writing style) don't bring home "bread". In conclusion: a "joker" who does not procure bread for his family is not a man. The reference to Isaac may hint at the blindness of a world unable to tell who's who.

[21] in a certain sense underlines Joyce's domestic problems resulting from the *cohabitation* with Nora and their different "education". But there is of course a clear reference to C. G. Jung's psychology and his alchemical symbolism. The co-education of Animus and Anima may hint at the "coniunctio" of Rex and Regina

CONIVNCTIO SIVE

Coitus.



in view of the attainment of the Magnum Opus (Great Work). The reference to Tiresias overturns Isaac's blindness. He is the "blind seer" who foretells the formation (co-education) of the Great Work-in-Progress.

At this stage [22] would seem to be out of context. It is well known what happened at Clontarf. The Vikings were thrown back from Dublin by the Irish natives under Brian Boru's command (with a reference to Marius who threw back the barbarians from the Roman borders). But how does it fit into Joyce's biography? That may be a polemic hint at Joyce's lack of interest for his country's political events. He is the artist who does not care about what is happening around him (a common criticism Joyce had to face.) It's even possible that Clontarf alludes to the Great War and the defeat of the Huns.

V. Finnegans Wake: conception and birth.

23. **Since our Brother Johnathan Signed the Pledge** [DIOGENES]

24. **or the Meditations of Two Young Spinsters** [PROCNE, PHILOMELA]

25. **Why we all Love our Little Lord Mayor** [ABRAHAM]

26. **Hengler's Circus Entertainment** [NESTOR]

27. **On Thrift** [CINCINNATUS]

28. **The Kettle-Griffith-Moynihan Scheme for a New Electricity Supply** [LEONIDAS]

29. **Travelling in the Olden Times** [JACOB]

30. **American Lake Poetry** [THEOCRITUS]

31. **The Strangest Dream that was ever Halfdreamt** [JOSEPH]

This group of titles deal basically with Joyce's engagement in his literary efforts.

[23] refers to Diogenes, who, as we know, carried a lamp in the daytime looking for an honest man (like Stephen/Joyce who devoted himself to authenticity and truth): that's his *pledge*. The reference to *Brother Johnathan*, a fictional character linked to the American war for Independence from Great Britain, may be a hint at Joyce's efforts in getting rid of the English language and conditioning. But his "pledge" is directly connected with

[24], where the two young spinsters are probably Sylvia Beach and Harriet Shaw Weaver, his two benefactresses. They are in fact those who in

[25] manifest their esteem and consideration towards him and look at him as the *Little Lord* of Frances Hodgson Burnett's novel. He is their "little god" who, at last, will have his due praise and the acknowledgment of his "nobility". There is though something tricky in the reference to Abraham. Leaving aside McHugh's suggestion of a Dublin Mayor which does not fit my scheme I'd rather see in Abraham the "patriarch", the father of many nations. But a nation is a "language", thus our Abraham is the father of many languages, with obvious connections with the many languages of *Finnegans Wake*.

[26] underlines this reading, introducing FW's Patriarch HCE, pointing to Joyce both as an entertainer (clown) and as a "teacher" (Nestor) giving lessons (public and private) in order to make ends meet.

[27] informs us that his employment is not enough to make a decent living. An economic situation worsened by his eye problems and surgeries, hinted at in

[28] where the *electricity supply* may be a metaphor for

"light/sight". The reference to *Leonidas* is subtle. The Spartan general built a "dam" against the Persians; a "dam" usually needed for hydroelectric power stations (although in the projected hydroelectric scheme for Dublin there wouldn't have been any dams.)

[29] probably refers to Joyce's wanderings throughout Old Europe and its glorious antiquity, its myths and its culture, that play such an important role in FW.

[30] is more complicated. There is of course the obvious acrostic **ALP**, balancing the **HCE** of [26], pointing to the fourth book of FW, where ALP has in fact the leading role and closes (temporarily) the book begun by HCE. A book looked at superciliously or/and condescendingly by the academic world, like the *American* Lake Poetry which was considered a poor imitation of the more noble *English* Lake Poetry.

