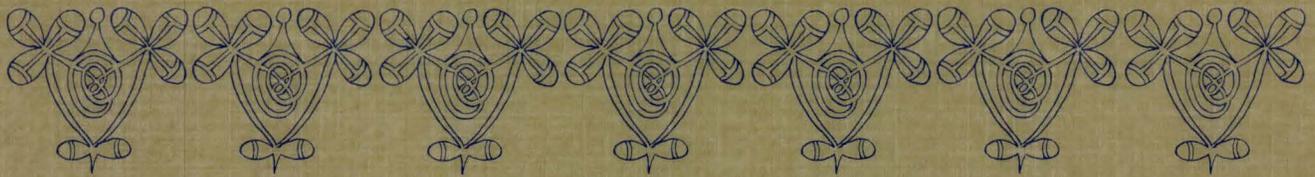


THAT TRAGOADY THUNDERSDAY



Warren Wedin

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THAT TRAGOADY THUNDERSDAY

An Introduction to and Interpretation
of the Thunderwords in *Finnegans Wake*

by
Warren Wedin



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For Patti
that noughty besighed him zeroine

This text, a separate work in its own right, is also intended to accompany Maury Nemoy's calligraphic version of the Thunderwords. His version, in reduced form, appears on pages 6 and 7. For purpose of design the artist re-arranged the order in which the Words appear in Joyce's text as shown:

<i>Finnegans Wake</i>			<i>Finnegans Wake</i>		
TEXT PAGE	Textual Order	Calligraphic Order	Calligraphic Order	Textual Order	TEXT PAGE
3	1	10	1	9	414
23	2	8	2	5	113
44	3	5	3	8	332
90	4	7	4	6	257
113	5	2	5	3	44
257	6	4	6	10	424
314	7	9	7	4	90
332	8	3	8	2	23
414	9	1	9	7	314
424	10	6	10	1	3

That Tragoady Thundersday

F*innegans Wake*, James Joyce's last and most impressive work, was written over a period of seventeen years. Much of the novel appeared in sections as *Work in Progress* in Eugene Jolas' literary magazine *Transition*. No synopsis of the "plot" in the ordinary sense can adequately summarize the content of the novel; in fact, there is still considerable question about that content and its rich texture of language and allusion. The action, if we can call it that, takes place during the night of Holy Thursday and appears to be a dream. Stephen Dedalus tells Mr. Deasy in *Ulysses* that "History is a nightmare from which I am trying to awake."¹ The content of *Finnegans Wake* is that nightmare or dream, encompassing the personal history of the dreamer-hero, the specific history of Ireland, the more general history of the Western world, and the collective history of mankind. The dreamer, so Anthony Burgess tells us, "turns himself into Universal Man, but Universal Man schooled mainly in the Indo-European languages, especially Dublin English. He re-enacts, in a single night's sleep, the essential movements of Western history, using his own family and the customers of his pub as an acting troupe which must take on many roles: he himself plays all the heavy leads."²

The actual dreamer is Mr. Porter who owns a pub in the Chapelizod suburb of Dublin, is married, and has three children—twin sons Jerry and Kevin and a daughter Isabel. In the dream he becomes Humphrey Chimpden Earwicker, also a pub owner, married to Anna Livia Plurabelle, and father to twin sons Shem and Shaun and to a daughter Izzy. Though he originally came from Scandinavia, he is now a resident of Dublin and is running for public office. He falls into public disgrace because he has committed a sexual indiscretion in Phoenix Park and because he is plagued with secret incestuous desires for his daugh-

ter. Thus, as the family man, he appears as and represents all father-figures, including God the Father, Adam, Noah, King Mark, and Finn MacCool; as the outsider, he represents all the foreign intruders into and invaders of Ireland, including the city of Dublin which the early Danes founded; as the guilt-ridden sexual offender, he represents all those who fell before him, including the God of creation, the Egyptian creation-god Atem, Adam, Humpty Dumpty, Lewis Carroll, and Parnell. In short, he is archetypal man, the embodiment of the masculine principle in the various guises of lover, husband, and father. Recognized by his initials HCE, he appears in the *Wake* as Here Comes Everybody, Howth Castle and Environs, and Haveth Childers Everywhere. His wife Anna Livia Plurabelle or ALP is his female counterpart, the Great Mother and the plural of all belles. The twin sons Shem and Shaun externalize the conflict within this male figure and, as balanced opposites, can be seen in the battling brothers, the Tristan figure divided into "tree" and "stone." Izzy, the Iseult figure, is the temptress, the younger version of ALP. This family unit as a microcosm of mankind re-enacts in the dream the basic patterns of human history.

But the historical dream of the novel is not based on the ordinary linear recapitulation of facts and dates. Joyce turned to the Italian philosopher Giambattista Vico (1668-1744), whose major work *Scienza Nuova*, "provides a cyclical view of history, seeing it all as an ever-revolving wheel with four segments. . . . Each segment represents a historical phase. First, there is fabulous prehistory, when men worship gods and pay heed to their words, expressed in thunder; next, there is a period of aristocratic rule—patriarchal as opposed to theocratic; next, there is a debasement of the aristocratic principle, in which demos is led by windy demagogues; then human society sinks to a

