TIME AND WALKING MAN: THE SPATIO-TEMPORAL POLITICS OF PERAMBULATION IN *ULYSSES* AND 'RHAPSODY ON A WINDY NIGHT'

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In *Time and Western Man*, Wyndham Lewis makes the contentious, and thus quite characteristic, claim that "the self-conscious time-sense […] has now been erected into a universal philosophy" (81). Whilst the implication made as to the predominance of the problems of time and temporality in philosophical discourse is not unreasonable - the work of Henri Bergson in the early decades of the twentieth century had significant reverberations in modern thought - the suggestion that it is this notion of the subjective 'time-sense' that is universally accepted is more problematic. This is mainly due to the notable absence of Relativity Theory in Lewis' claim: Einstein's fundamental redefinition of the laws of physics providing perhaps the most significant and influential theory of time to date; also, one that posits time as being the fourth dimension of an external universe understood as a space-time continuum. Lewis has here, then, albeit it somewhat indirectly, brought to light one of the major temporal aporias that Paul Ricoeur also identifies: the difference between 'phenomenological time' and 'cosmic time' (Ricoeur 129).

Accordingly, in adopting the position that space and time cannot be understood in distinction from each other, whilst allowing also that there is a significant phenomenological perception of time that is internal to our thoughts, *Ulysses* is not to be seen here as being a "*time*-book [italics in original]" as Lewis argued (81); rather it will be argued to be a '*space-time*-book'. Through an examination firstly of the nocturnal wanderings of the persona in T. S. Eliot's 'Rhapsody on a Windy Night', and then of Leopold Bloom's perambulations in the sections 'The Lotus Eaters' and 'Lestrygonians' of *Ulysses*, a marked relationship can be identified between the act of walking through urban spaces and the experience of time and of memory. By considering theories concerning urban peregrinations in relation to spatial politics, developed by thinkers such as Walter Benjamin, Michel de Certeau, and Guy Debord; and then also applying conceptions of time and temporality, the act of pedestrian motion can be ascribed a spatio-temporal significance.

Adapting, slightly, Ricoeur's notion of narrative as serving not to overcome temporal aporias but rather to engage with them so as to make them 'productive' (261), the act of walking as presented here is therefore one that unifies multiple, and often contradictory, perceptions. A final foray into the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari provides, then, by means of their concepts of the molar and the molecular, the rhizome and the haeccity, an interesting means to consider the ultimate import of a walk in the city in space-time.

Journey to the centre of the clock: 'Clock time' to 'motion time' in 'Rhapsody on a Windy Night'

The first problem that needs to be considered here is one that Bergson was also much preoccupied with: namely, the relation between the way in which we perceive time and the way in which we understand space. For Bergson, space is a quantitative and homogenous multiplicity in which objects exist as discrete from one another (*Time and Free Will* 120); in opposition to this he establishes the notion of "pure duration" (100), a state that reflects our experience of time when we are not directly perceiving space, and one that is understood to be a qualitative multiplicity. Our perception of time, however, Bergson argues, is influenced by the "gradual incursion of space into the domain of pure consciousness" (126) directly resultant of our perception of space: as space represents a discrete multiplicity we synthesise temporal ideas in order to comprehend that which would otherwise just be many fixed objects. Memory, here, for Bergson is key: it is memory, in addition to affectivity, that allows us to "link the instants to each other and interpolate the past in the present […] that makes the quality appear […] that makes a body something other than instantaneous and gives it a duration in time (Deleuze 25-6). This notion can be seen to be alluded to in the first stanza of 'Rhapsody on a Windy Night', a poem claimed by Donald Childs to be "in many ways dogmatically Bergsonian, but […] not *about* Bergsonism" (477), in the lines:

> […] lunar incantations
> Dissolve the floors of memory
> And all its clear relations,
> Its divisions and precisions (l. 4-7)

The description of memory in this manner, divided and precise, suggests Bergson's idea of a spatialization of time, as well as setting up an opposition between duration as 'pure memory' and "memory as practical recollection" (Childs 479); these are represented in the poem by the street-lamp and the moon, respectively.

