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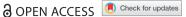
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RESEARCH ARTICLE



The beast and the sovereign in 'Circe': human and animal rights in Joyce studies

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ABSTRACT

My article will seek to interpret Bloom's trials and tribulations in the 'Circe' episode through Derrida's insight that 'between sovereign, criminal and beast, [there exists] a sort of obscure and fascinating complicity', as a way of considering consider what Joyce teaches us about the interplay between human and nonhuman rights in the episode and across Ulysses (B&S, 17). An analysis of these intertwined categories of being in the episode will reveal how 'Circe' emerges from Joyce's earlier work, such as 'Ireland at the Bar' (1907), in exploring how the sensational violence of colonialism violates both human and animal bodies and reflecting Derrida's sense 'that the animal is already political' (B&S, 14-15, my italics). Moving beyond 'Circe', my essay will function as a case study through which we might address the value of contemporary animal studies approaches to the politics of Joyce's Ulysses, often alongside and sometimes in contrast with a tradition of postcolonial modes of thought, ahead of its centenary.

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In James Joyce's 1907 'Ireland at the Bar' essay, he reflects on the criminalisation of the Irish-speaking rural poor via the case of Myles Joyce (1882), who was unjustly executed for murder; he was originally drawn to the case because of their shared family name. The midpoint of the essay – frequently quoted in Joyce criticism as if it were its ending, its pay off so to speak - is a moving reflection on how the bewildered and degraded Myles Joyce becomes the embodiment of the Irish nation facing colonial injustice: 'The figure of this bewildered old man, left over from a culture which is not ours, a deafmute before his judge, is a symbol of the Irish nation at the bar of public opinion'.2 While this essay is often discussed in postcolonial criticism of Joyce's work, critics have never been able to fit the closing few paragraphs on violence against animals in England and Ireland into their reading of

the essay. 'Ireland at the Bar' does not end with the figure of Myles Joyce before his judge. Instead Joyce's essay pivots rapidly and abruptly away from this injustice to discuss rural outrages, as he considers whether the harsh conditions in the Irish countryside might lead to both the murder Myles Joyce was accused of and to cruelty to animals.³ Joyce concludes that unfair reporting of Irish crime is the important factor and closes by highlighting connections between violence and injustice between humans and animals in connection with the English; first, recent killings of Belfast civilians by British soldiers and, second, the Great Wyrley Outrages, where 'barbaric, insane criminals have been rampaging against livestock for six years'. 4

In this famous case, the Great Wyrley community and local police force responded to a series of mainings of horses, cows and sheep, as well as a campaign of poison pen letters, by targeting a local solicitor and son of the vicar, George Edalji, because of his racially-mixed background. Edalji's father Shapurji Edalji was an Indian-born convert to Anglicanism who emigrated to Britain in 1866 and had eventually been appointed to the parish of Great Wyrley. The case remains extremely mysterious, but it is suggested that the police deliberately targeted the Edalji family, who had been periodically harassed since the 1880s. George Edalji was convicted to seven years' imprisonment, which, as Shompa Lahiri argues, was significantly out of step with normal sentencing for the offence. As Joyce reflects,

Five years ago, in order to quieten public anger, an innocent man, now freed, was condemned. But even when he was in prison the attacks continued. Last week two horses were found dead with the usual cuts to the base of the stomach and their guts spilled out over the grass.6

Edalji was eventually freed and exonerated due to the intervention of Arthur Conan Doyle, whose literary reputation as a writer of detective fiction lent weight to his counter-investigation of the case. 7 Doyle believed that he had identified the true culprits, as well as the motive of this violence against animals, in the racist antagonism of two local men, Peter and Paul Hudson (though they were never prosecuted).8 A widespread legal and bureaucratic recognition of the unsoundness of the conviction contributed to the establishment of the Court of Appeal in 1907. This case was thus called 'a new Dreyfus case' and 'a Dreyfus case in little'.9

The core significance of the Edalji case in legal history is 'the gradual appreciation by the British public that its criminal justice system was not infallible' and, as Adrian Hardiman reflected, it 'made a huge impression' on Joyce's attitude to the police and evidence. 10 However, the way Joyce distils the case to its stark essentials might mean that the most memorable, if not the most critically studied, part of this 1907 essay is Joyce's depiction of theriocide (a term coined by Piers Beirne to sum up the deliberate killing of animals), in the form of the two dead disembowelled horses with 'their guts spilled out over the grass'. 11 This violent, enigmatic ending to the essay, and Joyce's engagement with the whole Edalji case, highlights his early awareness of how those excluded from a culture of what Derrida terms 'carnophallogocentrism' are victimised or victimise others, as hard violence against marginalised people and animals emerges from a soft violence of biopolitical sovereignty, injustice, colonialism and meat-eating that targets women, minorities and animals in particular. 12 Once we unearth the history behind the essay we can see how, despite the choppy texture of Joyce's early prose, there is a deep and rich connection between Myles Joyce and George Edalji, despite Andrew Gibson's claim that here we see mere 'violent rhetoric'; while Joyce critics have made much of the postcolonial potential of Myles Joyce, no one has ever explored his knowledge of the Edalji case, with all its implications for thinking about human and animal rights. 13 For Joyce, what Myles Joyce, George Edalji, those killed in Belfast by colonial soldiers and the animals of Great Wyrley have in common is that they all suffered violence as a result of not being given appropriate ethical, political and legal recognition.