hopeless state of chaos, so that, to be redeemed, man must once more listen to the thunder, pay heed to the gods, and see the wheel start a new revolution. The god-hero Finn MacCool represents the first phase in Joyce's version of Vico. He is followed by the patriarch, the good honest family man, whom Earwicker is qualified to play. But as there is only one actor, himself, capable of taking the heavy roles, he must enact Finn as well as his own part. Finn is humanised into Finnegan, the drunken bricklayer, but he is still the giant on whose stretched-out body the city of Dublin rests. Earwicker, as Earwicker, falls like Adam and is removed from the Edenborough he rules, to be replaced by his sons, one of whom is an artist [Shem] unfitted for the postures of authority, while the other [Shaun] is a bloated travesty of the father he seeks to succeed. The general mess leads to a *ricorso*—Vico's term—in which the great father-figure is invoked, so that the phase of theocratic rule can start the wheel turning again."³ A. Walton Litz adds, commenting on Joyce's expansion of Vico's *ricorso* in *Finnegans Wake*, that "by emphasizing the fourth period of destruction and reconstitution he [Joyce] strengthened the personal application of his cyclic theory: Vico's institutions of religion (baptism), marriage, and burial combine with the mystic notion of resurrection to provide a personal analogue to the four-part progress of universal history. Just as each civilization passes through the four-part cycle, so each individual re-enacts in miniature the life of his race."⁴

This four-part cyclical notion governs the organization of *Finnegans Wake*, both in the larger structure of the division into four books and in the internal division of the books into chapters. William York Tindall describes the general plan of the novel in the following way: "*Finnegans Wake* is divided into four books, the first three long and the last one short. The first book has eight chapters, the second and third books have four chapters apiece, and the fourth has one chapter. The first book is Vico's divine age, the second his heroic age, and the third his human age. The fourth book is the reflux that leads to the divine again. In the first book we occupy a gigantic and fabulous world, but since subsequent history grows out of this world, the elements of the later ages are present in it. Each book contains the elements of the others, and each book contains the whole pattern. Each chapter of each book is one of Vico's ages. In Book I the first four chapters represent a complete cycle with its reflux. The second four chapters repeat the cycle on

another level. The four chapters of Book II and the four chapters of Book III constitute two more cycles. Joyce indicated the end of a cycle by the word Silence. This word occurs in the third chapters of Book II and Book III before the reflux. The main structure, therefore, is one large cycle, containing four smaller cycles."⁵

Central to both *Scienza Nuova* and *Finnegans Wake* is the great heavenly thunder which initiates the various cycles. "Thunder," so Anthony Burgess writes in *Here Comes Everybody*, "plays a big part in the scheme of history presented in the *Scienza Nuova*: it starts off, a terrible voice of God, each of the four segments into which Vico divides his circle—the theocratic age, the aristocratic age, the democratic age, the *ricorso* or return to the beginning again. It is the thunder which drives men to change their social organisations (they run into shelters, which foster the building of communities, to escape from it). Language is an attempt to present in human vocables the noise which the thunder makes. Thunder—which is only heard, like God, as a noise from the street in *Ulysses*—becomes part of the very fabric of the sound-stream that is *Finnegans Wake*."⁶

The thunder, which booms ten times in Joyce's novel, appears in each instance except the last as a hundred-letter thunderword; the last thunderword contains a hundred and one letters. The first five thunderwords occur in Book I, the next three in Book II, and the last two in Book III. This pattern of five, three, and two reveals a gradual falling off of the thunder as we move from cycle to cycle, from the theocratic or divine age which experiences the thunder directly down to the democratic or human age which has no direct experience of the thunder and misapplies, misunderstands, and debases its secret purpose. The first eight thunders are associated with the father-figure, while the last two are associated with the usurping son Shaun. Each of these ten thunderwords, Bernard Benstock notes in *Joyce-Again's Wake*, "marks the end of a stage of the cycle" and punctuates "the book, each one fitting into the particular series of events being narrated at the moment."⁷ Benstock then goes on to identify the dramatic event connected with each of the thunderwords: "The first thunderclap is the basic fall motif . . . (3.15-17); the second is the slamming of Jarl van Hoothor's castle door (23.5-7); the third announces the ballad written by Hosty (44.20-21); the fourth is an obscene rumble during the trial, suggesting the fall in the park (90.31-33); the fifth is the babble of the gossipy letter (113.9-11); the

sixth is the slamming of the Earwicker door after the children have come in from their play (257.27-28); the seventh records the din in the tavern as Earwicker's reputation takes a fall and Finnegan is again heard toppling from his scaffold (314.8-9); the eighth is the noise of radio static preceding the Crimean War broadcast, as well as the orgasm during the seduction of Anna Livia (332.5-7); the ninth is Shaun's cough as he clears his throat in preparation for the recounting of the Ondt-Gracehoper fable (414.19-20); and the last follows soon after (424.20-22), Shaun's angry rumble of abuse against Shem serving as the basic thunderclap of destruction before the Cabalistic regeneration begins."⁸ We can see from this summary, as Burgess has already noted, that the thunder in *Finnegans Wake* "is not so much the voice of God as the noise of a fall—the fall of the primal hero, the fall of man—and its dynamic charges the wheel and makes it turn. All history (at least, as it appears in a dream) is the story of falling and—through the force of that fall which makes the wheel go round—returning."⁹ But the thunderwords are not simply the random noise of a fall during a specific dramatic situation; the allusions within the words themselves, both separately and in sequence, comment pointedly on each dramatic event and refer us to the major themes of the novel. In many ways, the thunderwords provide us with a key to the *Wake* by presenting a compressed version of the larger historical cycles.

