

Fugal Musemathematics Track Two: Leopold Bloom’s Polyphonic Fart and J.M. Coetzee’s Contrapuntally Gendered Practice of *Meegevoel*

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Abstract

This multi-parted essay (now in its third movement and dovetailed spacing) pursues as a contrapuntal set of relationships some points of contact, crossing, disjunction, and synchrony among various border-voicings: literary, linguistic, musical, mathematical, autobiographical, and ethical. Its controlling technique is the inescapably abstract and general notion of fugal pursuit more particularly lodged in the etymological derivation of ‘fugue’ from *fugere* and *fugare* – to flee and to pursue or expel (to drive into exile). Although retaining its independence from ‘Fugal Musemathematics Track One’ (Points One and Two, the first two essay parts), this portion of the essay follows its numerically earlier antecedents, with which it shares an interest in the unexpectedness of the familiar. Track Two revisits and follows, in as fugal a writing-space as I am able to create, the orthographically-engineered and sometimes intestinal music of the ‘Sirens’ episode in James Joyce’s *Ulysses*, whose musical practice J.M. Coetzee contrapuntally pursues in his later fiction: here especially in *The Lives of Animals* and in *Summertime*. The essay pursues fugal writing and reading as a matter of placement, synchronization, and dehiscence: of bodies, of music, and of thought or seed spilling from within the dovetailed segments of text opening to one another. A particular concern on this occasion is the way synchronicity might be pursued through gendering, understanding this latter term to indicate, first, but not exclusively, a (familiar) process of sorting and placing into sexual categories, though not only and not always into groups of two: overlaps and exclusions demand more nuance. Gendered sorting, that is, and for instance, sorts not only into male and female; the neuter belongs by not belonging here too – hence the appearance of the castrati in these pages. So also are variously third or other categories summoned within these sorted page-sequences: biological, cultural, artificial, say; or temporal, spatial, fugal; human, animal, alien; ethics, politics, aesthetics. In order to pursue its prey, this essay – like its earlier two parts – has itself entered into exile, that word, space, and place Maurice Blanchot associates with literature, Kafka, and ‘the poetic condition’ (237), fleeing from the eminent domain of orthodoxly-governed argument even to the point of risking the exceptionable: whereby, for example, and for the sake and space and shape of its presentation, it eschews Chicago Style citation and makes (or takes) some sympathetic gestures (or liberties) in its spacing, while still conforming in most respects to the stylistic protocols of *Word and Text*.

Keywords: *fugue, counterpoint, compositional spacing, ethics, James Joyce, J.M. Coetzee*

The fragmentary opening phrases of the ‘Sirens’ episode in James Joyce’s *Ulysses* put into place and exploit sound from the outset and from the outside in; that is, from the exterior edge, whose initial evocation turns out and in to present at least two events: the sighting and sounding of that sight-sound we call reading, this time a reading-event initially unencumbered by the usual strictures of transitively referential duty but still tied to familiar patterns of syntax – ‘Bronze by gold heard the hoofirons, steelyringing’ (11.1). And, second (same but not same) event, later confirmed by a more mimetically-typical narrative turn: the sound of a viceregal procession passing outside a pub as heard by the barmaids inside, one with bronze hair, the other with golden hair – ‘Bronze by gold, miss Douce’s head by miss Kennedy’s head, over the crossblind of the Ormond bar heard the viceregal hoofs go by, ringing steel’ (11.64; henceforth only line numbers when chapter is obvious). Initially here the (part-visual) experience of sound precedes the demands of semantic obligation, requesting only an openness on the part of the (listening) reader prepared to engage this writing in a practice previous portions of my essay have called, and have followed as: fugal reading.

The sixty-three lines of fragmented sound-sentences that precede the more usual sort of narrative articulation inaugurated by the sixty-fourth line cited above are for the most part similarly elaborated by the rest of the episode, and come thus to resemble a series of visibly audible sounds that look and sound like an orchestra tuning before it interprets through execution a score; or, better yet, an orchestra already engaged in musical overture: ‘Jingle. Bloo’ (19); ‘Blew. Blue bloom is on the.’ (6). On the what? On the move and on the quayside, crossing the Essex bridge (not for Bloom the Yessex, only obliquely the Yessex, for another) on the way to the Ormond bar, feeling blue: ‘So lonely blooming’ (32); ‘Bloom. Old Bloom’ (49). (‘Overture’ once also meant ‘aperture, hole, opening’, and ‘orifice’, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*.)

In J.M. Coetzee’s *The Lives of Animals*, and thus also in *Elizabeth Costello*, the latter text’s eponymous fiction-writing protagonist takes issue with how – in ‘What Is It Like to Be a Bat?’ – philosopher Thomas Nagel places life as we know it, or as Nagel knows it, on a continuum stretching from the (familiar) human at one end all the way to the (alien) Martian at the furthest extremity of the continuum’s other end. The performance of this discontinuous ‘continuum’ (to use Costello’s word) or this partially ordered set (to use a related phrase borrowed from ‘JC’, the protagonist of Coetzee’s *Diary of a Bad Year* [204-205]) warrants re-embodiment here and some commentary, the first imitative gestures of fugal reading.

‘So, we have set up’ says Costello at precisely this point in her lecture on the lives of animals, at an articulated point exhibiting an already-interesting ambiguity of pronoun, agency, and modality, ‘we have set up a continuum’

that stretches from the Martian at one end to the bat to the dog to the ape (not, however, Red Peter) to the human being (not, however, Franz Kafka) at the other; and at each step as we move along the continuum from bat to man, Nagel says, the answer to the question ‘What is it like for X to be X?’ becomes easier to give. (*Lives* 31-32)

For Nagel, the possibility of imaginative access to the being of another increases with a decrease in the distance between ‘modes of consciousness’ (when these ‘modes’ are grounded in philosophically rational humanity).

'Bloom' (102), 'Greasebloom,' (185); 'Bloowhose' 'Blue bloom is on the rye' (149, 230); 'Bloohim[on]whom' the stationary shop-assistant 'Winsomely [...] smiled' (309) as he pays for the notepaper on which soon to write an amorous note to Martha – she 'Does that to all. For men' (310, three-ten) – just before he, Bloom, enters, at about four o'clock, the dining room of the Ormond, negotiating his way through 'ryebloom flowered tables' (390), 'silent bluehued flowers' (458), entering the Ormond at an o'clock before the blind piano tuner comes back to retrieve the tuning fork he left when earlier that day he tuned the piano, the fork's call 'pure, long, and throbbing. Longindying call' (12), but not at an o'clock before Blazes Boylan has left for his four o'clock assignation with Molly Bloom. So Boylan is still at the bar when Bloom enters the dining room, Boylan at this time still slowly 'sucking the last fat violet syrupy drops' of his sloe gin (420), 'slowsyrupy sloe' (369).

Joyce's writing here intransitively makes its musical dwelling among a collaboration of sibilant fricatives, attendant vowels, and other tongue-formed sounds, substituting orchestrated sound for the sort of explanation fictively proffered by the composer Pavone in Gabriel Josipovici's *Infinity* (based on the life of Giacinto Scelsi [1905-1988], whose words Josipovici incorporates here and there throughout his novel): 'A sound is not a step on the way to something else', Pavone is imagined and remembered to have said, 'it is itself a universe in which we should be happy to set up our dwelling' (89).

Costello puts it this way in *Elizabeth Costello* (although not in *Lives*): 'To Nagel a bat is a fundamentally alien creature, not perhaps as alien as Martian [sic], but certainly more alien than any fellow human being (particularly, I would guess, were that human being a fellow academic philosopher)' (76). Despite the little misprint introduced here in the version of Coetzee's lectures reprinted with slight changes as the third and fourth 'Lesson' of *Elizabeth Costello*, the reprinted version does rectify a more substantial misprint (if that's what it is) in the corresponding lines from *Lives* with Nagel page citations: 'To Nagel a bat is "a fundamentally *alien* form of life" (168), not as alien as a Martian (170) but less alien than another human being (particularly, one would guess, were that human being a fellow academic philosopher)' (31).