I would therefore like to argue in this essay, inspired by Derrida's theory and Joyce's reference to the interplay of violence against animals and humans in 'Ireland at the Bar', that it is important to include the animal in postcolonial readings of Ulysses focused on sovereignty in the Irish context. While Derrida asserts that the animal is always already political, contemporary animal studies writers such as David Nibert are closer to following up on this insight, having argued for a simultaneous consideration of animal rights and human rights in a model of 'interrelation' and 'entanglement'. 14 Similarly, scholars of law and literature such as Greta Olson have also concerned themselves with this intersection: in Criminals as Animals from Shakespeare to Lombroso, she examines how animal metaphor was used in literature in order to 'other' criminal, poor or 'undesirable' human subjects as part of denying them rights, even allowing writers to argue for their extermination as a group. 15 This project has had a transformative effect on Olson's work, who has more recently argued for a turn from classic American models of law and literature towards a more European focus on human rights within the field. ¹⁶ Judith Still has also explored the implications of Derrida's The Beast and Sovereign project in a way that has influenced my own argument, moving effortlessly from 'an examination of Derrida's response to the recurrent philosophical scrutiny of the difference between man and other animals, to the critical questions of how "we" treat (with) "the other", in the context of the continuity between the ways animals are treated and the ways that slaves, 'savages' and women were refused rights.¹⁷ In the last two years, two exemplary volumes have fully bridged postcolonial studies and animal studies: Evan Maina Mwangi's monograph on *The Postcolonial Animal* (2019) and Kelly Struthers Montford's and Chloë Taylor's edited volume *Colonialism and Animality* (2020). Mwangi even cites Joyce in several places.¹⁸

It is salutary to highlight this new work bridging animal studies, the postcolonial, and law and literature, because of the current disciplinary silos in Joyce Studies. Firstly, postcolonial Joyce scholars have historically tended to exclude the nonhuman when considering the effects of Empire. Secondly, a newer set of approaches to the animal, nonhuman and posthuman within Joyce Studies might sometimes exclude other forms of politics, including the postcolonial. Some highlights of Joycean scholarship on animals includes David Rando's work on Joyce's 'veterinary gaze', Sam Slote's essay on Garryowen, Maureen O'Connor's chapter on Joyce's signifying animals, and Margot Norris's and Cliff Mak's essays on animal figures in Finnegans Wake - but this work is undoubtedly more ethical, textual and historical than political in scope.¹⁹ This swerving of the political is also sometimes true of otherwise excellent work on Joyce and ecology, exemplified by Robert Brazeau's and Derek Gladwin's 2014 edited collection Eco-Joyce: The Environmental Imagination of James Joyce and Alison Lacivita's The Ecology of Finnegans Wake (2015). 20 In recent years, I have been attempting to address this lacuna through my own writing and editorial work: an exemplary essay that does address both animal studies and the postcolonial is Peter Adkins's 2017 approach to vegetarianism in *Ulysses*, published in my Humanities special issue on 'Joyce, Animals and the Nonhuman', which shows a complex historicised understanding of the postcolonial politics of meat-eating in 1904 Dublin.²¹ Additionally, my recent special issue of James Joyce Quarterly, edited with Michelle Witen, on 'Joyce and the Nonhuman' uses the 'nonhuman turn' in animal studies to include both the politics and ethics of Joyce's engagement with life beyond the human.²² Methodological divides which exclude either the human or the animal from critical consideration are also a feature, more widely, of both Irish Studies and Modernist Studies; for example, an otherwise brilliant volume of essays edited by Kathryn Kirkpatrick and Borbála Faragó on Animals in Irish Literature and Culture (2015) does not include a section that fully addresses the colonial/ postcolonial context, while an important recent postcolonial monograph, Mark Quigley's Empire's Wake: Postcolonial Irish Writing and the Politics of Modern Literary Form (2013), does not address animals or the environment as a theme.²³ In more conventional postcolonial historiography, Aaron Skabelund has shown how in the last decade a 'growing interest in animals and [...] renewed attention to imperialism have led to more research on the relationship between animals and imperialism' and that this work is crucial to reinvigorating the field.²⁴

In this sense it may not yet have fully dawned on Joyceans that we could be using the famous plurality and expansiveness of *Ulysses* to span

postcolonial and animal studies (as well as other fields), but I would argue that it is essential that we do so now. A recent article by Lauren Benjamin, published while the present essay was being finalised, points the way, sharing my own sense of a need to 'part company' with past scholars 'when it comes to their methodological insistence on disentangling sexuality, race, and animality' arguing instead in Joyce's text these categories of being 'form "taxonomies of power" that are culturally co-constituted and mutually reinforced'. 25 Benjamin likewise uses 'Circe' as the key episode for her argument and we share an understanding of how Bloom participates in Joyce's all-round critique of carnophallogocentric order; we differ in that she chooses moments where Bloom is disempowered and scapegoated as the key lens for examining these possibilities, where my use of The Beast and the Sovereign allows me to examine a wider range of more contradictory performances and postures across the episode, including those in which Bloom is identified with sovereign power. For me, ultimately, a focus on 'Circe' is an important case study for what Joyce teaches us about the interplay between human and nonhuman rights across *Ulysses* and his oeuvre more generally. While Bloom's appearance as a woman in the 'Circe' episode is frequently noted in Joyce criticism, his more varied metamorphoses into figures of the sovereign, the animal and the criminal are more rarely discussed. 26 My article will thus seek to interpret Bloom's trials and tribulations in the 'Circe' episode through Derrida's insight that 'between sovereign, criminal and beast, [there exists] a sort of obscure and fascinating complicity'. 27

So, what do we gain from considering Joyce's 'Circe' via Derrida's The Beast and the Sovereign? Primarily, Derrida's work allows me to show how these intertwined categories of being in the episode emerge from Joyce's earliest writings, such as 'Ireland at the Bar' (1907), in exploring how the sensational violence of colonialism violates both human and animal bodies, reflecting Derrida's sense 'that the animal is already political'. Further, while Derrida's famous 'The Animal That Therefore I Am' essay has had a great effect on contemporary animal studies, The Beast and the Sovereign's potential to bridge animal and human rights issues has not yet been fully explored. Crucially, Derrida's project in The Beast and the Sovereign investigates man as a 'political animal' but also asserts that the animal is already political and, especially, biopolitical. Throughout the two volumes, Derrida puns on 'et' and 'est' (the beast and the sovereign, the beast is the sovereign) but importantly, as part of avoiding straightforward allegorical readings of the animal, he also muddies any sense of hierarchy between these terms:

We should never be content to say, in spite of temptations, something like: ... the value or exercise of sovereignty are merely disguised manifestations of animal force ... We could invert the sense of the analogy and recognise, on the contrary, not that political man is still animal but that the animal is already political.29

Finally, as I will explore in more detail, this method is appropriate because it is likely that Joyce's 'Circe' has its full share of influence on Derrida's thought in The Beast and the Sovereign.³⁰