We can, of course, see this cyclical pattern of *Finnegans Wake* in Joyce's title, where the god-like Finn again awakes after his wake. As Joyce puts it, giving us a terse summary of this motif in his novel, "Phall if you but will, rise you must: and none so soon either shall the pharce for the nunce come to a set-down secular phoenish" (4.15-17). This structural and thematic pattern of birth-death-rebirth derives in part from Vico's theory of history. In *The Books at the Wake*, James S. Atherton focuses our attention on five of these historical "axioms" which Joyce incorporated into *Finnegans Wake*:

1. History is a cyclic process repeating eternally certain typical situations.
2. The incidents of each cycle have their parallels in all other cycles.
3. The characters of each cycle recur under new names in every other cycle.
4. Every civilization has its own Jove.

5. Every Jove commits again, to commence his cycle, the same original sin upon which creation depends.¹⁰

But Atherton goes on to say: "It would appear to follow from this that creation is the original sin."¹¹ The thunderwords represent the sound of the fall and naturally bring to mind the original fall of Adam. For Joyce, however, Adam's fall was not the first: "This attribution of Original Sin to God is one of the basic axioms of *Finnegans Wake*. Joyce had studied theology under Jesuit teachers and knew that the official Catholic solution to the problem of the existence of pain in a world controlled by an omnipotent and loving God was to be found in the doctrine of Original Sin. Joyce transferred the responsibility for Original Sin to God. This, he says, is the Original Fall."¹² And we find the sense of this situation in a prayer which appears later in the novel: "Ouhr Former who erred in having down to gibbous disdag our darling breed" (530.36-531.1).

Creation as God's original sin comes about because of an imperfection in God's own nature. Atherton argues, for instance, that "We begin with unity, but according to Joyce it is imperfect because it is not satisfied to be alone So God produces His creation and sets up conflict. 'Let there be fight!' (90.12) is Joyce's version of the words of creation."¹³ As the Word falls to become flesh, it is divided into balanced opposites in the form of Satan and the Archangel Michael, who become the prototypes of all warring brothers from Father Adam's Cain and Abel on to Earwicker's battling twins Shem and Shaun.

Nor is this first fall, like all subsequent falls, free from guilt. The sound of the fall and of creation itself is heard in the thunder, which as the voice of God sounds like a stutter: "inmaggin a stotterer. Suppoutre him to been one biggermaster Omnibil" (337.18-19). Finn MacCool, Tim Finnegan, and Earwicker, the masterbuilders of Dublin, the towering wall in Phoenix Park, and the family, are all stutterers, as is God, the "bigger" masterbuilder of the universe. "And it must be remembered," Atherton writes, "that stuttering, according to the modern psychologists, is a neurotic symptom caused by a consciousness of guilt. Joyce is suggesting that the original masterbuilder is God and that He stutters when His voice is heard in the thunder—thus proving that He is conscious of having committed a sin!"¹⁴ The sin of the father-creator may well be masturbation because Joyce refers us to the "account of the ancient Egyptian creation

myth that ascribes the peopling of the world to the self-pollution of Atem, here called Temu, upon the primordial mud-heap at Heliopolis. This is . . . the sin of the father-figure in this era, 'the firstold wugger of himself in the flesh' (79.2)."¹⁵ Also, in Joyce's account of Finn MacCool's and Tim Finnegan's fall, we find a cluster of allusions to masturbation, to the Ancient Egyptian mastaba tombs, and to Atem in the form of "Master Bad Tomm" as the original sinner: "He stottered from the latter. Damb! he was dud. Dumb! Mastabatoom, mastabadtomm, when a mon merries his lute is all long. For whole the world to see" (6.9-12). Joyce has carefully linked the Christian God of creation with the Egyptian creation god Atem who "is most clearly god in 'Thom Thom the Thonderman' (176.1) but is more often thought of as 'our old offender' (29.30) than as the thunderer."¹⁶ Thus, the original sin is God's, is of a sexual nature, brings about the creation of the world, and is heard as a guilty stutter in the thunder. This fall, however, as it is repeated endlessly by all mankind, is fortunate because it brings forth the rise of all life, civilization, and culture; it is truly the *felix culpa*, for it is the necessary first step in all cycles of life, history, religion, and *Finnegans Wake*. So, too, when we come upon the central question of the novel—"What then agentlike brought about that tragoady thundersday this municipal sin business?" (5.13-14)—we can expect that the answer will focus on man's self-inflicted sexual guilt which goads him on to create the immense diversity of his world, this "scherzarade of one's thousand one nightinesses" (51.4-5), this world of *Finnegans Wake* where we find in the ten thunderwords one thousand and one letters.

With this general background in mind, we can now turn directly to the thunderwords. In Book I, Chapter 1, a divine age within a divine age, we find the first two thunderwords, one coming at the beginning and the other near the end of the chapter. Both thunderwords and the situations in which they occur introduce us to the larger themes of the fall, of sexual guilt, and of the defense-mechanism of the dream language which associates the genitalia with elimination rather than procreation. We see this device especially in the tale of Jarl van Hooter and the Prankquean which surrounds the second thunderword. With the first thunder, however, we hear the sound of the divine fall into creation, the thunderclap that starts all the cycles going. Through the course of the novel, we will hear nine more times the reverberations

of this thunder as it attenuates to the final and complete secularization of the creative mysteries in the tenth thunderword. This last thunder uttered by the political Shaun demonstrates the inevitable "secular phoenish" (4.17) of the historical cycles: a "finish" to the cycles and a promise of the next "phoenix" beginning which will rise out of the ashes of secular chaos: "Teems of times and happy returns. The seim anew" (215.22-23).