And [31] seems indeed to be an explicit allusion to Finnegans Wake. What is to be remarked is that this title ends with a period, not with a comma as the other titles do (with the exception of those with question marks). We might see in this the conclusion of an existential "period".

VI. Facing public hostility.

32. **Circumspection** [FABIUS]

33. **Our Allies the Hills** [SAMSON]

34. **Are Parnellites Just towards Henry Tudor?** [CAIN]

This group of titles deal with the public hostility Joyce had to face.

[33] is kind of subtle. McHugh informs us that '*our allies the hills*' was a saying of De Valera when 'on the run', thus underscoring Joyce's circumspect proceedings and his need of a "social shelter" in his confrontation with a "Philistine world" (reference to Samson).

[A far-fetched interpretation: *hills* are *mounds* - and if we read mounds as French "*mondes*" we might see in the "*allies*" the French

"*Revue des deux mondes*" (often cited in FW) which looked benevolently at Joyce's literary experiments.]

[34] is indeed kind of thorny. The relation between Parnell (Charles Stewart) and Henry Tudor is well known. This last was the commander of the ill-famed Black and Tans, an army of auxiliaries who fought Irish nationalists. Some of these auxiliaries were themselves Irish, who thus fought their brothers, which justifies the reference to Cain. Now Joyce, not being a nationalist, was probably considered a "traitor", like an Irish Black-Tan. But he is not a traitor, that's sure; so he asks his Parnellite countrymen why are they treating him like that? Are they "just" towards their brother? The brother image is highlighted by the fact that *Henry Tudor Parnell* was a brother of Charles Stewart.

VII. Financial straits

35. **Tell a Friend in a Chatty Letter the Fable of the Grasshopper and the Ant** [ESOP]

36. **Santa Claus** [PROMETHEUS]

37. **The Shame of Slumdom** [LOT]

38. **The Roman Pontiffs** [POMPEIUS MAGNUS]

and the Orthodox Churches [MILTIADES STRATEGOS]

39. **The Thirty Hour Week** [SOLON]

40. **Compare the Fistic Styles of Jimmy Wilde and Jack Sharkey** [CASTOR, POLLUX]

41. **How to Understand the Deaf** [DIONYSIUS]

42. **Should Ladies learn Music or Mathematics?** [SAPPHO]

This section describes Joyce's economic and financial straits during the years of FW's composition.

The friend of [35] is probably Harriet Shaw Weaver, who was quite aware of his "grasshopper like" prodigality. There are though a couple of tricky hidden allusions. The "chatty letter" seems to point

to Lady Chatterly, thus an amused reference to a lady who certainly was not of the Chatterly kind. But there is also a vaguely misogynist touch, where the "feminine chatter" takes the place of a more serious approach.

[36] seems to state that his demands have been taken into consideration and money (Santa Claus gifts) sent to him .

[37] is a clear proof that he has kept squandering that money as usual in his vicious life, with Lot who hints at incest and debauchery (Sodom).

[38] is quite indicative since it displays the alternation between temporary magnificence (pomp : Pompeius Magnus : Italian "*pompa magna*": grand style : the splendor of the corrupt Roman Church) and penury: the simplicity of the original (orthodox) Church. The reference to *Miltiades Strategos* is perhaps an ironic hint at the survival strategies Joyce had to elaborate and, since Miltiades was the winner at Marathon, an allusion to his flights from creditors.

[39] seems to be a reference to a proposed bill of cutting work week to 30 hours (as a measure against unemployment) in the America of the Great Depression (1933). That could be one further hint at Joyce's financial straits. Or even a possible lack of interest for his work and a dramatically reduced time spent on it.

[40] shows how Joyce had to make use of all his ability and toughness (Jimmy Wilde style) to front much larger opponents (like Jack Sharkey); but apparently without success, since Sharkey won the match.

**Aggressiveness of American Com-
pletely Baffles the Little
Welshman.**

In [41] we see Joyce trying to understand and speak the language of a world deaf and unable to recognize his worth. A compromise in order to establish a sort of dialogue with a deaf academic society.