Despite Costello's advancing age, attendant fatigue, and explicit self-identification with Kafka's exiled Red Peter, 'a branded, marked, wounded [clothed and *speaking*] animal' (26, 23), and despite that she speaks in pain and distress, haunted by the typically invisible presence of abattoirs, drug-testing laboratories, and factory farms, 'factories of death' (21, 53), haunted to the brink of a kind of madness even (69), and despite that she will (in the poetry seminar) admit to 'confusion' (57), there is no indication in this earlier moment from *Lives* that Costello has misspoken herself in a moment of confusion, saying 'less alien' when she must *certainly* have meant to say 'certainly more alien.'

But Bloom. Bloom, him to whom, as he plans his amorous note to Martha soon, soon also will come musings about measurement and vibration after Boylan has left the Ormond and before he, Bloom, leaves too at about half-way through the time it takes the blind piano-tuner to return for his tuning fork, judging by the number of cane taps we hear approaching throughout the chapter. Bloom will entertain musings before leaving, a leaving not taken before Miss Lydia Douce ('Shebronze,' the one with 'wet lips' [365, 72]) is to be observed handling the handle of a beer-tap, 'smooth jutting beerpull' over which her hand moves 'Fro, to: to, fro: over the polished knob (she knows his eyes, my eyes, her eyes)', tapped cock and cocked tap over which 'her thumb and finger passed in pity: passed, reposed and, gently touching, then slid so smoothly, slowly down, a cool firm white enamel baton protruding through their sliding ring' (1112). White enamel: not Guinness then, but Bass Ale, EST^D 1777.

We've seen this familiar beer-pull tap at our local bar, though now we see it in a new (but not exactly alien) way: here it is defamiliarized, as Viktor Shklovsky would have said, pointing out also how commonly defamiliarization works in accounts of and by way of the erotic. We find ourselves awash in the familiarly unknown new: mysteriously erotic sound-sight surrounding us and inviting our participation in this estrangement, inviting pursuit of the unexpected in and across the familiar. All this is more straightforwardly known as seduction.

Coetzee's text gives no indication that Costello's unsympathetic daughter-in-law, Norma, who 'holds a Ph.D. in philosophy with a specialism in [Nagel's field] the philosophy of mind' (*Lives* 17), and with whom 'Hostilities [have been] renewed almost at once', indeed on the first page of Coetzee's lecture (15), and who is now listening to Costello's lecture – she *is* listening, having just prior to this very point quietly accused Costello of 'rambling', of having 'lost her thread' (31) – no indication that Norma reacts, as she certainly would have, to this wrong phrase, this verbal mis-measurement, further potential footnoting fuel for the 'review essay' she is 'at present writing for a philosophy journal' in whose text her husband John, Costello's son, 'would not be surprised if his mother figured in a dismissive footnote' (17).

Surely not a textually-intended mistake then, not a mistake Costello was meant to make; instead, Coetzee's oversight, or a type-setting error, or even, perhaps, an intuitive mistake, a mistake taken by and of intuition, and so perhaps not even a mistake in the usual sense of that term.

And this remains so however much we might be tempted to feel the tickle of suggestion that, under some (and even quite familiar) circumstances, a bat might be 'less alien' than an 'academic philosopher' to "me", a particular human being, although this is certainly not what Costello means in the first instance. Nevertheless, the ticklish temptation is not an entirely alien suggestion; under some circumstances the thought might evoke, if not laughter, at least an affirmative smile or a quiet 'yes, yes.'

Nor will Bloom leave this company before hearing Simon Dedalus beautifully sing – all becoming one with the music, ‘feeling that flow endearing flow over skin limbs human heart soul spine’ (668) – before himself becoming one with Simon Dedalus singing ‘Lionel’s song’ from (‘Coincidence’ [713]) von Flotow’s *Martha* – ‘Siopold!’ (752), ‘Lionelleopold’ (1187), ‘Simonlionel’ (1210) – ‘One life is all. One body’ (907); empathetic identifications touched by joy, ‘music everywhere’ (964). Nor will Bloom leave before being moved to sympathy by Ben Dollard’s rendition of *The Croppy Boy*, boy who, like Bloom since the death of Bloom’s only son, is the ‘Last of his name and race’ (1064), betrayed (as Bloom is about to be): in the Croppy Boy’s case by a priest to whom the Croppy Boy confesses.

Sensual seduction for the eye and for the ear, the mind and the heart and the loins;
treachery too. Not for nothing is the episode known as ‘Sirens’.

But here, finally, some of Bloom’s musings before leaving the Ormond:

Numbers it is. All music when you come to think. Two multiplied by two divided by half is twice one. Vibrations: chords those are. One plus two plus six is seven. Do anything you like with figures juggling. Always find out this equal to that. (830)

In a word: ‘Musemathematics.’ (834):

Like Bloom, Elizabeth Costello is also surrounded: not by embodiments of the erotic, the musical, or the vegetarian gastronomic, but by the invisible presence of abattoirs, drug-testing laboratories, factory farms, and the *disembodied* abstractions – ghostly, ghastly – that she knows are there and that she struggles against, while her own body continues to age.

As a paper being, a by now more or less familiarly feminine articulation of a masculine writer, Costello is preceded. Coetzee has engineered a linguistically feminine focalizing agent before this: first courtesy of Magda from *In the Heart of the Country* and Susan Barton in *Foe*, and then, shortly before Costello’s appearance in *Lives of Animals*, by way of the Mrs Curren who signs her notes ‘EC’ in *Age of Iron*, where her initials anticipate the subsequent arrival of Elizabeth Costello in Coetzee’s oeuvre.

Musemathematics. And you think you're listening to the ethereal. But suppose you said it like: Martha, seven times nine minus x is thirtyfive thousand. Fall quite flat. It's on account of the sounds it is. (834)*

Thus are the measures and phrases of Joyce's siren-call performatively put into flight – 'on account of the sounds it is' – fugally to be pursued into exile by that compositional design and chance for which the composer of music 'grub[s] about', reaching by experience and instinct for the accident that Stravinsky further says 'is perhaps the only thing that really inspires us' (55), and by whose pursuit it might be possible to meet a 'duty towards music', the duty 'to invent it' with 'an act of invention [that] implies the necessity of a lucky find and of achieving full realization of this find', its embodiment, an achievement further along than imagination *per se*: 'What we imagine does not necessarily take on a concrete form and may remain in a state of virtuality, whereas invention is not conceivable apart from being worked out' (53), of being worked out in the actuality of its embodiment (Vico's 'wholly corporeal imagination' [105], Blake's 'Invention [that] depends Altogether upon Execution' [637], Croce's equivalence between intuition and expression: parents all of what Costello calls 'the sympathetic imagination' [35]). Coetzee understands the sympathetic imagination as 'an inborn faculty in human beings which may or may not grow' and that can sometimes be extended to embrace 'other forms of life' [*Good Story* 134]). Thus is the 'lucky find' pursued in any of the arts, there ideally to be embodied, perhaps exemplarily so in music, towards whose condition Pater believed '*All art constantly aspires*' (86).