The first thunderword appears in the third paragraph of *Finnegans Wake*: "The fall (bababadalgharaghtakamminarronkonnbronntonnonnerrontuonnthunntrovarrhounawnskawntoohooorderenthur-nuk!) of a once wallstrait oldparr is retaled early in bed and later on life down through all christian minstrelsy" (3.15-18). The fall is at once divine, heroic, and human. The god-hero Finn MacCool falls to become the foundation upon which Dublin is built. His fall, through associations with Timothy Healy's Dublin as Healiopolis, refers him back to Atem, the Egyptian creation-god of Heliopolis; other references to Humpty Dumpty as the egg of the material world and to the scattering of Osiris' body bring to mind similar creation stories.¹⁷ The Word of the thunder has become flesh. At the same time, the fall is made heroic by references to that other first fall of Adam and is secularized by references to Tim Finnegan's fall from the scaffold. Each fall contains the model for all other falls, including—as we later learn—Earwicker's own fall in the Edenborough of Phoenix Park.

The thunderword itself, a cluster of one hundred letters, contains the words for thunder and noise in several languages, beginning with the guilty stutter:¹⁸

bababad-, a stuttering accusation, "ba-ba-bad"

ba-, the Egyptian immortal soul

baba-, the Russian *baba* for "woman"; is the male attempting to blame woman for the fall in "baba bad"?

-gharaghtak-, the Gaelic *gaireachtach* for "boisterous"

-kammi-, the Japanese *Kami* for "higher powers"

-kamminar-, the Japanese *kaminari* for "thunder"

-bronnto-, the Greek *brontaô* for "to thunder"

-brônnton-, the Greek *Brontôn* for Zeus the "Thunderer"

-ton-, the Latin *tono* for "to thunder"

- tonner-, the German *Donner* and the French *tonnerre* for "thunder"
- tuonn-, the Italian *tuono* for "thunder"
- thunn-, the Middle English *thuner* for "thunder"; perhaps also Thon or Thonar, a form of "Thor the Thunderer"
- varrhouna-, Varuna, the Hindu creator and storm god
- skawn-, the Gaelic *scán* for "crack"
- toohoooor-, perhaps Thor
- thur-, Thor again
- thurnuk!, the Gaelic *tornach* for "thunder"

William York Tindall also feels that "konnbron" refers to General Pierre Cambronne (1770-1842), one of Napoleon's generals, who said *merde* (French for "shit") in public and that "*Le mot de Cambronne* becomes a theme."¹⁹ This theme of defecation and elimination as a slightly more acceptable dream-reference to sexuality will become obvious in the next few thunderwords. Nor is it so far-fetched to find in the general rumbling of the thunder references to flatulence and defecation, especially when we remember that a "thundermug" is a chamber pot and that God in a parody of the Pater Noster is referred to as "A farternoiser" (530.36).

That the first thunder and the dream-novel itself take place on Holy Thursday or Thor's Day seems appropriate, for on that day the thunder says its own name—a variation of the Biblical "I am I"—as it descends into the world. In Vico's scheme, this thunder is the voice of God which starts for man the first cycle of civilization. But for Joyce, the fall into creation is not that simple. When Thor's thunder cracks in the "Oxen of the Sun" episode in *Ulysses*, the cynical Stephen Dedalus tells us "an old Nobodaddy was in his cups" (*Ulysses*, 395). But for Leopold Bloom, thunder is merely a natural phenomenon; mankind's religions are quite possibly a product of his fear-inspired imagination and not of divine revelation. Adaline Glasheen hints at this interpretation when she says: "It is, of course, possible that in *Finnegans Wake* the thunder says nothing, just makes a noise, and that the dense language of the Cletters represents what Man has imagined he heard the thunder say."²⁰

The thundering fall, whether divine or not, be-

comes the archetypal model of man's fall into guilt and starts the wheel turning on all levels. Each individual fall recapitulates every other fall, whether it be Adam's fall into disobedience and sexual consciousness in the Garden of Eden, Finn MacCool's fall from heroic stature into the Dublin landscape, Humpty Dumpty's scattering fall from the wall, Tim Finnegan's drunken fall from the ladder, Parnell's fall from power for sexual indiscretions, or Earwicker's fall from power in Phoenix Park and in his own imagination. But for Joyce, as for Vico before him, every fall announces a subsequent rise, whether in the form of Finn awakened again, of Tim Finnegan's "resurrection" in the popular ballad, of the phoenix rising out of its own ashes, or of the return from the *ricorso* at the end of the novel to the general divinity of "river-run, past Eve and Adam's" (3.1) in the opening sentence. Implicit in this cyclical pattern is at least a suggestion of the rhythmical rise and fall of sexuality and of the consequent sexual guilt. All stories are the same story over again, both in the thunderwords and in *Finnegans Wake*: "There extend by now one thousand and one stories, all told, of the same" (5.28-29).