My choice of the 'Circe' episode as my focus for exploring the significance of Derrida's late work for Ulysses aims to build on Adkins's work on the earlier scenes of the novel and respond to Benjamin's recent reading of the feral in the episode, while taking account of its formal qualities - such as hallucination, transformation and phantasmagoria - that are shared with Derrida's thought in The Beast and the Sovereign. Derrida explores how 'an abundance of animal figures invades discourses of the political', as he investigates 'a compulsion (let's call it psychic and libidinal)' that 'pushes or attracts' political philosophers including Machiavelli, Hobbes and Rousseau 'towards zoomorphic visions or hallucinations ... a field where there is a greater chance of fantastic animal apparitions (I say "apparitions" in the sense of phenomena, but also of visionary epiphanies, be they chimerical or not)'. I would argue that Joyce, similarly, through the surrealist aspects of 'Circe', rejects straightforward allegorical or fabular readings of the animal, through visionary epiphanies that dramatise its political potential. Derrida's and Joyce's investigations of modes of being outside conventional relationships to law and citizenship thus allow us to consider the human/animal binary in new ways, or even to dispense with it. Indeed, the triangulation of the king, the criminal and the beast, which we see in both Derrida's theory and Joyce's 'Circe', might be the ideal refusal of human exceptionalism or anthropocentrism, as well as of more obviously political forms of power. Though Derrida's book itself is primarily dual, in that it is about the animal and the king, I have chosen to amplify the presence of the criminal in this paradigm, in keeping with my opening discussion of the sovereignty of the law in the context of Myles Joyce, George Edalji and the unfortunate animals of Great Wyrley. My overarching aim is to link animal studies approaches and postcolonial methods in considering the intersection of human and animal rights in the 'Circe' episode of Joyce's Ulysses.

While the criminal might not necessarily seem to belong with these two concepts of beast and sovereign, Derrida is interested in how each of these three terms appear in relation to the law compared to human and citizenship norms:

These modes of being-outside-the-law (be it the mode of what is called the beast, be it that of the criminal, ... be it the being-outside-the-law of the sovereign himself) -these different modes of being-outside-the-law can seem to be heterogenous among themselves, or even apparently heterogenous to the law, but the fact remains, sharing this common being-outside-the-law, beast, criminal, and sovereign have a troubling resemblance: they call on each other and recall each other, from one to the other; there is between sovereign, criminal



and beast ... a worrying familiarity, an unheimlich, uncanny reciprocal haunting. Both of them, all three of them, the animal, the criminal, and the sovereign, are outside the law, at a distance from or above the laws: criminal, beast, and sovereign strangely resemble each other while seeming to be situated at the antipodes, at each other's antipodes.³²

For Derrida, the sovereign is primarily above both the law and the human, the beast is primarily below the law and the human and the criminal is above the law and below the human. All of these categories of being are outside or beyond citizenship as we normally understand it. Similarly, in 'Circe', Bloom is treated to a set of experiences of being above and below the law, which are pivotal for his character and which express the interpenetration of human rights and animal rights within the political which I found originally within 'Ireland at the Bar'. These transformations fit with Derrida's focus on the atmosphere of the fable and the fairy tale for dramatising the political animal in all its forms.

Derrida's text thus undoubtedly illuminates Joyce's 'Circe' and its overall Homeric parallel of the transformation of men into beasts and, indeed, it seems likely that many of Derrida's most important insights in The Beast and the Sovereign -whether about the political, the law, the animal or all three - are founded on his initial reading of Ulysses. This Joycean influence in Derrida's thought is explicitly foregrounded in the second volume of The Beast and the Sovereign which includes Derrida's brief but deep engagement with Joyce's neglected nonfictional work on Defoe.33 Here Derrida argues that Joyce's essays show connections between Defoe's development of an English national style and 'the prefiguration of an imperialist, colonialist sovereignty' before a brief digression on Bloom's view of whether animals bury their dead in 'Hades'. 34 Further, Derrida's idea of the 'uncanny' or 'haunting' nature of the connections between king, criminal and animal in the passage quoted above speaks especially to the transformations and hallucinations of Leopold Bloom in the 'Circe' episode of Joyce's Ulysses. Derrida also writes of the 'vertigo of this unheimlich, uncanny hallucination, one would be as though prey to a haunting, or rather the spectacle of a spectrality' that blurs these categories, indicating how The Beast and the Sovereign does not merely speak usefully to the content of Ulysses, but also how it appears to emerge from its texture and technique.³⁵ In this critical phase of re-examining Derrida's legacy as a political and legal thinker of both human and nonhuman rights, we find that, rather than simply applying a new critical methodology to Joyce's work, the conditions are right to acknowledge the role of *Ulysses* in *shaping* this mode of thought.³⁶

Joyce has been preparing for the 'Circe' metamorphoses of Bloom from his first use of the unusual term 'metempsychosis' in the mouths of the Blooms in the 'Calypso' episode, which first prompts us to think that experiences of becoming-nonhuman might be important to *Ulysses*:

- —Metempsychosis, he said, frowning. It's Greek: from the Greek. That means the transmigration of souls.
- —O, rocks! she said. Tell us in plain words. [...]
- -Some people believe, he said, that we go on living in another body after death, that we lived before. They call it reincarnation [...] Metempsychosis, he said, is what the ancient Greeks called it. They used to believe you could be changed into an animal or a tree, for instance. What they called nymphs, for example.³⁷

This is one of the rare instances of tenderness or at least full responsiveness between the Blooms, but one which is arrested by the smell of Bloom's burning breakfast of kidneys: ironically Bloom breaks off from an explanation of pantheist beliefs in a union between human and nonhuman in order to consume animal bodies. Bloom's explanation has always been read as Joyce's metatextual pointer towards the Homeric parallel, focused on Bloom's explanation of reincarnation, but I would argue that it also importantly prefigures the 'Circe' episode's emphasis on panpsychism in the recognition that 'you could be changed into an animal or tree', through Bloom's reference to an Ovidian sense of metamorphosis. In the Gilbert schema, Joyce identifies the art of the 'Circe' episode as magic, and the technique as hallucination, but less noted is the symbol of 'zoology' listed first in the Linati schema, alongside pantheism and other relevant terms. Indeed, Bloom's image of a nymph, first seen here in 'Calypso' is given life in the 'Circe' episode.