Whilst it is to be acknowledged that there are numerous readings that can be made as to the stance that Eliot is taking on Bergsonism, it is ultimately the description of the rhapsode's ramblings through the night and the Parisian streets in relation to the street-lamp, through those illuminated memories, that is of particular interest here. Clock time is announced throughout the poem by the street-lamp, for example "The lamp said, / 'Four o'clock […]" (69-70), and it is the seeming singularity of the lamp as indicated by the use of the definite article 'the', despite the reference earlier in the poem to "every street-lamp" (l.8) that is passed, that is curious here. If it is assumed that within the poem there is just one street-lamp, repeatedly encountered, then it might be deduced that the rhapsode is walking the night away in circles, measuring time like the hands of a clock. Further, noting that the time intervals between each encounter decrease first from ninety minutes to sixty minutes, and then finally to thirty minutes, it would seem that, assuming a constant walking speed, the circles that are being paced are decreasing in circumference, spiralling inwards towards a central point: to continue with the clock imagery, the centre of the clock-face.

The importance of this is that it creates an interesting connection between the act of walking and the perception of clock-time, and grants, it is to be argued, a certain affirmation

of the subject's identity. Whilst Gabrielle McIntire has suggested that 'Rhapsody on a Windy Night' "situates recollection within the arbitrary but strictly regulated divisions of clock time" (52), and that it is the "march of clock time [that] provides one of the few stable anchors in a poem concerned to address the chaos of desire vis-á-vis memory within an alienating modern cityscape" (52), her analysis does not take into account the fact that the 'arbitrary' divisions are in fact, according to this reading, determined by rhapsode's movements. In fact, it could be said that there is no real stable anchor in the poem because it is not the 'march of clock time' that is dominant but, rather, the march of the subject through this time: although the time of the clock is still the given one, it is experienced only in relation to the rhapsode's movement. So, if a pure duration can never be fully achieved in consciousness, regardless of whether this is positive or negative, that which is suggested is that we do have a certain degree of control over our experience of space-time.

Something similar to this can also be observed in *Ulysses* when Bloom, whilst walking and pondering the acceleration of falling masses and the relation between speed and time, is described as rolling a newspaper into a baton and tapping it "at each sauntering step against his trouserleg. Careless air: just drop in to see. Per second, per second. Per second for every second it means" (69). Evidenced again, here, is a somewhat confused measure of time: it is personal, and yet not duration; it is spatialized, and yet not uniform. By the act of measuring out intervals of time in accordance with the steps effected by his legs, Bloom replaces standardised time with his own 'movement-time'; in so doing he imposes himself a little more on the space-time identity of Dublin.

Doing the Time Walk again - A space-time *dérive* in Dublin?

The potential challenge that can be made to the spatial character of a city by means of walking is one that has been much theorised about in the twentieth century; notably so by Benjamin, de Certeau, and the Situationists. In expanding, however, upon the notion that Bloom's walk through Dublin can be seen to present a certain humanising of clock time measurements, it will be argued that walking presents the means to engage with not just the spatial but also with the temporal dimensions of the city. Accepting Einstein's conception of the universe as a four-dimensional space-time continuum, in which all objects and events can be assigned four-point Gaussian coordinates (Einstein 95) provides a foundation for understanding the space-time dynamics of Dublin: all things exist in space and time; and all physical movements are dependent upon at least a change in the time coordinate. As Bloom, however, has neither the propensity nor the ability to propel his person through Dublin at the near-to-light-speed velocity that would be required to render an analysis of temporal perception in Einsteinian terms useful, and because attempts to attempt such readings generally have a tendency to result in "absurdities" (Vargish and Mook 8), the primary focus here is on the interrelations between the space-time schemata of the physical and social geography of the city and of Bloom's movements and thoughts.

Although we might jest slightly about Bloom's apparent preference for a gentle walking pace, this quality is in fact one of some interest here. In 'Lotus Eaters' and 'Lestrygonians', Bloom's perambulatory movement is repeatedly described as being leisurely

in its nature, for instance: "He […] sauntered across the road" (69); "he strolled out of the shop" (82); and, "[h]is slow feet carried him riverward, reading" (144). This both suggests a comparison to Walter Benjamin's conceptions of the *flâneur*, a figure also notably leisurely in his travel through the city ('Paris of the Second Empire' 84), and raises the question as to how Bloom's motion is being determined. A reading of Bloom as a *flâneur* figure might further be justified by the fact that, as a result of his Jewish identity, he occupies the position of an outsider who is at once part of the crowd and distinct from it that is so central to the *flâneur* (Tom McDonagh 257). The notion of *flânerie* in *Ulysses*, as well as in general, is, however, a potentially limiting one; especially so when time is also being considered. Although 'sauntering' or 'strolling' as a form of idleness in demonstration "against the division of labour" (Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, 427) does suggest as an interesting challenge to the strictures of clock-time, this is mainly as a result of the overall statement made rather than the mechanics of the act itself.