Hence, the tale of Jarl van Hoothor and the Prankquean, which comes just before the second thunderword, presents another variation of the fall motif. The Prankquean is the witch-temptress, a form of Eve, Grania, and Grace O'Malley. She catches van Hoothor in a compromising situation three times, at least two of which seem to involve masturbation: "laying cold hands on himself" (21.11) and "shaking warm hands with himself" (21.36). At the door of his castle she asks for relief from thirst, a full bladder, and sexual desire. The tale itself is set at the dawn of history, "when Adam was delvin and his madameen spinning" and when "everybilly lived alone with everybiddy else" (21.6-9), that is when every Billy loved his Bidy before the fall into sexual guilt. Both Tindall and Benstock have noticed innumerable references to the natural process of elimination, and Benstock feels that here and elsewhere Joyce is equating elimination with sexuality.²¹ The entire sense of the tale, which relates to and forecasts Earwicker's own sexual crime in Phoenix Park and Adam's sin in Edenborough, introduces—with the dream-confusion of elimination and masturbation—the theme of sexual guilt as a second version of the fall. Thus, at the end of the tale, van Hoothor "ordurd" the door shut, "And the duppy shot the shutter ['shitter'] clup" (23.14). With that ordering and orduring, this time suggesting

HUSSTEN HASSTENCAFFINCOFFINTUSSEMTOSSEM DAMANDAMNACOSAGHCUSA

THINGCROOKLYEXINEVERY PASTURESIXDIXLIKENCEHIMAROUNDHERSTHEMA

PAPPAPPARRASSANNUARAGHEALLACHNATULLAGHMONGANMACMACMA

LUKKEDOERENDUNANDURRASKEWDYLOOSHOOFERMOYPORTERTOORYZOOYS

KLIKKAKLAKKAKLASKAKLOPATZKLATSCHABATTACREPPYCROTTYGRADDAG

ULLHODTURDENWEIRMUDGAARDGRINGNIRURDRMOLNIRFENRIRLUKKILO

BLADYUGHFOULMOECKLENBURGWHURAWHORASCORTASTRUMPAPORNAN

PERKODHUSKURUNBARGGRUAUYAGOKGORLAYORGROMGREMMITGHUND

BOTHALLCHORACTORSCHUMMINAROUNDGANSUMUMINARUMDRUMSTRUM

GABABADALGHARAGHTAKAMMINARRONNKONNBRONNTONNERRONNTU

Calligraphy: MAURY NEMOV · Decorated capitals adapted from the Book of Kells

GHHOBIXHATOUXPESWCHBECHOSCASHLCARCARACT



GGGERBYKINKINKANKANWITHDOWNMINDLOOKINGATED.

*The
hundred lettered
name again,
last word
of perfect
language.*

WHACKFALLTHERDEBBLENONTHEDUBBLANDADDYD OODLED

*JAMES JOYCE
"Finnegans Wake"*

PHALNABORTANSPORTHAOKANSAKROIDVERJKAPAKKAPUK.

HSEMMIHSAMMIHNOUITHAPPLUDDYAPPLADDYPKONPKOT!

KIBAUGIMANDODRRERINSURTKRINMGERNRACKINAROCKAR!

FENNYKOCKSAPASTIPDATAPPATUPPERSTRIPPUCKPUTTANACH, EH?

HURTHRUMATHUNARADIDILLIFAITITILLIBUMULLUNUKKUNUN!

TRUMINAHUMPTADUMPWALTPOOFOOLOODERAMAUNSTURNUP!



ONNTHUNNTROVARRHOUNAWNSKAWNTOOHOHOORDENENTHURNUK!

the noise of intestinal gas as "van Hooter was to get the wind up" (23.14), we hear the second thunderword. But the windy world that van Hooter-as-father creates out of guilt is the material world, appearing here in altered form as Dublin's motto: "Thus the hearsomeness of the burger felicitates the whole of the polis" (23.14-15). This second fall is the "foenix culprit," the necessary fall into evil out of which rises man's civilization: "Ex nickylo malò comes mickelmassed bonum" (23.16-17). As Adaline Glasheen puts it, "The act was a Fall, the man does not understand, nor does he understand the woman, but we would not be here today if he hadn't acted."²²

Thunder, noise, defecation, and sexual allusion mark the second thunderword: "Perkodhuskurunbarg-gruauyagokgorlayorgromgremmitghundhurthrum-athunaradidillifaititillibumullunukkunun!" (23.5-7). Some of the possible words are:²³

- Per-, "by means of"
- kod-, "cod," "scrotum"
- kurun-, vagina layer
- barg-, the Persian *barg* for "lightning"
- gruau-, "porridge," "semen"
- gruauyagok-, the Gaelic *grúagach* for "hairy," "ugly," "wizard"
- agok-, "struggle"
- grom-, "man," "penis"; also the Russian *grom* for "thunder"
- grem-, "woman," "vagina"
- mitghund-, the German *mit Hund* for "with dog"
- ru-, "rue"
- math-, "destruction"
- thunar-, "thunder"
- rad-, "afraid"
- fait-, the French *fait* for "made"
- tit-, "teat"
- bum-, "arse"
- mull-, "demolish"
- nuk-, "destruction"
- kunun!, the German *kennen* for "to know"

The sound of this thunder has come down to a human level and is "the noise of guilt."²⁴ After Adam "knew" Eve, that is when sexuality became conscious, primal man covered his genitals ("kod" and "husk") and fell into sexual guilt; yet it was precisely this guilt which enabled him to become the builder of cities, which "brought about that tragoady thundersday this municipal sin business" (5.13-14).