This moment, and the kidneys as interruption, also demonstrates the way in which Bloom is at risk throughout Ulysses, at least within an animal studies framework, via his dual identity as animal lover, feeding gulls and playing with his cat, alongside Joyce's initial statement of his identity in 'Calvpso':

Mr Leopold Bloom ate with relish the inner organs of beasts and fowls. He liked thick giblet soup, nutty gizzards, a stuffed roast heart, liverslices fried with crustcrumbs, fried hencods' roes. Most of all he liked grilled mutton kidneys which gave to his palate a fine tang of faintly scented urine.³⁸

While Bloom often appears very modern, very liberal, a masochist, a feminist, an animal-lover, a hen-pecked bringer-of-breakfast-in-bed-to-his-wife, this introduction to him is as a subject invested in the concept of 'carnophallogocentrism', a term coined by Derrida (but which could have been made up by Joyce), who reflects 'There was a time, not long ago and not yet over, in which "we, men" meant "we adult male Europeans, carnivorous and capable of sacrifice". 39 Carnophallogocentrism excluded not only animals from full participation in the concept of the human, but also rejected human cultures that did not eat meat, cultures that valued the female, and

non-standard European languages. In short, carnophallogocentrism is inherent in colonialism and in racism, and is particularly relevant for an oppressed 1904 Ireland in which meat, animal products and food for animals were mostly exported out of the country for English markets. For example, Bloom's choice to eat pork in 'Calypso', against his Jewish background, reflects his buying into a dominant carnophallogocentric culture. But at other times throughout the novel, meat disgusts Bloom, as he identifies with animals and is excluded from Irish male cultural norms. Adkins notes particular crises in Bloom's attitude to meat in episodes such as 'Hades' and 'Lestrygonians', which involve substantial reflections on the postcolonial politics of homosociality, as he argues that 'Bloom's sexual identity is repeatedly constructed or deconstructed in relation to the dominant logic of carnophallogocentric masculinity'. 40

In the following broad pattern, across the 'Circe' episode, Bloom will be first rejected as a criminal, then ennobled as a king, and finally threatened with permanent animalisation and even with consumption as food:

- (1) Becomes-criminal (Joyce, Ulysses, 'Circe', 15.672-1210 and 15.1752-1956)
- (2) Becomes-sovereign (Joyce, *Ulysses*, 'Circe', 15.1470-1751)
- (3) Becomes-animal (Joyce, *Ulysses*, 'Circe', 15.2848-3449)

Given that Derrida's key example in The Beast and the Sovereign of the mixture of criminal, animal and sovereign is King Louis the 16th of France, we might expect to see Bloom as a king first, then deposed, criminalised and executed. 41 But actually, in a more complex way, Bloom becomes a criminal first, and then a king later in the chapter, then a criminal once more, and finally an animal in his encounter with Bella/Bello Cohen. Further, as I will show, these three categories of being outside the law are blurred and interlinked by Joyce. As Chris Danta has glossed Derrida in a recent essay, 'If there is a moral to The Beast & the Sovereign, Derrida expresses it here in the question: Might sovereignty be devouring?'. 42 In Bloom's transformations in the 'Circe' chapter, whether it be into predator (represented by the king and the criminal) or into prey (represented as the slavery of beast of burden, or the vulnerability of the food animal), he gains more identities but also risks the devouring of his identity by forms of sovereignty, law and cultural practice.

Many of the contradictions within Bloom's character thus come home to roost in the 'Circe' episode of *Ulysses* as this everyman becomes fundamentally nonhuman, by becoming-animal, becoming-king and becomingcriminal. These transformations appear to be provoked by the way that Bloom enters the 'Circe' episode in his 'carnophallogocentrism' guise, carrying parcels with 'a lukewarm pig's crubeen' and 'a cold sheep's trotter'. 43

When he relents from these appetites and gives the meat to a dog – who at first resembles a retriever but transforms into many other breeds becoming once more the benevolent Bloom who feeds Dublin's beasts, he is quickly overshadowed by the evil spirits of the chapter. Bloom's action in giving the crubeen to the dog is bookended by an oppressive colonial law represented by Private Carr and Private Compton, who will eventually attack Stephen, and 'The Watch', who immediately criminalise Bloom:

PRIVATE CARR

Bennett? He's my pal. I love old Bennett.

THE NAVVY

(shouts.)

The galling chain.

And free our native land.

(He staggers forward, dragging them with him. Bloom stops, at fault. The dog approaches, his tongue outlolling, panting.)

[...]

BLOOM

My spine's a bit limp. Go or turn? And this food? Eat it and get all pigsticky. Absurd I am. Waste of money. One and eightpence too much. (The retriever drives a cold snivelling muzzle against his hand, wagging his tail.) Strange how they take to me. Even that brute today. Better speak to him first. Like women they like rencontres. Stinks like a polecat. Chacun son goût. He might be mad. Dogdays. Uncertain in his movements. Good fellow! Fido! Good fellow! Garryowen! (The wolfdog sprawls on his back, wriggling obscenely with begging paws, his long black tongue lolling out.) Influence of his surroundings. Give and have done with it. Provided nobody. (Calling encouraging words he shambles back with a furtive poacher's tread, dogged by the setter into a dark stalestunk corner. He unrolls one parcel and goes to dump the crubeen softly but holds back and feels the trotter.) Sizeable for threepence. But then I have it in my left hand. Calls for more effort. Why? Smaller from want of use. O, let it slide. Two and six.

(With regret he lets the unrolled crubeen and trotter slide. The mastiff mauls the bundle clumsily and gluts himself with growling greed, crunching the bones. Two raincaped watch approach, silent, vigilant. They murmur together.)

THE WATCH

Bloom, Of Bloom, For Bloom, Bloom,

(Each lays hand on Bloom's shoulder.)