* Yes, yes. *Oui rire* / we laugh, remembering as we do so Derrida risibly counting the yesses in *Ulysses* (see 'Track One'). The word-calculations invite at least a smile if not outright laughter, that most infectious, irrationally reasonable act of humanness, the liminal state that for different reasons marks for both Wittgenstein and for Costello an ethics at or beyond the 'boundaries of language' (Wittgenstein, 'Ethics' 11-13; again, see also 'Track One'). 'Perhaps it is so', analogously writes JC, thinking about what it means to have a mother language, that 'all languages are, finally, foreign languages, alien to our animal being' (*Diary* 197). This is one way of thinking; here's another, crossing the first from a different angle: 'Two people are laughing together', imagines Wittgenstein, 'say at a joke. One of them has used certain somewhat unusual words and now they both break out into a sort of bleating. That might appear *very* extraordinary to a visitor coming from quite a different environment. Whereas we find it completely *reasonable*.' Wittgenstein reports witnessing such a scene on a bus, finding himself able 'to think myself into the position of someone to whom this would be unfamiliar. From that point of view it struck me as quite irrational, like the responses of an outlandish animal' (*Culture* 78e).

No matter which, no matter what, and far from falling 'quite flat', mismeasurement here peculiarly collaborates with and corroborates the most perversely striking and unexpected property of Costello's continuum: its gestures of exclusion, gestures more performatively overt and particular than the discontinuities underlying Nagel's continuum of consciousness.

Albeit not the kind of example Pater would have been likely to pursue, the famous fart with which Leopold Bloom draws the music of 'Sirens' to a close illustrates just such a saturating coincidence of matter and form, confirming also the ending reverberations of the episode as already present in its beginning: a particular instance of contrapuntal sight-sound simulated smell engaging in fugal imitation, and in turn inviting imitative pursuit, the first response and responsibility for fugal reading to meet.

Even the yawn, as infectious as laughter and more widespread – from horse to human, lion to lemur – surfaces as a discourse-sign of potential animal synchrony and solidarity. Coetzee explicitly identifies sympathetic projection as 'a moral capacity' (*Good Story* 154). Mentioning the yawn in particular (alongside laughter and sorrow), Leo Tolstoy insists that such empathetic identifications become art only through mediation (38); JC from *Diary* singles out Tolstoy (and Dostoevsky) as a means or median toward becoming an 'ethically better' artist (227).

Not just an index of boredom, the yawn can be a source of fascination (and of discourse). Flaubert knew something of all this when he made fascination with boredom a cornerstone of his aesthetics in *Madame Bovary*, an aesthetics bequeathed to Joyce, Beckett, and Coetzee (in that order). In *Ulysses*, when Davy Byrne, proprietor of the pub where Bloom has his lunch, 'smileyawnednodded all in one' (8.969), we see:

'—Iiiiiichaaaaaach!'

and not so oddly succumb to the contagion of yawning along with these alphabet letters; we do so as easily as we do likewise in the company of another animal yawning, human or not, or as we do in the presence of a picture of one yawning, synchronizing our bodies to the other, even, as here, to the otherness of only an evocative simulacrum.

(This capacity could be dangerous; it has that potential: potential to be dangerous.)

Imitative synchrony: music; or, like music, a series of complex identifications connecting one to another by the eye (that stereoscopically sees the yawn), the ear (that empathetically hears the laughter), the ear-eye (that sympathetically responds to weeping) and the mind-heart (that registers mediation).

Costello has this to say about 'one of the academic philosophers' she read in preparation for her lecture, and whom Coetzee identifies in a footnote as [Michael] Leahy: 'A calf who has not mastered the concepts of presence and absence, of self and other – so goes the argument – cannot, strictly speaking, be said to miss anything. In order to, strictly speaking, be said to miss anything, it would first have to take a course in philosophy. What sort of philosophy is this? Throw it out, I say. What good do its piddling distinctions do?' (*Lives* 65-66). Yes-yes, (*oui-rire* puns Derrida reading Joyce in 'Ulysses Gramophone'); we laugh – uncomfortably, as elsewhere here also.

Strangely enough, the affect and effect of such separation *has* now apparently been "measured" in some sense – through the language of the eye on the face of the Other – though for disparate reasons none of the parties here fictively and not so fictively involved are likely to be impressed by the measurement: 'Recent studies with cows find that the amount of eye-white visible in the animal's eye increases during temporary separation from their calves. It also corresponds to their frustration when food is temporarily withheld, and to contentedness when it is provided' (Balcombe 60).

Bloom's flatulence stirs unobtrusively amid the opening collection of sound fragments: 'Pwee! Little wind piped wee' (11.55) and 'Fff! Oo!' (58), getting mixed up with what will later emerge as co-conspirators of bung-hole release (the noisy sound of a passing tram 'Rrrpr. Kraa. Krandl' [60], and a palimpsest of Irish nationalist Robert Emmet's final speech 'Then not till then. My eppripftaph. Be pfrwritt' [61]) all saturated by and saturating the structural ends and end of the opening poem-prelude, 'Done' (62), and the beginnings of the more narratively-pursued fugal elaboration: 'Begin!' (63). Fugal pursuit requires this all first to be imitatively repeated.

Thus begins among other incipient beginnings and pursuits the account of a developing 'eppripftaph' ballooning from Bloom's bowels (and doubling the prior marking of Emmet's voice) quietly 'pfrwritt' at first, but also immediately marked – as has widely been noted – for *stretto* dynamics by an orthography that jumps from, between, and among *pp* pianissimo, very soft, *p* piano, soft, to *f*, forte, loud and *ff*, fortissimo, very loud: 'eppripftaph.'

The bio-physical genesis for this particular display of musically "synchronized" flatulence is lodged in life. (Most of us fart about fourteen times a day, though not apparently Samuel Beckett's Molloy, who by his own dubious calculations averages 'Four farts every fifteen minutes. It's nothing. Not even one fart every four minutes. It's unbelievable. Damn it, I hardly fart at all, I should never have mentioned it. Extraordinary how mathematics can help you to know yourself' [29].)

The surprising "mathematical" calculations (and exclusions) shaping Costello's continuum from Martian to bat, to dog, to ape (but not Red Peter), and to human (but not Franz Kafka) constitute – one might thus suppose – neither a 'piddling distinction' or empirical (mis?)measurement, nor yet simply another typographical error of some sort, no matter how much they appear to violate rules of rational generalization, especially in the Kafka-instance; nor even do they *only* constitute a perverse counterpoint to Descartes. What to make of the exclusions? They interfere with "sorting as usual": more even than Molloy interferes with calculating as usual; they interfere also with gendering, understanding this term to mean the process of sorting and placing into categories or kinds. (The second edition of the *OED* lists this [now perhaps obsolescent] sense of 'gender' as its first definition for the term.) One possibility is that Red Peter is excluded because, as a mostly-fictive creation (who however has real and once-living counterparts, like the one Wolfgang Köhler called 'Sultan'), he is not an ape in the usual sense of what it means to be an ape; from which it perhaps follows that Kafka too is not a human in the usual sense, or better, not a usual human being, despite having been more usually-existent than Costello herself.

In his *Diaries*, Kafka excludes himself: 'What is it that binds you more intimately to these impenetrable, talking, eye-blinking bodies than to any other thing, the penholder in your hand, for example? Because you belong to the same species? But you don't belong to the same species, that's the very reason why you raised this question' (396).

However one calculates its frequency, the physical necessity to fart is lodged in the simul-cre-ation of Bloom's life too, which begins on this day – insofar as we become privy to it – when we meet him in chapter four with the acknowledgment that 'Mr Leopold Bloom ate with relish the inner organs of beasts and fowls', relishing 'giblet soup, nutty gizzards, a stuffed roast heart, liverslices fried with cruster crumbs, fried hencods' roes' and 'grilled mutton kidneys which gave to his palate a fine tang of faintly scented urine' (4.1). On such a diet, Bloom, like Molloy, might regularly beat the average of fourteen farts a day.