That guilt compounds as we move into Chapter 2, the heroic age within the larger divine age of Book I. Here we meet HCE, the all-father of the novel, known throughout as Humphrey Chimpden Earwicker, Here Comes Everybody, and Haveth Childers Everywhere. This composite figure of mankind, like all the other figures he replaces and represents, has committed a sexual indiscretion in the park and carries with him a sense of original sin expressed as sexual guilt. As Humphrey Chimpden Earwicker, he carries on his back the "free-hump" of sexuality and the hump of sexual guilt, incorporates the animal nature of the chimp, and hides his incestuous desires (where in dream-language "incest" becomes "insect") in "earwig." Rumors of his secret crime begin to spread and are finally given full form at the end of the chapter in "The Ballad of Persse O'Reilly." The ballad connects Earwicker to the title character by way of the French word for earwig, *perce-oreille*, and associates him with the egg of the world Humpty Dumpty, the God of creation, the Norse Thor, the invading Vikings, and with Padraic Pearse and O'Rahilly, leaders of the Easter Rising. In the ballad, HCE is blamed for all the evils in the world because he "Made bold a maid to woo" and thus became "the crux of the catalogue / Of our antediluvian zoo" (46.31; 47.3-4). Earwicker's indiscretion in the park is not only equated here with Adam's first sin in Eden, but also with the creation and fathering of mankind.

The ballad is announced by the third thunderword, which itself is introduced as both sexual orgasm and bowel movement: "It's cumming, it's brumming! . . . The (klikkakkakkaklaskaklopatzklatschabattacreppycrottygraddaghsemmihsammihnouithappludd-yappladdykonpkot!)" (44.19-21). With reference to the thunderword and its situation, Tindall notes: "That *persse* is also Estonian for arse is fortunate because the ballad, like all literature, is defecation . . . The thunder that signals Earwicker's third fall and renewal, includes 'kak' (Latin *caco*, shit; Greek *kakos*, bad) and 'pluddy . . . pkonpkot' (German *kot*, shit), which sounds like what it is. 'It's cumming, it's brum-

ming!' which introduces this thundering, recalls Cambronne, whose word is *merde*. Earwicker's thundering third fall is not unlike his second at the end of the Prankquean's story."²⁵ In the thunderword itself, after the initial "klikk—klop" sequence, we find:

- klatsch-, the German *klatsch!* for "crack!" and *Klatsch* for "applaud" and "gossip"
- schaba-, the German *Schabe* for "cockroach" and "scrape"
- schabatt-, the Hebrew *Shabuoth*, the holiday of Pentecost and the revelation of the Law on Mount Sinai
- creppy-, "crappy"
- crotty-, perhaps "crotch" and "rot"
- grad-, the Russian *grad* for "city"
- graddagh-, the Gaelic *greaddadh* for "clapping" and "driving rapidly"
- adda-, "Babylonian god of wind and storm, also called Ramman, 'the roaring one'"²⁶
- semmihsammih-, perhaps Shem and Shaun; may also refer to "Immi ammi Semmi" (258.11) which follows the sixth thunderword
- sammih-, the Hebrew *Samuel* for "His name is God"
- ammihnouithapp-, the Egyptian Amenhotep, known also as the monotheist Akhnaton
- appluddyappladdy-, "a bloody applause"; also as Eve and ALP, "a bloody apple lady"
- kot!, the German *Kot* for "excrement"

This thunderword opens with a harsh, noisy sequence: "Klikk a klakk a klask a klopätz klatsch" (German "crack!"). From this crack of thunder, excrement, applause, and gossip comes the revelation of *Shabouth* and the division into paired opposites: "creppy crotty; semmih sammih; appluddy appladdy; pkon pkot." *Shabouth* also leads to the founding of "a creppy crotty grad" (Russian "city") and to the veiled masculine accusation that woman is the original temptress and the cause of the fall, "a bloody apple lady." However, despite attempts to shift blame, Earwicker sees his reputation fall amid the sound of excrement and applause; Everyman's guilt is made public.

In Chapter 3 of Book I, the rumors of HCE's crime spread and he is arrested. We see his trial

toward the end of Chapter 4, where the fourth thunderword appears: "Bladyughfoulmoecklenburgwhurawhorascortastrumpapornanennykocksapastippatappatupperstrippuckputtanach, eh?" (90.31-33). This thunder, so Campbell and Robinson maintain, reproduces the actual noise of HCE's sexual "tussle" in the Park.²⁷ Tindall, by referring to the passage immediately preceding the thunderword, finds that the "two solicitresses, associated with 'pox' and 'clap,' caused Earwicker's fall. The fourth thunder, connected with the third by the reference to Persse O'Reilly, consists of words for whore and dirt of all kinds."²⁸ In this thunderword, we find:

- Blady-, "bloody" and perhaps "bloody lady"; it's her fault
- Bladyugh-, the Gaelic *bladaireacht* for "flattery"
- ugh-
- foul-
- moecklenburg-, "Mucktown"²⁹
- whurawhora-, the Gaelic *Mhuire, Mhuire* for "Mary, Mary," associated here with "whore"
- scorta-, the Latin *scorta* for "harlot" and "strumpet"
- strumpa-, "strumpet"
- pap-, "nipple" or "teat"
- porna-, the Greek *porneia* for "prostitution" and *pornê* for "prostitute"
- nanenny-, the Gaelic *na n-ean* for "of the birds"
- kock-, "penis"
- tippatappatupper-, possibly a verb sequence (tip, tap, tup) ending with "tup" for "copulate"; a "tupper" is a ram copulating with a ewe
- strip-
- puck-, the Gaelic *poc* for "sudden blow" and "he-goat" (a Pan figure?)
- anach, eh?, the Gaelic *eanach* for "marsh" and for the name "Anna"; is HCE saying that ALP is the whore who started it all?