The main problem with analysing Bloom's walk as a form of *flânerie*, however, is that the *flâneur* is essentially a passive spectator or voyeur, merely observing the sights of the city that they wander through. Although Simon Dobson may argue that the Benjaminian concept of walking "could also have a pedagogical, political and even military goal" (4) of "recaptur[ing] and re-experience[ing] space surrendered to planners, architects and owners of capital" (4), this is still just an experience; an experience in which it is the urban space that has authority. In a particularly caustic critique of Benjamin's *flâneur*, Martina Lauster also suggests that such a figure becomes intoxicated by that which he sees and that his "inner life begins to tick like a clock, signifying a physical internalisation of the world of objects" (142): the act of *flânerie* leads to a certain loss of self. By walking, Bloom does bring himself into frequent contact with various sights and sites of Dublin, but this is shown to result in engagement with, or critique of, them: Bloom never just *observes*.

The act of walking for Bloom involves not just the perception of the city but also a critique and contemplation of it; the space he moves in may affect both his "psychic inner space of the interior monologue" (Andrew Thacker 134) and his "somatic space" (134) but, equally, he can be seen to project onto the spatiality of the city in turn. Whilst he does react to that which he perceives, his response then is often one of either thoughts or memories regarding it. In this sense, and in also returning to the question raised earlier as to the determining factors of Bloom's perambulations, the theory of the *dérive* developed by Guy Debord and the Situationists, and de Certeau's notion of the 'pedestrian speech act', may be more appropriate here; the period of clock time covered by Bloom's wanderings is also the same as that which Debord gives as being the average duration of a dérive, namely "the time between two periods of sleep" (*The Theory of the Dérive*).

Debord and de Certeau posit the act of walking as offering more than just the potential to take a detached look at the space you inhabit; instead, it is as much acted out *upon* the city as it is acted out *in* the city. This is expressed particularly clearly by de Certeau when he writes:

> The long poem of walking manipulates spatial organizations, no matter how
> panoptic they may be: it is neither foreign to them (it can take place only

within then) nor in conformity with them (it does not receive its identity from them). It creates shadows and ambiguities within them. It inserts its multitudinous references and citations into them (social models, cultural mores, personal factors). Within them it is itself the effect of successive encounters and occasions that constantly alter it and make it the other's blazon [...]. (101)

Such a manipulation of spatial organisation and creation of subjective ambiguities can be seen to be evidenced in the following section of 'Lestrygonians': "He crossed Westmoreland street when apostrophe S had plodded by. Rover cycleshop. Those races are on today. How long ago is that? Year Phil Gilligan died. We were in Lombard street west" (148). Here, we can see that in the process of Bloom physically walking across Westmoreland Street, an observation, seemingly of the 'cycleshop', leads to the emergence of a memory that connects it to an event in another street in Dublin that is both spatially and temporally distinct. The narrative mapping that is produced by the course of the perambulation is, therefore, one that organises into a nexus of connections many previously distinct space-time coordinates: for example, a 'line' would be drawn between Westmoreland Street, 1pm, 16th June 1904, and Lombard Street West at the time at which Phil Gilligan died.

This result, as it is seen in *Ulysses*, is similar to Situationist maps, such as Debord's 'The Naked City'. 'The Naked City' provides a representation of Paris that is

predicated on a model of moving […] known to the Situationists as *derives*; rather than presenting the city from a totalizing point of view, it organizes movements metaphorically around psychogeographical hubs. The movements constitute narratives that are openly diachronic […]. (McDonough 246).

Whilst this notion of diachronic narratives that are formed by the organisation of movements around certain 'hubs' is useful to an extent it is also, however, arguably slightly limited in its analysis of the temporal aspect of urban perambulation. The suggestion in the cited passage is that the diachronic nature of the narratives is the result of an accumulation of movements – there being a flow of many people moving in a certain area – whereas it has been argued here that in *Ulysses* even an individual act of walking results in the formation of a narrative map of a city that plots many different temporal coordinates simultaneously. This is due to the projection of memories on to the present, which in Bergsonian terms is the only way in which we are able to consciously exist as more than a single sensory-motor point (Bergson, *Matter and Memory*, 211), in addition to the tendency to replace standardised clock time with relative movement-time. As such, the mapping of a city by a number of people walking at the same time results in a multiplicity of different narratives in which only one set of space-time coordinates is necessarily the same.