FIRST WATCH

Caught in the act. Commit no nuisance.44

Within the quoted passage, the breed of dog that Bloom feeds changes from a retriever, to wolfdog, to setter, to mastiff: the dogs alternate loosely between those associated in Joyce's day primarily with England (the retriever and the mastiff) and with Ireland (the wolfdog and the setter), showing a colonial reading of animal life within the passage. These breeds, and perhaps especially the return of Garryowen from the 'Cyclops' episode, reflects conflicts already identified within Bloom between identification with meat-eating and the coloniser or with disavowal of carnophallogocentrism and a choice to be with the colonised. But, revealingly, as the presence of Garryowen, the dog of the nationalist Citizen shows, all of these forms of sovereignty are 'devouring': all the dogs eat the trotter and crubeen, leaving Bloom at the mercy of 'The Watch'. Throughout the episode from this crucial moment, Bloom will be repeatedly accused of political and biopolitical crimes: a mixture of treason and violence against women and animals. For example, during Bloom's threatened execution in 'Circe', he is also called Jack the Ripper, reflecting the value of concepts such as carnophallogocentrism for theorising violence. 45 In feeding the dog, 'The Watch' accuse him first of 'cruelty to animals'; 46 much later in the episode, during Bloom's trial, the remains of the crubeen and trotter will be mistaken for 'a bomb' and an 'Infernal machine with a time fuse'. 47

While the criminal is an important identity for Bloom, as I have sketched out, Bloom also moves rapidly from criminal to sovereign as the episode progresses. The transition from criminal to king is marked by a coronation scene in an English Imperial mode, with traces of Empire in the symbolism of the Koh-i-Noor diamond, and of unionism in the mixing of heraldic symbols of the four nations making up the British Isles:

ALL

God save Leopold the First! [...]

MICHAEL, ARCHBISHOP OF ARMAGH

(pours a cruse of hair oil over Bloom's head.) Gaudium magnum annuntio vobis. Habemus carneficem. Leopold, Patrick, Andrew, David, George, be thou anointed!

(Bloom assumes a mantle of cloth of gold and puts on a ruby ring. He ascends and stands on the stone of destiny. The representative peers put on at the same time their twentyeight crowns. Joybells ring in Christ church, Saint Patrick's, George's and gay Malahide. Mirus bazaar fireworks go up from all sides with symbolical phallopyrotechnic designs. The peers do homage, one by one, approaching and genuflecting.)

THE PEERS

I do become your liege man of life and limb to earthly worship.

(Bloom holds up his right hand on which sparkles the Koh-i-Noor diamond. His palfrey neighs. Immediate silence. Wireless intercontinental and interplanetary transmitters are set for reception of message.)⁴⁸

Blurring criminal and king, the Bishop of Armagh announces here, in crowning Bloom, 'Habemus carneficem', which means 'we have an executioner'. In a connection that Derrida would have loved, the root of the word 'carneficem' contains flesh – its literal meaning is flesh-maker or meat-maker – and so the word can be interpreted as meaning 'butcher', or 'murderer', or 'executioner', or here, for Joyce, 'king'. In short, being crowned king in this moment means being prepared to do violence against criminal and animal alike; the detail of the Koh-i-Noor diamond being present on Bloom's hand in this moment suggests the sovereign's complicity in the violent subjugation of native peoples and species involved in Empire-building. Similarly, while certain exotic species such as the lion and the elephant became symbolic of Empire, as Adkins has demonstrated, Joyce is fully attuned to imperialism's more everyday dependence on domesticated animals that allowed practical geographical control, such as dogs, horses and cattle, as the detail of Bloom's 'palfrey' in this passage implies.⁴⁹

While Bloom goes through successive identifiable phases of transformation into criminal, sovereign and animal, Joyce also often blurs these concepts within the same scene. During the trial scene of 'Circe', Philip Beaufoy calls Bloom 'a beast' twice in the space of a page, while he is called a 'pig dog' by Mrs Mervyn Talboys and threatened with punishments including 'gelding' and 'vivisection' by Mrs Bellingham.⁵⁰ In another example from the trial scene the mob shouts:

THE MOB

'Lynch him! Roast him! He's as bad as Parnell was. Mr Fox!'

(Mother Grogan throws her boot at Bloom. Several shopkeepers from upper and lower Dorset street throw objects of little or no commercial value, hambones, condensed milk tins, unsaleable cabbage, sheep's tails, odd pieces of fat.)⁵¹

The first exclamation about lynching marks Bloom as human and racially othered, but within the same outburst he is also seen as a 'fox' and a food animal to be roasted, while the mention of Parnell points two ways as both a kingly and criminal figure. Parnell is 'My dead king' for Mr Casey in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, but in 'Circe' and then later in 'Eumaeus', Joyce also recalls the forged Piggott letters implicating Parnell in the Phoenix Park murders which allowed those hostile to the Irish Home Rule movement to cast him as criminal rather than politician.⁵²

The reference to Parnell here further makes clear that, for Joyce at least, a triangulation of criminal, beast and sovereign is a distinctively Irish postcolonial phenomenon, echoing Stephen Dedalus's earlier judgement that Ireland is 'the old sow that eats her farrow', which will be repeated within his own 'Circe' hallucination of 'Old Gummy Granny'. 53 Further, the objects thrown in disgust at this version of Bloom by this mob who reject him are discarded animal products: 'hambones, condensed milk tins, unsaleable cabbage, sheep's tails, odd pieces of fat'. 54

In a postcolonial Irish context, while the animal appears superficially the most abject position, the Irish subject is equally at risk within any of the postures identified by Derrida: indeed, being ennobled with distinctive Irish heroism and sovereignty might make someone more likely to be quickly cast down into the criminal and beast categories of being. Joyce's judgements on Parnell in his early non-fiction writings often involved politicised animal figures: after his fall from power after a famous political sex scandal, Joyce reflected that Parnell 'went from county to county, from city to city, "like a hunted hind", a spectral figure with the signs of death upon his brow. 55 The essay concludes with savage irony, fitting in with the Derridean emphasis on the fable throughout The Beast and the Sovereign, that 'In his last proud appeal to his people, he implored his fellow-countrymen not to throw him to the English wolves howling around him. It redounds to the honour of his fellow-countrymen that they did not fail that desperate appeal. They did not throw him to the English wolves: they tore him apart themselves'.56 From a sovereign animal, such as the stag, Parnell becomes a prey animal, the feminised 'hind'; and his fall turns the society around him, on both sides of the Irish sea, violently carnivorous. But Parnell is already on his way to becoming more ambiguously and richly nonhuman, 'the shade of the "uncrowned king". 57

As I have previously shown, Bloom's feminisation is much more frequently discussed in Joyce criticism than his experience of becominganimal, but it is still important to address both of these aspects of his transformation. In the company of Bello, Bloom becomes a horse to be ridden and may even become food: 58

BELLO

... Very possibly I shall have you slaughtered and skewered in my stables and enjoy a slice of you with crisp crackling from the baking tin basted and baked like sucking pig with rice and lemon or currant sauce. It will hurt you.