That the phrase "Meirdreach an Oincuish!" (90.34), the Gaelic for "whore, the harlot," immediately follows the thunderword seems to add to this negative sexual climate. Thus, the nature of the fall imbedded in the fourth thunder is clearly sexual, but suggests that the fault lies with Anna Livia Plurabelle, with Eve-as-temptress, and with Mary-as-whore. When

asked to explain his fall in Mucktown (perhaps the Heliopolis mudheap upon which Atem masturbated), man responds by accusing woman of being the whore who started it all. This response in the fourth thunderword, coming as it does at the end of Chapter 4, corresponds to the *ricorso* of Vico. We have reached the end of the first smaller cycle within the larger cycle of Book I, a cycle which has been—as we can see from these accusations—predominantly masculine.

The fifth thunderword, the last to appear in Book I, comes in Chapter 5; both the word and the chapter are associated with the first stage of the second smaller Viconian cycle of Book I. The second cycle is primarily feminine and serves to balance the masculine focus of the first cycle. The chapter introduces the theme of the missing letter which is dug from the midden or mudheap by the mother hen and in which Anna Livia comes to HCE's defense. The letter, aside from the actual multi-level contents, also refers to Anna Livia's special letters of the alphabet, the Delta and the Omega: the Delta, of course, refers us to ALP as the "waters of life" and in its inverted form refers us to the "delta of Venus," the mysterious source of creation and sexuality; the Omega is the great circle of nothingness from which springs the world. By equating both the Delta and the Omega of feminine sexuality and creativity with the mudheap of Heliopolis, the patriarchal HCE is suggesting that the female principle is the source of filth and evil in the world. However, the fifth thunderword which introduces the letter is the simplest of the ten words, containing primarily pastoral words in English and looking almost like a self-contained sentence: "Thingcrooklyexineverypasturesixdixlikencehimaroundhersthemaggerbykinkinkankanwithdownmindlookingated" (113.9-11). This simplicity and the pastoral references are appropriate to ALP as the Great Mother, "Annah the Allmaziful, the Everliving, the Bringer of Plurabilities, haloed be her eve" (104.1-2). Benstock, taking this fifth thunderword as a sentence, finds: "Things lie crookedly in (and out of) every pasture, six or ten, like (licentious) him around hers, the magger (his majesty), by kin or cancan, with down (low) mind through the locked gate or in the looking-glass."³⁰ In spite of the obvious pastoral references of "a shepherd's crook, milk cans, downy feathers, and a locked gate," Benstock goes on to suggest that "these may belie the cock's troot of smut. The guilty Earwicker locked in behind his gate and the lascivious daughter looking into her mirror are discernible in the last word, so that the thunder-

word itself may be a gossipy letter, despite the innocent echo of the kindly fowl offering a golden age . . ."³¹ Yet, even if these speculations are valid, we can also see in this thunderword the suggestion that sex in the pastoral world is merely a natural process: even though all things everywhere lie crookedly with a vision of evil or guilt, the sexual fall has produced our civilization with its livestock, pastures, and enclosed farms, while "magger" also suggests "Magi" and the promise of renewal in the "manger." Thus, while HCE may well experience sexual guilt and while that experience of guilt may be Everyman's, this thunder argues constructively that, though sex is natural, man's self-imposed sexual guilt goads him on to great accomplishments.

Though there are three more chapters in Book I, the thunder does not sound again during this feminine cycle within the larger divine age of the first book; we do, however, see the Shem-Shaun conflict develop in the twelve questions of Chapter 6, get a portrait of Shem the Penman in Chapter 7, and get a lyrical picture of Anna Livia Plurabelle in Chapter 8. The thunder has sounded five times, the first four associated with the masculine principle in the small cycle of Chapters 1 through 4, the fifth associated with the feminine principle in the second small cycle of Chapters 5 through 8. The next three thunders appear in Book II, the book which corresponds to Vico's heroic age of the sons and aristocrats, and focus less on man's attempt to interpret divine will in the voice of the thunder and more on the sons' attempt to interpret the voice of the father. In the divine age, the thunder speaks directly to the theocratic patriarch; in the heroic age, the thundering patriarch speaks directly to his aristocratic sons who seek to replace him.

The sixth thunderword comes at the end of Chapter 9, corresponding to a divine age within the larger heroic age. In the chapter itself, which gives us "The Mime of Mick, Nick, and the Maggies," we find the children at play, but the play is a battle for the father's legacy of both sexual knowledge and sexual guilt. Adaline Glasheen sees the Mime as "a play about dubious battle on the plains of heaven. Nick-Glugg-Shem is the rebel who presumes to seize his father's prerogative of sex-creation; Mick-Chuff-Shaun is the pure, sexless angel who opposes the Devil, but, as in *Paradise Lost*, is not strong enough and makes it necessary for the father to intervene decisively in the battle. Both sons run in fear of thunder, but Michael is sure he will have heaven and his

brother be 'havonfaeled.' As God-or-Adam the father takes the girl who is his own creation and, the next section tells us, 'maker mates with made.'"³² The children's play ends with the sixth thunderword, this time the sound of HCE the father slamming a door; the noise sends the children to prayers and to bed, thus ending another cycle.