Haecceities and Multiplicities: Walking the [rhizomatic] line

The question now is how to understand the nature of the four-dimensional psycho-geographical map of Dublin that Bloom's space-time dérive has created and, in turn, the full implication that this has in terms of the act of walking itself. It has been shown that the

perambulation of Bloom in *Ulysses* allows for neither clock time nor phenomenological time to assume dominance but, rather, pulls them together into a synthesis with space; this, however, still leaves a certain amount of thought to be unpacked. To do so, the concept of the 'haecceity' as it is developed by Deleuze and Guattari can be brought into the analysis. A haecceity is seen as being an assemblage having a latitudinal and longitudinal constitution that make it particular thing; where latitude and longitude are respectively seen as referring to, on the "plane of consistency" (287), "the sum total of the intensive affects it is capable of at a given power or degree of potential" (287) and "the sum total of the material elements belonging to it under given relations of movement and rest, speed and slowness" (287). Deleuze and Guattari advance the notion of interassemblage haecceities, too; these are described as "also mark[ing] the potentialities of becoming within each assemblage (the milieu of the longitudes and the latitudes)" (290). An interassemblage haecceity can be roughly understood, then, as a composition formed by the interaction of two assemblage haeccieties; one of the examples given being that of a horse on a street.

To bring this back, however, to Bloom and the question of the perambulatory act, the statement that is made, amidst references to Virginia Woolf and *Mrs Dalloway*, that "[t]aking a walk is a haecceity" (290) can be considered. As a haecceity, a walk, then, given the numerous compositions that it must create between different assemblages – walker and street; walker and second walker; walker, street and second walker, etc. – is a significant highlighter of 'the potentialities of becoming'. The notion could also seem to imply that the walk, as a haecceity, allows for a greater awareness of the nature of the whole as monad by means of analysing the interassemblages of the molecular. Such an awareness that emerges is perhaps evidenced in the passage in 'Lestrygonians' in which

> [Bloom's] smile faded as he walked, a heavy cloud hiding the sun slowly, shadowing Trinity's surly front. Trams passed one another, ingoing, outgoing, clanging. Useless words. Things go on same; day after day: squads of police marching out, back: trams in, out. Those two loonies mooching about. Dignam carted off. Mina Purefoy swollen belly on a bed groaning to have a child tugged out of her. One born every second somewhere. Other dying every second. Since I fed the birds five minutes. Three hundred kicked the bucket. Other three hundred born, washing the blood off, all are washed in the blood of the lamb, bawling maaaaaa. (156)

We are presented here with the image of the walker, as one assemblage haecceity, realising as he moves through his spatio-temporal surroundings that he is but one part of an unending event constituent of multiple other similar haecceities. As Deleuze and Guattari argue: "A haecceity has neither beginning nor end, origin nor destination; it is always in the middle. It is not made of points, only of lines" (290).

The idea, however, of a walk that is without beginning or end is a perplexing one; it is a conception that seemingly resists normal logic. That which might be argued to be the case is that it is a slightly circular tautological claim: a walk can really only be seen to be 'always in the middle' because it has been labelled a haecceity; it is labelled a haecceity because it has neither beginning nor end. Despite being somewhat obfuscating, this is an argument that is,

however, not necessarily without a certain relevance, here, as it draws interesting parallels to Graeme Gilloch's postulation that "[m]otion in the city and in memory is a persistent going nowhere in particular that constitutes a perpetual rediscovery" (68). The act of walking, as illustrated in *Ulysses* and 'Rhapsody on a Windy Night', is presented not so much a means of achieving a translation from one location to another but, rather, as being an action or event that allows the pedestrian to established themselves within the spatio-temporal relations of a space-time continuum of multiplicities.

Conclusion

To close, then, it can be said that both 'Rhapsody on a Windy Night' and *Ulysses* work to create an idea of motion, specifically of perambulation, that challenges the opposition between time and space that is established by some and that also brings the often problematic issue of the intrinsic subjectivity of phenomenological time, Bergson's *durée*, into a role of interesting significance. Movement, as almost everybody points out without always agreeing in their ultimate conclusions, involves a translation of something in space over time (with the notable exception of a rotation on a point). The significance of the act of walking in the instances examined here, then, as well as in general, is that allows the pedestrian the opportunity to directly engage with the world of the space-time continuum that they inhabit; to shape, and to an extent impose themselves upon, this setting by augmenting the immediate data of perception with memories; and to potentially experience themselves as part of a unceasing and amorphous event.

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