On this day 'Kidneys were in his mind' as he moved around the kitchen to the unexpectedly familiar sound of the cat saying 'Mkgnao!', 'Mrkgnao!', 'Mrkrgrnao!', and 'Gurrhr!' (6, 16, 25, 32, 38). To these articulations Bloom more conventionally responds with a 'Miaow!' (462); it's not entirely clear who in this exchange says 'prrr'; probably both of them: 'Prr. Scratch my head. Prr' (19). Bloom settles this day on the idea of eating for breakfast a pork kidney. He goes out to buy such a kidney, takes it home, and slightly burns it in the pan while serving Molly breakfast in bed (and bringing her the mail, which includes a letter addressed to her in what Bloom recognizes as Boylan's hand); then he eats it – the kidney, not the letter – 'with relish' one can safely assume (despite the letter), giving the bit of burnt skin to the cat. The kidney is 'Done to a turn' (391). With done to a turn kidney under the belt, Bloom sets out to work his way towards a lunchtime whose hour approaches in chapter seven ('Aeolus'), a chapter full of rhetorical wind and flatulence, typesetting proofs and orthographical poofs: much 'afflatus' (7.774).

In chapter eight it's getting late: Bloom looks for a place to have lunch. He tries the Burton restaurant; to no avail: 'Stink gripped his trembling breath: pungent meatjuice, slush of greens. See the animals feed. / Men, men, men' (8.650). 'Couldn't eat a morsel here' (673); but still: 'Eat or be eaten. Kill! Kill!' (703):

Pain to the animal too. Pluck and draw fowl. Wretched brutes there at the cattlemarket waiting for the poleaxe to split their skulls open. Moo. Poor trembling calves. [...] Bubble and squeak. Butchers' buckets wobbly lights. Give us that brisket off the hook. Plup. Rawhead and bloody bones. Flayed glasseyed sheep hung from their haunches, sheepsnouts bloodypapered snivelling nosejam on sawdust. (722)

What these three – Red Peter, Kafka, and Costello – have in common (with Coetzee and with Joyce also), and what possibly excludes them (all) from the *philosophically-conceived* notion of a continuum anchored at one extremity by the human being, possibly particularized as a human being that 'one would guess' is also 'a fellow academic philosopher', and at the other extremity by the Martian – with the bat, the dog, the ape, and the exclusions in between and otherwise situated – is that all three, no five, are extraordinary purveyors of fiction, more deeply and particularly complicit in a type of fictive and autobiographically-embedded writing-embodiment than are the more generalized marking points on the continuum; this distinction might even apply to the Martian, for all we know, though of course we simply do not know.

Any more than we know if language might not originally have emerged from song-seduction; any more than we really know why birds sing; any more than we reliably know (despite Gill) why some spiders "purrr" on the leaf-bed to announce themselves.

And so, sorting through, we encounter Bloom and Costello encountering everyday ethically-imbued issues of sorting: what to eat, for instance. Bloom worries a bit about this at lunchtime; Norma is profoundly irritated that under Costello's influence her children suspect chicken and tuna of being meat from a veal calf cruelly deprived of his mother and her milk, of nutritional iron, sunshine, movement, and his testicles—all to ensure the pale, tender texture of his flesh on a plate. As already noted, such dietary considerations inevitably run alongside or into thought about how one might in-or-exclude various animals into or out of groups (some omnivores eat dogs; others do not). The sorting Costello entertains – in her rambling loss of thread according to Norma – just before introducing Nagel's bat and Martian, relies on a deeply gendered notion with which she begins to exclude Red Peter and his amanuensis from other apes and humanimals: 'Kafka saw both himself and Red Peter as hybrids, as monstrous thinking devices mounted inexplicably on suffering animal bodies.' And, she adds, 'Hybrids are, or ought to be, sterile' (30), analogues of some sort, one might say, to the castrati, who also, as Costello says of Red Peter, have given up 'Much, including progeny, succession', in return for their voices or for their positions or for both, though neither prestige nor power was guaranteed.

Monstrous "enhancements" for the butcher-shop, or for voice-potential and song.

Singing was a risky gamble by all accounts, including that of a 2006 *Handel and the Castrati* exhibition in the Handel House Museum, 25 Brook Street, Mayfair, where the childless Handel lived till his death of old age, next to number 23 (one property) where Jimi Hendrix would by chance live two centuries later, and so which, after hosting the 2010 Hendrix exhibition, has now displayed not only scores Handel composed for the castrati, and the shears called *castratori* (parents too poor to afford a specialist could perform the procedure at home), but also an electric guitar played by that rock music phenomenon whom a coroner pronounced dead at age twenty-seven by suffocation on his own drug-induced vomit.

Of the about four thousand roughly eight-year old boys castrated each year in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Italy in the hopes of singing fame, 'only a small number became star performers.' Those who made it became superstars in every sense, including their capacity to command sexual attention; but 'the majority fail[ed] to make a career in music' (Coughlan; Melicow adds information on sexuality).

Like the castrati, Red Peter – in exile from his home, family, and companions – has given up or handed over 'Much' in 'return for the prodigious overdevelopment of the intellect he has achieved, in return for his command of lecture-hall etiquette and academic rhetoric' (30). (But Heidegger refuses the possession of a hand to Red Peter and his kind, reserving the hand for de-monst(e)ration of hu-man as the one who designs and signs his (not her) mental handiwork [*What* 16].)

And Kafka? Although she makes no mention of any source, Costello is surely thinking of Kafka's *Diaries*: 'What have you done with your gift of sex?' auto-writes Kafka there: 'It was a failure, in the end that is all that they will say' (399).

And Bloom? Despite empathy and a good breakfast, Bloom is by lunchtime hungry; under the circumstances – ethical, physical – he settles for a snack: ‘Stopgap’ (8.698). He chooses Davy Byrne’s, a ‘Moral pub’ (732), where, chastened, he orders a ‘glass of burgundy and ... let me see’ (740; he thinks for a bit about cannibals) ‘a cheese sandwich?’ (756). Good choice of wine, many apes would say; actually they do say, in their way: the pinot noir and chardonnay grapes of Burgundy are firmly established as *the* grapes of choice among the vineyard raiding baboons of South Africa.

But now that the chaste gesture has been thought, the cheese might as well be Gorgonzola ‘feety savour of green cheese’ (819) and might as well be accompanied by olives, Spanish onion, and mustard; and, had it not been June (‘June has no ar’), it might all have been supplemented by oysters: ‘no ar no oysters’ (868) on the theory that oysters are safe only in those months with an ‘r’ in their name. So for now, it being June, no safe aphrodisiac ‘Effect on the sexual’ (866), although (temptation) ‘there are people like things high. Tainted game. Jugged hare.’ (868).

No one said the sorting would be especially easy.

Castrati aside, the more literally-conceived meat market to which Costello principally and in principle objects has a dubious track-record (witness the Joyce slaughterhouse passage quoted a couple of pages previously) exacerbated by the rise of factory farming. Scatteredly recent and ameliorative legislation here and there: veal crates, gestation crates and battery cages have been banned in Europe and are being phased out in California, the first of the United States to prohibit tail-docking of dairy cows, while Norway has banned the castration of piglets at the same time (2009) that ‘major Dutch supermarkets pledged to stop selling meat from piglets castrated without anesthesia’ (Balcombe 197-198).

But the *Diaries* also engender (and so present for hybridized birth) some very short stories that sometimes go on to reappear in the few pages Kafka published in his lifetime; stories like that born of the November 1911 entry that begins, ‘It seems so dreadful to stay a bachelor, to become an old man struggling to keep one’s dignity while begging for an invitation’, that reaches at about its mid-point the words, ‘having to admire other people’s children and not even being allowed to go on saying: “I have none myself”’, and that ends: ‘That’s how it will be, except that in reality both today and later, one will stand there with a palpable body and a real head, a real forehead, that is, for smiting on with one’s hand’; (this is the version published in *The Penal Colony* and collected in *Complete Stories* [395]).