... (The brothel cook, Mrs Keogh, wrinkled, greybearded, in a greasy bib, men's grey and green socks and brogues, flour-smeared, a rollingpin stuck with raw pastry in her bare red arm and hand, appears at the door.)⁵⁹

Here Bello/Bella has become the figure of the sovereign and Bloom as animal is at risk of being killed and eaten – but we must remember that elsewhere in the episode, the meat-eater/predatory Bloom was identified with the aggressor, a tyrant, a butcher, a murderer and an executioner. Thus Bloom only assumes his identity and takes back sovereignty through determined animalisation of Bello/Bella in an act of rhetorical violence:

BLOOM

(composed, regards her) Passée. Mutton dressed as lamb [...] Your eyes are as vapid as the glass eyes of your stuffed fox ... [...]

BELLA

(contemptuously) You're not game, in fact. (her sowcunt barks) Fbhracht!

BLOOM

(contemptuously) Clean your nailless middle finger first, your bully's cold spunk is dripping from your cockscomb. Take a handful of hay and wipe yourself. 60

For me, this final verbal contest between Bloom and Bello/Bella speaks to the La Fontaine fables that Derrida takes as key examples in The Beast and the Sovereign: Danta argues that 'For Derrida, the fable is a type of primordial speech act that performs the disjunction between force and right'.61 Bloom's misogynistic language is forceful, rescuing him from a death and consumption associated with women and animals through identification with carnogophallocentrism and with sovereignty, though we might sense as readers that this is not right. While elsewhere in the episode, the animal is seen positively, associated with magic and the anarchic spirit of the chapter, it is telling that we see a return to more straightforward hierarchies and power struggles of sovereignty when it comes to gender. In an important recent essay, Laura Lovejoy highlights the latent misogyny of animalised women in Joyce, asking whether asks whether the trope of the woman-asanimal might resist the misogyny of early twentieth-century Ireland's sexual politics, or whether Joyce's invocation of this historically patriarchal construction instead reinforces the historical dehumanisation of women and refusal of their rights.⁶² Similarly, Benjamin argues that 'Bloom's transformation from male to female and from female back to male does not reveal a state of gender ambiguity so much as it illuminates the way that sex is conceived in animalized terms'. 63 Judith Still has identified a similar myopia about the role of women within Derrida's paradigm, but is adamant that his overall focus on sovereignty is also relevant to the history of women's rights.⁶⁴ Here Bloom appears to again embrace devouring sovereignty in order to escape from feminisation and yet he does not fully break the spell of the episode, only passing it onto to Stephen who will be plagued by the ethical claims of women even more painfully, as he confronts the spectre of his 'beastly dead' mother. 65 Maddened by Mulligan's stark, dehumanising claim that 'Kinch dogsbody killed her bitchbody', Stephen rushes out into a confrontation with the two soldiers, Privates Compton and Carr, who overshadowed Bloom's encounter with the dog examined earlier. 66 Haunted by animalised women like 'Old Gummy Granny' and 'the old sow that eats her farrow' who wish him to kill the soldiers, Stephen ironically challenges the soldiers that there can be 'human philirenists' outside of the 'struggle for life' and is threatened and attacked by these colonial representatives, who want to 'make a bleeding butcher's shop of the bugger'. 67 Stephen's encounter, similarly, has qualities of the fable as a 'primordial speech act that performs the disjunction between force and right' and, like Bloom's encounter with Bello/Bella, takes a cynical view of the possibility of escape from a devouring sovereignty.⁶⁸ In the world of 'Circe', human rights, women's rights and animal rights may be shown to be intertwined but they are also consistently breached rather than protected by representatives of the law and the state; the power of the episode is diagnostic, rather than reparative.

By tracing the development of Joyce's thought in relation to sovereignty from his early essays onward as far as *Ulysses*, as well as considering our critical history of approaches to *Ulysses* so far, I have shown how Joyce values intersectional identification, however messy and unresolved, between those groups excluded from or marginalised within the enlightenment project, especially women, animals and colonial subjects. Across Joyce's career, figures such as Myles Joyce, George Edalji, Charles Stewart Parnell, Leopold Bloom and Stephen Dedalus are powerfully interconnected through the use of animal figures to represent themes of power and injustice. Joyce's diagnosis of our need to embrace transformative experiences of sovereignty and, conversely, its absence, is reflected in his repeated elevation and puncturing of Bloom in the 'Circe' episode, which I have productively interpreted through a Derridean framework. Instead of his normal identity in relation to the law and in criticism as petit bourgeois hero, in 'Circe' Bloom becomes both the wolf and the lamb, the oppressor and the oppressed. As I have shown, these aspects of Bloom's character have been latent in the novel since 'Calypso' and his response to Bello/Bella in its invocation of the fabular 'disjunction between force and right' makes it unlikely that he has fully embraced the radical message of 'Circe'. ⁶⁹ As Benjamin puts it, the episode has 'a liberatory potential that is never actualized'. 70 Still, while Bloom and Stephen ultimately have limited perspectives on their unresolved zoomorphic hallucinations, readers of *Ulysses* in the twenty-first century can see powerful and transformative connections between animal studies and postcolonial studies in the content and texture of the novel. This essay



therefore functions as a case study, and an opportunity for future scholars, offering a challenge for us all to work together and develop new hybrid methodologies ahead of the 2022 centenary of the novel.