The deafness of that world is probably mirrored by

[42] where we may find again polemic and misogynist hints at Joyce's benefactress (H.S. Weaver) who had started to change her mind about him, her "evaluations" (mathematics) gaining the upper hand over "artistic sensitivity", the melody (music) of art.

VIII. Invitation to repentance

43. **Glory be to Saint Patrick!** [MOSES]

44. **What is to be found in a Dustheap** [JOB]

45. **The Value of Circumstantial Evidence** [CATILINA]

46. **Should Spelling?** [CADMUS]

47. **Outcasts in India** [EZEKIEL]

48. **Collecting Pewter** [SOLOMON]

49. **Eu** [THEMISTOCLES]

50. **Proper and Regular Diet Necessity For** [VITELLIUS]

51. **If You Do It Do It Now.** [DARIUS]

52. **Delays are Dangerous.** [XENOPHON]

The final group of titles is particularly interesting because it shows a reversal of perspective. The vantage point is no more that of Joyce's, but the one of the righteous, virtuous, orthodox world. A world inside which Joyce seems to be an alien.

[43] with its praise to Saint Patrick invites Joyce to recognize and repossess his Irish pride, to come back to the "promised land" of Moses.

[44] invites Joyce to to cleanse himself from the dust that besmears his authentic soul. Like Job's friends lamented him, but thought that his disgraces were the just punishment of his faults, so Joyce's friends impute his precarious state to his questionable behaviour.

[45] with its reference to Catilina underlines Joyce's anti patriotic attitude, which he should dismiss immediately, lest his friends lose their patience. His faults being evident.

[46] is the enumeration (spelling) of his faults (note that "should" has homophony with German "*Schuld*" : guilt).

[47] shows the consequences of Joyce's sins. He has become an outcast, like an Indian Dalit, an *untouchable*. The reference to Ezechiel points out Joyce's predicament:

Ezekiel 33:10

Therefore, O thou son of man, speak unto the house of Israel; Thus ye speak, saying, If our transgressions and our sins be upon us, and we pine away in them, how should we then live?

[48] describes Joyce as a beggar collecting coins in his tin cup. The reference to Solomon is interesting. McHugh suggests a parallel with "King Solomon mines". Thus vile "pewter" instead of gold. In alchemical symbolism: the baseness of *prima materia* instead of the *philosophical stone*, the gold of the wise.

The "Eu" of [49] is the wretch's lamentation. The miserable one who, like Themistocles, has been *ostracized*. McHugh's suggestion that Eu is the place in Normandy where Lawrence O' Tool was buried is a further remark on the concept of "displacement" (out of his own country).

[50] points to the need of contrition, penitence, temperance, a pious return to the road of salvation and a promise (sincere!) to walk the line.

[51] invites Joyce to act promptly.

[52] remarks how dangerous delays can be. The reference to Xenophon and his "*Anabasis*" is enlightening. It is the perilous return to one's own country and the "*ascent*" (Anabasis), in our case Joyce's going up to "heaven". It is indeed something he must do without delay since life runs swiftly to its "finish". In "*Vitavite!*" we find in fact Italian "*vita*" (life) and French "*vite*" (fast, quickly). And at the end, when tea is set and all has been seen (**tea's set, see's eneugh**), there is the final judgment, the weighing of the heart of the Book of the Dead



in which, if the deceased is found guilty, he is devoured by a monster



whose name is Ammit, meaning "she who devours", very like the "goblin" Ann, the Gobbling One. With Ann who is the devouring Mother Earth, to whom we all return. We find that same *Ammit* in Footnote 1 of page 306:

Dear Auntie **Emma Emma Eates**. (A-M-M-IT.)

The moral of it being:

308.02 Mox soonly
308.03 will be in a split second per the chancellory
308.04 of his exticker.

As soon as his debt (exchequer / **exticker**) is cancelled (**chancellory**) he'll turn immediately (**in a split second**) into an orthodox *Mookse* (**Mox**). A chaste Mookse, gotten rid of his sex mechanism (s-ex ticker/clockwork).