More could be said about the hand, synecdoche for the labouring human body and also intellectually intimate companion of thought as ‘handiwork’: from Hegel’s *Begriff* as ‘the act of grasping (*begreifen*), of comprehending by taking hold, by laying one’s hands on’ (Derrida ‘Heidegger’s Hand’ 40), to Heidegger’s human and linguistically gendered hand proper to man only, in whose work thinking is rooted and vice versa: ‘All the work of the hand is rooted in thinking’ (*What* 16), But:

But no. No oysters, despite temptation. Leopold Bloom is a temperate and cautious man, more or less; temperate in his drinking habits ('God Almighty couldn't make him drunk' [8.978]): only one glass of burgundy despite the joy it brings ('Sun's heat it is' [889]). Glass of wine carefully sipped to the bartender's mention of Blazes Boylan: 'A warm shock of air heat of mustard hunched on Mr Bloom's heart' at the mention of Boylan's name and news about Boylan's less cautious exploits (789); close to home this extravagance. There's a hanching suitor in Odysseus-Bloom's parlour.

And thus is the stage set in chapter eight for Bloom's supper in chapter eleven (liver, bacon, cider), set for the gastrointestinal agenbite of breakfast-lunch-tea-time-supper – the word 'agenbite' makes six of its seven total appearances in this *Ulysses* book during intervening chapters nine and ten – gastro-enteric agenbite of kidney-Gorgonzola-Burgundy-cider-bacon-liverslices, trimmings, and condiments: 'Pwee! Little wind piped wee'; 'Fff! Oo!' (11.55, 58).

But: such efforts notwithstanding, all is not well at the factory farm, out-of-sight locus of the industrial production of monsters even more corporeally altered than a castrato was likely to become with his 'disproportionately large thorax, infantile larynx, long spindly legs' and similarly elongated arms and ribs, with his likely predisposition for gynecomastia and perhaps steatopygia (Melicow 748-749).

And, (one more time again), But: suffice it to say that the body and its other often-privileged metonymic representative, neither the hand nor the heart, but the head – often trivially and offensively privileged in counting ("x many head", one says, counting livestock) and also privileged because it can itself sometimes count and identify itself as the site of mind, reason, and governance – the head also, like the heart, feels pain, experiences loss, both traces of what it means, from the beginning and in the end, to have a body and a name, and thus to *have had* from the outset an anticipation of a time after the end, when, if one could still say, one would have to say *to have had a body, to have had a name*, traces of which might or might not persist in some other body or bodies – that of one's progeny, say – or, even without progeny, which might persist in some creation or another, in some (other animal's) memory, in some written thing even, perhaps in a book like Coetzee's *Summertime*, a book of manipulated memories concerning its purportedly dead subject, John Coetzee.

This is the semi-fictional Coetzee who, while still alive, typed his love-letters rather than writing them by hand (*Summertime* 172), but who has left after death some (handwritten?) journal notebooks his would-be biographer surmises were intended for a book (20), the 'third memoir' that 'never saw the light of day' (205), except of course as *Summertime*, which begins with a journal entry that explicitly links to political event the Joyce-derived *agenbite of inwit*: the again bite of conscience (4). (Blanchot speaks of writers' journals – let's say those six J.M. Coetzee notebooks written and dated 'in meticulous small script' and now kept at the Harry Ransom Center – as constituting a 'memorial' that feeds literary production by keeping the writer in touch with his or her everyday life beyond the literary (Blanchot 28, Meaney 28); in *Summertime* the memorial is captured, erected, and complicated by the journal writer's fictive death, and by the book's procreative hybridity as fictional memoir-fact and ethical inquiry.)

'Fff! Oo!'; musical overture and physical aperture picked up as bio-body-necessity: 'Words? Music? No: it's what's behind' (703); 'There's music everywhere' (964); 'Mere fact of music shows you are' (970); 'Chamber music. Could make a kind of pun on that. It is a kind of music' (979); 'Songs without words' (1092); 'Ventriloquise. My lips closed. Think in my stom. What?' (1095), as Bloom leaves the Ormond. 'Rrr' (1155); not a recollection of the cat that morning, but the stomach's musical reprise as 'bloom felt wind wound round inside. Gassy thing that cider: binding too. Wait' (1178); 'then all of a soft sudden wee little wee little pipy wind': 'Pwee! A little wind piped eeee' (1201), and:

The monsters produced by industrial farming include not only those animals with deformed heads, massive navels or malformed arteries typical of the small percentage of clones that escape miscarriage and so come to be born (Weiss), but also, for example, the creatures produced by the US turkey industry: 'Commercially farmed turkeys in America are no longer biologically viable on their own. The tom has been bred to be so heavy that, aside from the fact that he can no longer walk but only totters, he cannot fertilize a female, for if he mounts her he will crush her to death.' The female has to be impregnated by artificial insemination (Hacking 147).

This is the Coetzee who never quite fits in: an *alleenlooper* or loner (133), lacking in passion (242), as 'heatless as he is sexless' (118), as though sprayed by a 'neutering spray' (25), as though he were 'neutral' (101), '*celibataire*' (160), as though he were 'a eunuch' (114), a castrato-wager or unpropitious gamble.

Feeling 'soiled' by reading a newspaper account of what (despite official denial) clearly appears to be a set of political assassinations in Botswana sponsored or undertaken by the South African Defence Force, journal-writing Coetzee writes, by hand presumably, and bitten by the remorse of having had a hand in this business, if only by happenstance of nationality: 'How to escape the filth: not a new question. An old rat-question that will not let go, that leaves its nasty, suppurating wound. Agenbite of inwit' (4); the phrase is itself not new – Joyce recycled it from earlier Kentish and French versions of a handbook on virtue and vice, and passes it on, bequeaths it even, to Coetzee. Ethics is linked to the aesthetic and to the political by way of the joy, suffering, memory, remorse, and end of a body, here a body embodied in a book.

A book, writes Gabriel Josipovici in the Northcliffe Lectures published as *Writing and the Body*, 'a book *is* in one sense produced biologically, in the same way as a laugh or a scream has biological roots', though Josipovici quickly goes on to acknowledge that a book is also 'an issue not of biology but of a system of representations' (xi, 10); only *like* a laugh and *like* a scream then (not hereby underestimating the biological similitude nor the depth or spread of biological roots). At the moment here, at this place in Coetzee's *Lives* especially, we hear the last first: first the scream (already sounding), later the nearby laugh, often uncomfortable, even painful – a veal calf who needs philosophy lessons, for instance – the laughter part of the pain and vice versa; this is how it works in Beckett also. ('My only talent is for comedy,' writes J.M. Coetzee in one of *his* journal notebooks [Meany 28]: Beckettian Bequest.)

Rrrrrr.
I feel I want.... (1216)

Wish I could. Wait. (1224)

A kind of utilitarian factory-farm economics emerges here in all its blinkered thinking, the sort of thinking Heidegger sought to subvert by rooting thinking in handiwork, though he was surely wrong categorically to exclude the other animals as poor in the world of the thinking hand; (for Heidegger, nonhuman animals have neither hands nor speech; they cannot think). But it could be much worse: imagine thinking in this context of symbiotic relationships between species (turkeys, humans); or thinking of the creation of job opportunities, say, since – after all – the semen has to be collected and relocated. Surely one would stay one’s hand before such “thinking” that so utterly disregards the dignity a body might hope for, the dignity a body might expect to enjoy?

This is the sort of thinking also perhaps present in the 1967 case of sexual reassignment whereby renowned Johns Hopkins ‘sexologist’ John Money scheduled the surgical removal of testicles from a boy whose penis had been ablated during circumcision. Then Money tried to assure (without convincing, it turns out) the eight-month-old child and his monozygotic twin brother – neither of them old enough to acknowledge the event nor still young enough for pre-natal protection (so Money was actually trying to assure other concerned parties) – that: that what? That an accident can simply be reversed? That individuals are psychosexually neutral at birth? That gender is fundamentally an environmental and social construct? That it is easier, surgically-speaking, to create a previously-absent vagina than to construct an adequate penis? That an ‘unplanned opportunity’ had by felicitous chance presented itself? (Money’s words [Colapinto 67].) That an important experiment had been launched? That more surgery later and pre-adolescent estrogen therapy would make it all work?