Notes

- 1. See Margaret Kelleher's recent book on this injustice in the context of Irish language politics, The Maamtrasna Murders: Language, Life and Death in Nineteenth-Century Ireland (Dublin: UCD Press, 2018).
- 2. James Joyce, 'Ireland at the Bar', in Occasional, Critical and Political Writing, ed. Kevin Barry (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 145-7 (146).
- 3. Joyce, 'Ireland at the Bar', p. 146.
- 4. Ibid., p. 147. My account of the case is indebted to Adrian Hardiman's *Joyce in* Court (London: Head of Zeus, 2017), which explores several legal echoes between the Edalji case and trials mentioned in Ulysses and Finnegans *Wake*, pp. 68–77.
- 5. Shompa Lahiri, 'Uncovering Britain's South Asian past: The case of George Edalji', Immigrants & Minorities, 17.3 (1998), pp. 22-33.
- 6. Joyce, 'Ireland at the Bar', p. 147.
- 7. The Edalji case has had a literary legacy in the form of Julian Barnes's novel Arthur and George (2005), which focuses on Conan Doyle's intervention.
- 8. Lahiri, 'Uncovering Britain's South Asian past', p. 30.
- 9. Conan Doyle Solves a New Dreyfus Case, The New York Times, 2nd February 1907: 1.
- 10. Adrian Hardiman, Joyce in Court (London: Head of Zeus, 2017), p. 70.
- 11. On theriocide, see Piers Bierne, Murdering Animals: Writings on Theriocide, Homicide and Nonspeciesist Criminology (Houndsmills: Palgrave, 2018).
- 12. Jacques Derrida, 'Force of Law: The Mystical Foundations of Authority', in Deconstruction and the Possibility of Justice, ed. Drucilla Cornell et al. (New York and London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 3-67 (19).
- 13. Andrew Gibson, 'Desolating Certainties: The "Triestine Writings" and the Return of the Liberals, 1904-1906', in The Strong Spirit: History, Politics and Aesthetics in the Writings of James Joyce (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 92–122 (115-116).
- 14. See David Nibert's, Animal Rights/Human Rights: Entanglements of Oppression and Liberation (Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield, 2002) and his Animal Oppression and Human Violence (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), as well as the two volumes of Animal Oppression and Capitalism edited by Nibert, Santa Barbara (California: Praeger, 2017).
- 15. Greta Olson, Criminals as Animals from Shakespeare to Lombroso (Berlin/ Boston: DeGruyter, 2013).
- 16. Greta Olson, 'The Turn to Passion: Has Law and Literature become Law and Affect?', Law & Literature, 28:3 (2016), pp. 335-53.
- 17. Judith Still, Derrida and Other Animals: The Boundaries of the Human (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015), p. 6.
- 18. See Mwangi, The Postcolonial Animal: African Literature and Posthuman Ethics (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2019), p. 101, 141, 206, 213.
- 19. David Rando, 'The Cat's Meow: Ulysses, Animals, and the Veterinary Gaze', James Joyce Quarterly, 46.3-4 (Spring 2009), pp. 529-43; Sam Slote,



'Garryowen and the Bloody Mangy Mongrel of Irish Modernity', James Joyce Quarterly, 46.3-4 (Spring 2009), pp. 545–57; Maureen O'Connor, "Mrkgnao!": Signifying Animals in the Fiction of James Joyce', in James Joyce, ed. Albert Wachtel (Ipswich, MA: Salem, 2013), pp. 101-19; Margot Norris, 'The Animals of James Joyce's Finnegans Wake', MFS: Modern Fiction Studies, 60.3 (Fall 2014), pp. 527-43; Cliff Mak, 'Joyce's Indifferent Animals: Boredom and the Subversion of Fables in Finnegans Wake', Modernist Cultures, 11.2 (2016), pp. 179-205.

- 20. Robert Brazeau and Derek Gladwin, eds, Eco-Joyce: The Environmental Imagination of James Joyce (Cork: Cork University Press, 2014) and Alison Lacivita, The Ecology of Finnegans Wake (Gainesville, Florida: University Press of Florida, 2015).
- 21. Peter Adkins, 'The Eyes of That Cow: Eating Animals and Theorizing Vegetarianism in James Joyce's Ulysses', 'Joyce, Animals and the Nonhuman', ed. by Katherine Ebury, Humanities, 6.3 (2017), n.pag.; https://doi.org/ 10.3390/h6030046
- 22. 'Joyce and the Nonhuman', James Joyce Quarterly, ed. Katherine Ebury and Michelle Witen, 58.1-2 (Fall 2020-Winter 2021). See in particular essays by Robert Brazeau and Mark Steven.
- 23. Kathryn Kirkpatrick and Borbála Faragó, Animals in Irish Literature and Culture (Houndsmills: Palgrave, 2016) and Mark Quigley, Empire's Wake: Postcolonial Irish Writing and the Politics of Modern Literary Form (New York: Fordham, 2013).
- 24. Aaron Skabelund, 'Animals and Imperialism: Recent Historiographical Trends', History Compass, 11.10 (2013), pp. 801-7 (801).
- 25. Lauren Benjamin, 'Circe's Feral Beasts: Women and Other Animals in Joyce's Ulysses', Journal of Modern Literature, 43.2 (Winter 2020), pp. 41-59 (44).
- 26. James Joyce, Ulysses, ed. Hans Walter Gabler (London: The Bodley Head, 2002). Benjamin's essay also sees Bloom's feminisation as a key flashpoint (2020, 41-59). On Bloom's feminisation, see also Marsanne Brammer, 'Joyce's "Hallucinian via": Mysteries, Gender and the Staging of "Circe", Joyce Studies Annual 7 (1996), pp. 86-124. Ewa Ziarek, "Circe": Joyce's Argumentum ad Feminam', in Gender in Joyce (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1997), pp. 150-69; Oriana Palusci, 'Modernist Sex-Change on Paper: Gender Markers in Joyce's "Circe" and Woolf's Orlando, Parallaxes: Virginia Woolf Meets James Joyce, ed. Marco Canani and Sara Sullam (Cambridge Scholars, 2014), pp. 152-66. On animals in 'Circe', see Eric D. Smith, 'I Have Been a Perfect Pig: A Semiosis of Swine in "Circe", Joyce Studies Annual 13 (2002), pp. 129-46; Maud Ellmann, 'Ulysses: Changing into an Animal', Field Day Review (2006), pp. 74-93. One essay that does bridge questions of race, women and animals in 'Circe' is Joan Jastrebski's 'Pig Dialectics: Women's Bodies as Performed Dialectical Images in the "Circe" Episode of Ulysses', James Joyce and the Fabrication of an Irish Identity (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2001), pp. 151-75. Joyce, Ulysses, 'Circe', 15.2943-2949.
- 27. Jacques Derrida, The Beast and the Sovereign Volume I, trans. by Geoffrey Bennington (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2009), p. 17.
- 28. Derrida, The Beast and the Sovereign Volume I, 14-15, my italics.
- 29. Derrida, The Beast and the Sovereign Volume I, 14-15.
- 30. There is a substantial critical background on Joyce's influence on Derrida, but much of the scholarship focuses on Joyce and deconstruction in general,