That it was all for the best?

The more or less silent scream begins quietly enough, but very quickly in Coetzee’s lecture – deep-rooted it is – and quietly, but almost immediately – high-tainted it is – in Costello’s lecture, whose initial words exclude themselves from those easy ‘lighthearted remarks whose purpose is to set the audience at ease’ (*Lives* 18), and instead establish dis-ease when for the second time and again not for easy rhetorical purposes Costello identifies her wounded self with Red Peter (the first time, already published independently at this point as ‘What is Realism?’, will re-emerge as the first ‘lesson’ in *Elizabeth Costello*). All much already to the dis-ease of son John in particular, who ‘senses what she is up to’, can smell what is coming, and ‘does not look forward’ to it: ‘He does not want to hear his mother talking about death’ (19). What child, generally speaking, or what veal calf for that matter, *would* want this (these degrees of eye-whitening)? And conversely, again in the particular: what to say to the parents who tried – who felt they had to try once the die was cast – to raise one of their sons as their daughter?

And so Bloom waits to let it all out, walking away from the Ormond, still thinking of music: not only of the human voices that had been on singing display in the bar – ‘The human voice, two tiny silk chords, wonderful, more than all others’ (791) – but of less nuanced instruments too, thinking for instance of ‘the chap that wallops the big drum [...] Sitting at home after pig’s cheek and cabbage nursing [his drum] in the armchair. Rehearsing his band part. Pom. Pompedy’ on an instrument fashioned from ‘Asses’ skins. Welt them through life, then wallop after death. Pom. Wallop’ (1228), and thinking of how with just ‘comb and tissuepaper you can knock a tune out’ (1238). Each to her own: ‘Hunter with a horn’, ‘Shepherd [with] his pipe. Pwee little wee’, marching along, ‘we march along, march along. Pom’ (1240 ff.). The waiting, the music, bodily need, and some considerable measure of empathy all get mixed together (1247):

‘I must really. Fff.’:

The “surgically-speaking” claim might have been so, might be so still;
as for the rest....

The scream quickly amplifies, broadens to disturb more than just John, who is at least partially prepared for it: ‘they should have asked him before they invited his mother. He could have told them’ (*Lives* 67).

Predicated on a silence at its core, a promise of silence concerning ‘the horrors’ of how animals live and die ‘in abattoirs, in trawlers, in laboratories, all over the world’, a recitation Costello says she will ‘omit’ from her discourse, despite that these horrors ‘are nevertheless at the center of this lecture’, the scream still quickens out of this promised silence in the very next sentence Costello utters, a death sentence:

Between 1942 and 1945 several million people were put to death in the concentration camps of the Third Reich: at Treblinka alone more than a million and a half, perhaps as many as three million. (19)

To ‘quote or haggle over the numbers is already inhumane’, writes Adorno in ‘Education After Auschwitz’ (192). The immediately following Costello sentences count alongside Adorno as well, and, in the best Beckett and Adorno manner, fail to count also: ‘These are numbers that numb the mind. We have only one death of our own; we can comprehend the deaths of others only one at a time. In the abstract we may be able to count to a million, but we cannot count to a million deaths’ (19).

Costello exhibits not only a scar, but the wound – dehiscent wound – that links her to Red Peter. She shows also her thought-affinity to JC considering a partially ordered set (*Diary* 204), and to the Coetzee ‘overwhelmed’ by ‘the fact of suffering’ (*Doubling* 248). As in *Ulysses*, the imbricated juxtapositions here partially overlap without coinciding. Along similar lines, Shklovsky speaks also of *Ulysses* as a book emphasizing the ‘noncoincidence of the juxtaposed’ (*Bowstring* 69).

Art that is:

pursuant, as in fugal practice. But Fff-art Fff-for the most part kept in reserve for a little longer still (nothing reserved about the art), out of modesty (nothing modest about the art). Bloom does not want to let the prostitute now approaching along the quayside get any wind of this, especially since he knows her and she knows Molly. And so – artifice it is now – Mr Bloom pauses to look into a shop window, pretending to look while he waits for her to pass so that he too may: ‘Look in here [...] Let her pass [...] She’s passing now’ (1260); all the while with urgency increasing: ‘Must be the cider or perhaps the burgundy.’ (1268). Bloom fails to suspect the kidney, Gorgonzola, condiments, liverslices, or bacon.

After years of silent but also audible cries (some made it onto the medical record) – biological cries – those implicated others more or less convinced by the unconvinced “subject” of this experiment accepted failure. (But not Money, still reaping the benefits of publishing a “classic” study.) The others mostly came to accept the failure indicated, and thus indicted, by the pre-teen who without yet knowing of his male origins refused to be female, insistently suspecting otherwise and behaving otherwise to the alarm and ridicule of his (female) peers when he tried, for instance, and without much success, to urinate standing upright (‘as many girls do’, according to Money, though Money does admit that this child ‘needed perhaps more training than usual’ [120]).

All this before the child learned the truth of his history and while he was still resistantly submitting for the most part to his estrogen regimen; all this before he was granted at age fourteen confirmation of what he had long bodily-known, and before he was granted yet another reassignment – more hormones, though now by request, a mastectomy, plastic testicles in a reconstructed scrotum, and an initial phalloplasty, he would later have another – so that he could live out his remaining years as a male, which he did: marriage, children (not biologically his own of course), a job as a sanitation worker in a slaughter-house, living, it seems, more or less happily and masculinely enough; living until his suicide at age thirty-eight in the wake of matrimonial difficulties, two years after his twin brother died of a drug overdose that was perhaps not accidental.

Why does Costello persevere with this discursive perversion? Why speak *this* and not some more amenably other way to the philosophers? *Costello*: by Joycean etymology a corruption of Irish words for ‘beautiful foot’ (Joyce, *Selected Letters* 374). Is she signing her discourse by putting this beautiful foot into her mouth? Or is this an endorsement of Wittgenstein’s notion that ‘only by thinking even more crazily than philosophers do’ can you ‘solve their problems’ (*Culture* 75e)? All partially so, perhaps, though Costello is not obviously interested in *solving philosophical problems* in some academic sense, being concerned instead with negotiating her own problems: among which number those problems facing the animals – all the animals, a more expansive community than that entertained by either Heidegger or Levinas – and those of how to address the animals – all the animals – philosophers included.

Waiting under the guise of looking, Bloom notices that he *is* looking: at a picture of Irish nationalist and Republican orator Robert Emmet. The latter's last (political) words, which Bloom reads, are thus re-incorporated into the chapter's last words to the sound relief of Blooming inner organs releasing sound under camouflage of the opportunely passing tram. Another dovetailed dehiscence of ethics, aesthetics, and politics:

No one will ever know what part, if any, name-shifting (of first name, typically a mark of gender) might have played: Bruce, Brenda, David, in this case; the last was self-chosen, which is not usually what happens. We do not usually choose our names, though Derrida did change his given name of Jackie to Jacques when he 'began to publish' (*Points* 343). We never get to choose our skin color ('no way of escaping the skin you are born with' writes Coetzee: 'can a leopard change its spots?' [*Doubling* 96]). We don't get to choose where we are born ("our country"). Nor do we get to choose our parents. (But if he could have, the semi-fictional JC might have chosen Bach as his father [*Diary* 222].)

Some of the Bruce, Brenda, David details are recorded in the best-selling Colapinto book; a more medical account is summarized in the follow-up case study, not by Money, who became silent on later developments in the case even as he continued to champion the thinking that informed it, but by Diamond and Sigmundson.

Only partially keeping its promise of silence – barely keeping it at all – the Costello-cry is embodied in words about death, and breaks silence in a way that leads the Appleton College poet, Abraham Stern, to refuse to 'break bread' with Costello at the invitational dinner after her lecture, during which his chair remains silently empty, although he does send a handwritten note the next day to articulate his absence.

'Let me say it openly,' Costello says in lecture:

we are surrounded by an enterprise of degradation, cruelty, and killing which rivals anything that the Third Reich was capable of, indeed dwarfs it, in that ours is an enterprise without end, self-regenerating, bringing rabbits, rats, poultry, livestock ceaselessly into the world for the purpose of killing them. (21)

If Jews were treated like cattle, it does not follow that cattle are treated like Jews. The inversion insults the memory of the dead. It also trades on the horrors of the camps in a cheap way

writes Stern in his – yes, handwritten – note (50). Yes, yes; but not an invitation to laughter. Just doubly Yes this time: to Stern and to Costello. But also No to both. Pursuing the idea of justice, Jacques (no longer Jackie) Derrida, who saw himself as an 'Algerian exile' (*For Strasbourg* 7), but who until the end was not himself a vegetarian, speaks of 'the worst kinds of violence' ('the purely instrumental, industrial, chemico-genetic treatment of living beings') and justifies the rhetorical violence with which he spoke at the law school 'of a Jewish university' in the US (Yeshiva) by 'using this word *genocide* to designate the operation consisting, in certain cases, in gathering together hundreds of thousands of beasts every day, sending them to the slaughterhouse, and killing them en masse after having fattened them with hormones' (*For What* 73).

Seabloom, greaseabloom viewed last words. Softly. *When my country takes her place among.*

Prrrr.

Must be the bur.

Fff! Oo. Rrpr.

Nations of the earth. No-one behind. She's passed. *Then and not till then.* Tram kran kran kran. Good oppor. Coming. Krandrkrankran. I'm sure it's the burgund. Yes. One, two. *Let my epitaph be.* Kraaaaaa. *Written. I have.*

Prrrpfrrppffff.

Done. (1284)

Yes-No. Fugal fart is done now, almost: but still some residue lingering.

Culpably capable of underestimating or of ignoring the bio-ethical paraph of that prenatal testosterone produced by the fetal testes he would later have removed from his mutilated but otherwise bio-normal subject, Money, one assumes, would be little moved by Josipovici's coupling of laughter, scream, and book.

The broadly-conceived category of ethnobiology or ethology, however (ethology: a term that before its zoologic reincarnation once directly pertained to mimicry and to ethics), has no compunction recognizing both scream and laughter as biologically-rooted.

Yes-No: an articulation shared with Elizabeth Costello's fictive predecessor from *Age of Iron*, Mrs Curren (Coetzee refers to her in *Doubling* as 'Elizabeth Curren'); she is the one we see at the piano struggling to play Bach's first fugue (*Age 21*), the one who struggles to bear witness to 'such a word' as yes-no, despite that it 'has never been allowed into the dictionaries' (106), nor into the courtrooms, where – even if you are on trial for your life – you are allowed only two words, yes or no, but not both together, where the judges warn you 'Yes or No: no speeches,' to which you must say 'yes': "Yes" you say. Yet all the time you feel other words stirring inside you like life in the womb', words or a word like yes-no, some other word for which Curren says she is fighting, 'fighting for it not to be stifled', fighting – 'like one of those Chinese mothers' with whom she identifies herself – against the fate of a neonate who will be taken 'from the midwife's arms and, if the sex is wrong', will be 'stifle[d] just like that, pinching the little nose to, holding the jaw shut. A minute and all is done' (132-133).

Yes-No: this is the "yes" on some other side of or alongside Joyce and Molly Bloom's 'Yes', a "yes" other also than the 'yes' of Derrida reading Joyce. Yes-No: middle-voice enunciation with which dialectically to write against death, and with which to struggle against the difficulty of writing despite particular and general death, despite and because of shame; to struggle against the impossibility of writing the unique singularity of death, made all the more impossible – if this were even possible – when that unique singularity is made shamefully general, and when writing therefore becomes a responsibility of some sort. I have previously treated the middle voice in Coetzee as a linguistic matter ('Charting'). Here I am thinking of it as also an ethical issue.

So, not quite done yet; not entirely quiet yet. Still the dehiscent coda to come. Albeit partly muted by death and the passage of time, the written residue-seed of this residual life-coda still resonates with the olfactory animal-joy of intimacy that poor-sighted Joyce associates with and within the body of Nora Barnacle: 'I think I would know Nora's fart anywhere. I think I could pick hers out in a roomful of farting women' (*Selected Letters* 185). And this because Joyce knows Nora Barnacle intimately:

Yes, now I can remember that night when I fucked you for so long backwards. [...] At every fuck I gave you your shameless tongue came bursting out through your lips and if I gave you a bigger stronger fuck than usual fat dirty farts came spluttering out of your backside. You had an arse full of farts that night, darling, and I fucked them out of you, big fat fellows, long windy ones, quick little merry cracks and a lot of tiny little naughty farties ending in a long gush from your hole.

Like the capacity for empathy with which the scream is clearly embroiled, these at once language-independent but also linguistically manipulable entities – laughter, yawn, scream, sym-em-pathy – have deep evolutionary ties to the bodies of various mammals, though perhaps not to all and perhaps also not only to mammals. The recent discovery of mirror neurons appears neuroscientifically to support ethological inquiries that themselves supplement the longer practiced and not only behaviorist observation and speculation of primatologists (especially), contributing to ever more interdisciplinary efforts: neuro-ethology, for example, complementing Costello's sense of what it means to be kind and of a kind (*Lives* 61).

Yes-No: the nominally Catholic Bloom more or less indifferent to Irish politics is quite deeply Jewish (these are his spots), and is marked as we all are, this last century in particular – especially so but not only the Jew – by the shame and guilt of survival (see Levinas, *On Escape*, and Agamben, *Remnants*): not "only" the guilt of the death camp survivor, but 'of any survivor, of anyone who is mourning' (Derrida, 'Hostipitality' 383); of anyone who, like Bloom, like us all, has survived death – the death of a parent or of a dog, perhaps. And in Bloom's case, and in Coetzee's case, the death of a son.

Yes-No: the expression is colloquially commonplace in Afrikaans – *ja-nee* – in which tongue it means similarly to what 'Sure' colloquially means in the United States, but not surely or only so.

Yes-No: a reading-invitation to share, with the purportedly dead John Coetzee of *Summertime* and his cousin Margot, an experience of '*meegevoel*' (97). The word comes to us readers as a recollection from the Coetzee family farm: Margot remembers the child John dismembering one leg from a locust and then watching the insect futilely struggle to escape. *Meegevoel*: the Afrikaans word, foreign and strange to many readers, simply glossed as 'feeling-with' in the text, is more complex than the gloss can accommodate, as context demonstrates. This 'feeling-with' is the compassion Margot shows as a child and remembers as an adult – '*Kill it!* she screamed at him' – but also the shame John feels for many aspects of this shared memory, including leaving it up to Margot to kill the locust (96).