apolitical terms, focusing on a period before Derrida's late turn towards analysing forms of justice and injustice: for some examples, see Murray McArthur's 'The Example of Jovce: Derrida Reading Jovce', James Jovce Quarterly, 32.2 (Winter 1995), pp. 227-41; Peter Mahon's Imagining Joyce and Derrida: Between Finnegans Wake and Glas (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007); Andrew Mitchell and Sam Slote, Derrida and Joyce: Texts and Contexts (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2013); Stephen Abblitt, 'Love, Infidelity, and Postcards: Derrida and Joyce', Mosaic: An Interdisciplinary Critical Journal, 50.3 (2017), pp. 1–17. One exception to this rule is Christine van Boheemen-Saaf's Joyce, Derrida, Lacan and the Trauma of History: Reading, Narrative and Postcolonialism (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), which conceptualises Joyce's influence on Derrida and other thinkers in the context of colonial trauma. Additionally, Derrida's 'The Animal That Therefore I Am' essay is, justly, often the starting point for any critical exploration of Joyce's engagement with animal life, but Derrida's engagement with animality is still rarely used as a sustained methodology even within this strand of Joyce Studies.

- 31. Derrida, The Beast and the Sovereign Volume I, p. 81.
- 32. Derrida, The Beast and the Sovereign Volume I, p. 17.
- 33. Derrida, *The Beast and the Sovereign Volume II*, trans. by Geoffrey Bennington (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2011), pp. 15–17 (16). The whole second volume of this project is devoted mainly to animals and politics in Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*.
- 34. Derrida, The Beast and the Sovereign Volume II, p. 16.
- 35. Derrida, The Beast and the Sovereign Volume I, p. 18.
- 36. Joyce's influence on theorists important to both animal studies and the 'non-human turn' goes beyond Derrida including Deleuze and Guattari and Jane Bennett. On Deleuze see Ebury, 'Becoming-Animal in the Epiphanies: Joyce Between Fiction and Non-Fiction', in *Joyce's Non-Fiction Writings: Outside His Jurisfiction*, ed. Katherine Ebury and James Alexander Fraser (Houndsmills: Palgrave, 2018), pp. 175–94. On Jane Bennett, see Ebury, 'Joyce's Non-Human Ecologies', in *New James Joyce Studies* ed. Catherine Flynn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021).
- 37. Joyce, *Ulysses*, 'Calypso', 4.331-365.
- 38. Joyce, *Ulysses*, 'Calypso', 4.1-5.
- 39. Derrida, 'Force of Law', p. 18.
- 40. Adkins, 'The Eyes of That Cow: Eating Animals and Theorizing Vegetarianism in James Joyce's *Ulysses*', n.pag.: https://doi.org/10.3390/h6030046
- 41. See Derrida, The Beast and the Sovereign Volume I, pp. 229–231, 290, 339.
- 42. Chris Danta, "Might Sovereignty Be Devouring?" Derrida and the Fable', *Sub-Stance*, 43.2, (2014), pp. 37–49 (38).
- 43. Joyce, *Ulysses*, 'Calypso', 15.158-159.
- 44. Joyce, Ulysses, 'Circe', 15.629-680.
- 45. Ibid., 15.1153.
- 46. Ibid., 15.694.
- 47. Ibid., 15.1198-1199.
- 48. Ibid., 15.1480-1501.
- 49. See valuable work by historians of Empire including Virginia DeJohn Anderson, Creatures of Empire: How Domestic Animals Transformed Early America (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2002); Kathleen Kete, ed., A Cultural



History of Animals in the Age of Empire (Oxford, Berg, 2009); John Miller, Empire and the Animal Body: Violence, Identity and Ecology in Victorian Adventure Fiction (London and New York: Anthem, 2012); Greg Bankoff and Sandra Swart, Breeds of Empire: The 'Invention' of the Horse in Southeast Asia and Southern Africa 1500–1950 (Copenhagen: NIAS Press, 2007).

- 50. Joyce, Ulysses, 'Circe', 15.11114 and 15.1105.
- 51. Ibid., 15.1761-166.
- 52. On echoes of the Piggott case and trial in Circe, see Margot Backus, 'Unorthodox Methods in the Home Rule Newspaper Wars: Irish Nationalism, Phoenix Park, and the Fall of Parnell', in Scandal Work: James Joyce, the New Journalism, and the Home Rule Newspaper Wars (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2013), pp. 22-58.
- 53. Joyce, *Ulysses*, 'Circe', 15.4582–83
- 54. Ibid, 15.1766-66.
- 55. Jovce, 'The Shade of Parnell', Occasional, Critical and Political Writing, 191-196 (196).
- 56. Joyce, 'The Shade of Parnell', p. 196.
- 57. Ibid, p. 196.
- 58. Joyce, Ulysses, 'Circe', 15.2943-2949.
- 59. Ibid, 15,2903-2925.
- 60. Ibid, 15.3480-3490.
- 61. Danta, "Might Sovereignty Be Devouring?" Derrida and the Fable', p. 43.
- 62. Laura Lovejoy, 'The Bestial Feminine in Finnegans Wake', Humanities, 6 (2017), n.pag.; doi:10.3390/h6030058
- 63. Benjamin, 'Circe's Feral Beasts', p. 53.
- 64. Still, Derrida and Other Animals, p. 6.
- 65. Joyce, Ulysses, 'Circe', 15.4170.
- 66. Ibid, 15.4178-4179.
- 67. Ibid, 15.4433-4630.
- 68. Danta, "Might Sovereignty Be Devouring?" Derrida and the Fable', p. 43.
- 70. Benjamin, 'Circe's Feral Beasts', p. 55.

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