It appears to end with a bang then. But still it is not quite done yet. Yes-No, not a bang but a bat: for in the end this Joyce-capacity to appreciate sound and smell is not quite so remarkable after all, although it is remarkably marked by its orthographically placed music. Still (whether she can know it or not, Costello earns this point): not so different from, no more impressive than, the way a mother bat, also not so well-sighted (but not, contrary to idiom, blind), is able by sound-smell-memory to find for nursing – yes, yes, life – her own (only) child-pup among ‘hundreds of thousands, even millions’ of other pups on the walls of a pitch-dark cavern several times a day, after absences for rest or food-foraging, first by calculating ‘the spatial geometry of the cavern’ to get close to where the pup was left, and then by making finer discriminations, soliciting and recognizing the distinctive timbre of *her* pup’s autobiocall among all those others in a reciprocal call-exchange barely audible to the human ear – oto-biolo-graphy – and by final olfactory confirmation of identity, courtesy of scent glands situated on the head that release as paraph ‘a pungent perfume’ (Balcombe 9-12). We could speak in such contexts (to Heidegger, Levinas, and Nagel?) of love.

‘We literally *feel* a scream’, writes de Waal: ‘We should be grateful for this [insofar as the feeling is anathema], because otherwise there would be no reason for empathy to be used for good. In and of itself, taking another’s perspective is a neutral capacity. It can serve both constructive and destructive ends. Crimes against humanity often rely on precisely this capacity’ (210-211).

This ‘feeling-with’ is linguistically linked to a Russian word that Coetzee remembers coming across, ‘*vzhivanie*, living in or into (someone)’; living into some body. Given that he has been unable to find the word in his Russian dictionary, Coetzee suspects it might be a coinage (‘Nevertheless’ 48). But the word stems from the commonplace verb *vzhit’sya* or *вжиться*, and is especially current in theatre and film, where its literal meaning of ‘living oneself into something / somebody’ lends itself well to those practices called ‘method acting.’ (My thanks to Dimitri Psurtsev.) Strangely, by compelling paradox, *vzhivanie* or *living into* bears also a deeply rooted resemblance to another contrary but cooperative neighbor – semantically distinct, but familiarly related – *vyzhit’* [ВЫЖИТЬ]: to survive; literally, that is, to *live out of*, to live beyond.

This ‘feeling-with’ is something Coetzee thinks of as a ‘moral capacity’ that allows us ‘to enter other [not exclusively human] lives and to live them from the inside’ (*Good Story* 154; 134).

This ‘feeling-with’ is textually embodied in the context of how the Karoo, much-loved native-land for these Coetzees, can wring a heart. “‘This place wrenches my heart’” Margot recalls John saying in the desert night confessing his childhood love for her and thinking of a book by Eugène Marais describing life lived for a year alongside a baboon troop, remembering Marais writing that ‘at nightfall, when the troop stopped foraging and watched the sun go down he could detect in the eyes of the older baboons the stirrings of melancholy, the birth of a first awareness of their own mortality’ (*Summertime* 96-97).

Meegevoel: not exactly *vzhivanie*, though *meegevoel* is clearly also consonant and concordant with (especially) the performative and representational arts; nor just sympathy (in Afrikaans *simpatie*) though it *can* mean this; nor only empathy (*invoeling*, *navoeling*) which again it can mean. This word *meegevoel* means *more* also, and it *means* also more (more distinctively, maybe even dangerously) in the sound and smell of its coupling, its musically distinctive orthographic singularity that mixes together what the English terms sympathy and empathy mostly try to keep separate nowadays: it means something like compassionate and comreasonable identification with another alongside whom one feels fellow feeling (but there are dangers here: which others count as fellows, and what constitutes “reason”; also, exactly what sort of feeling is here being designated?). *Meegevoel* smells of a together-knitting of consonant sentience and of consciousness; (this harbours another danger: to whom and to what is consciousness accorded?).

Meegevoel means, feels, smells, sounds, and looks something like some bodily symp-em-pathy, some third thing “beyond” sympathy and empathy, some defamiliarized and dehiscent polylogue (not just dialogue) that writing and reading can, together with enough care, response, respect (and defamiliarizing impediments) sometimes make happen also, opening up to the dehiscent release of variously gendered human and animal voices: feminine, masculine, and neuter, voices before which the writer might feel responsible, in part perhaps because these voices live also inside the body of the one who writes.

Meegevoel looks something like some other thing that can comreasonably and compassionately sometimes dovetail or synchronize bodies and textual bodies, the biological and the artificial, ethics, aesthetics, and politics, all the while keeping an eye and an ear and a gut-feeling open to multiply or fugally engendered excurses that avoid those political dangers lurking within sympathy and empathy, variously exploitable: more or less powerful forces (beautiful, seductive, visceral, persuasive, convincing, and therefore dangerous). Borrowing from Levinas, one could say *Meegevoel* is one way of *saying* the intimacy that can and does sometimes occur after imitation and commentary – those first obligations of fugal reading – have been *said*.

Meegevoel is one way of spelling the pursuant obligation of fugal reading that opens before and after familiarity has been achieved; that opens to the other and to an intimacy that refuses to return alterity to familiar Sameness without some (musical, ethical, spatial) surplus.



Winter on the Coetzee family farm; © Ben MacLennan, 2013

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Muzimatematica fugii, banda a doua: pârțul polifonic al lui Leopold Bloom și practica genurilor de tip contrapunct a lui J.M. Coetzee în *Meegevoel*

Acest eseu multipartit, care ajunge la cea de-a treia mișcare spațială, de altfel ultima, în acest număr, urmărește ca set de relații ale contrapunctului anumite puncte de contact, de suprapunere sau sincronie dintre diverse voci învecinate: cea literară, cea lingvistică, muzicală, autobiografică, matematică și etică. Tehnica sa de control e noțiunea – inevitabil abstractă și generală – de fugă, mai precis axată în sensul etimologic al fugii derivat din *fugere* și *fugare* – a fugi și a urmări sau a expulza (a trimite în exil). Cu toate că își păstrează independența față de „Muzimatematica fugii Banda întâi, punctul 3”, primele două eseuri publicate în numerele anterioare, această parte a eseului urmează antecedentele numerice cu care împărtășește interesul lipsei de așteptare a familiarului. Partea a treia revizitează și urmează, într-un spațiu al fugii pe care reușesc să-l creez, muzica de inginerie ortografică și uneori muzica intestinală a episodului „Sirenelor” din romanul *Ulysses* al lui Joyce, a cărui practică muzicală este contrapunctată de J.M. Coetzee în ficțiunea târzie, îndeosebi în *The Lives of Animals* și în *Summertime*. Eseul articulează o lectură și o scriere în cheia fugii ca materie a localizării, sincronizării și a hiatului trupurilor, a muzicii și a gândurilor sau a sâmburelui format din fragmentele puse cap la cap care deschid un text într-altul. Cu această ocazie, o preocupare constantă este modul în care sincronicitatea ar trebui urmărită prin problematica genului, înțelegând prin acest termen un indicator înainte de toate (dar nu în mod exclusiv) a procesului (familiar) de sortare și plasare a categoriilor sexuale, cu toate că nu doar și nu întotdeauna în grupuri de câte doi: suprapunerile și excluderile necesită nuanțări. Cu alte cuvinte, clasificarea genului, de exemplu, se face nu doar prin divizarea în masculin și feminin; neutrul aparține fără a aparține acestei clasificări de asemenea, astfel apare categoria castraților în aceste pagini. Așa sunt și variatele categorii a treia sau alta invitate să facă parte din aceste secvențe de pagini sortate: biologicul, culturalul, artificialul, să spunem; sau temporalul, spațialul, fuga; umanul, animalul, străinul; eticul, politicul, esteticul. Pentru a-și urmări prada, acest eseu – asemenea celor două părți anterioare – a ales el însuși exilul, acel cuvânt, acel spațiu și loc pe care Maurice Blanchot îl asociază cu literatura, Kafka și „condiția poetică” (237), fugind de domeniul nobil al argumentării convenționale și riscând aproape inadmisibilul: ca formă, de exemplu, de dragul spațiului și al formei prezentării, el evită sistemul de citare Chicago Style și face anumite gesturi prin care își ia anumite libertăți în spațierea sa, deși se conformează în alte privințe protocolului stilistic al revistei *Word and Text*.