This sixth thunderword—"Lukkedoerendunan-durraskewdylooshoofermoyporertoorzyoosphal-nabortansporthaokansakroidverjkapakkapuk" (257.27-28)—is very dense, but we can identify enough phrases to see that in this scene the thunder has become domesticated:

- Lukkedoeren-, Danish *Luk døren* for "shut the door"
- dunandurras-, the Gaelic *dun an doras* for "shut the door"
- skewdylooshoo-, as "skew dy loo shoo," wherever that may come from, this looks like another "shut the door"
- fermoyporte-, French *fermer la porte* for "shut the door"
- porter-, HCE's family name and also a "gatekeeper"
- tertooryzoo-, perhaps the German *Die Tür ist zu [machen]* for "The door is shut"
- sphalna-, the Greek *sphalma* for "stumble" or "false step"; "failure"
- abortansport-, with sexual "sport" and "abortion," a closed door to birth
- phal . . . tha . . . sakroidver-, Glasheen finds "Alph, the sacred river" here³³
- kapakkapuk, Tindall finds "the hen's cackle that also follows the fifth thunder"³⁴

The children at play become curious about sexuality; with this knowledge, the sons can replace the father, who threateningly slams the door on such knowledge. The "kapakkapuk" of the mother hen, however, is an attempt to placate the father and reassure the children. This thunder is clearly the voice of the angry father, for in Vico's second age the sons inherit their legacy from a reluctant father who, in his age, got it directly from the thunder. As Tindall puts it, "The thunder that once gave Vico's men the idea of gods gives children now an idea of father and mother."³⁵ Frightened, the children attempt to appease the angry father with prayers. But the age of the father is ob-

viously over, for in this last section of the chapter we find a cluster of references to the "Twilight of the Gods" in "Gonn the gawds" (257.34), in "Rendning-rocks" (258.1), which, as the Norse *Ragnarok*, is the day of the gods' downfall, and in "gttrdmrnng" (258.2), the Germanic *Götterdämmerung*. HCE's parental thunder slams the door on the divine age.

Chapter 10, the second chapter of Book II, does not contain a thunderword. It focuses on the children's education, the parents being the real topic of the lessons. Numerous references to the Kabala suggest that the parents, viewed now by the children as the source of sexual creation, hold the key to the mysteries and secrets of sexuality. Burgess, commenting on the role of HCE and ALP in this chapter, points out that "The All-Father is 1 and his consort is 0—'Ainsoph, this upright one, with that noughty be-sighed him zeroine'. Introduce the dart to the egg, or the phallus to the Elizabethan 'thing of nought', and we have 10, symbol of creation."³⁶ Thus, these kabalistic references contain the basics of sex education. Tindall, in a similar vein, comes to a slightly different conclusion: "As 'Ainsoph' (261.23), Earwicker is God in the Kabala, a maker who, mating with made (261.8), descends to it through ten emanations or *sephiroth* . . . Earwicker's number is ten, the number of completeness, that, recurring at the end of the tenth chapter (308.5-14), brings the *sephiroth* back to mind. If his number is 10, that of the made or maid he mates with, a 'noughty . . . zeroine' (261.24, *zero-eine*), is 01. Combined, they make 1001, the number of renewal."³⁷ We also recognize that 1001 refers to the number of letters contained in the thunderwords and to the number of stories—"one thousand and one stories, all told, of the same" (5.28-29)—contained in the Arabian Nights of *Finnegans Wake*. For the children, the parents are the key to the universe. Armed with this sexual information about creation, the warring brothers can depose the father.

The seventh and eighth thunderwords occur in Chapter 11, the third chapter of Book II; this chapter corresponds to Vico's human age, the age of the plebs or people, within the larger cycle of the heroic age of the second book. The dream action takes place in the pub, amid the noise of drinking and storytelling. The seventh thunder comes near the beginning of the long section dealing with the Norwegian Captain and announces the fall of Earwicker's reputation.³⁸ Earwicker's fall here is connected to the fall of Finnegan from the scaffold and Humpty Dumpty from the wall.

There is now a suggestion that HCE is responsible for Finnegan's—and his own—fall because “he himself had removed the planks which caused the collapse of Finnegan's scaffold.”³⁹

This seventh word, unlike most of the other thunderwords, contains few references to words in other languages: “Bothallchoractorschumminaround-gansumuminarumdrumstrumtruminahumptadump-waultopoofoolooderamaunsturnup!” (314.8-9). Some of the references we can identify are:

- Bothall-, “both” and “all,” that is, each and every one
- choractors-, “characters” and the Greek *choros* for “dance” and “group of dancers in a play”
- chumminaround-, being intimate or friendly together
- gan-, past tense of “gin,” “to begin”
- gans-, the German *Gans* for “geese” and *ganz* for “entire”
- sum-, the Latin *sum* for “I am”
- sumum-, the Latin *summum* for “the top”
- rum-, the sailor's drink; three more follow
- drumstrum-, the sounds of music
- strum-, “struma” or “scrofula”; “strumpet”
- trum-, possibly the German *Traum* for “dream”
- humptadumpwaul-, Humpty Dumpty on the wall
- topoof-, “top of”
- topoofool-, possibly “topple off of” and “poor fool”
- looderamauns-, the Gaelic *ludramán* for “lazy idler”; also “ladder man” and “lewd man”
- maun-, Scottish for “must”
- turnup!, the edible root and a promise of resurrection

With this thunder, much like the pastoral fifth thunder, there is a temptation to read it like a series of sentences in English: “All of the characters in this dance of life are intimate with each other. It all began because I, as the father at the top of it all, in a dream of wine, women, and song, in a Humpty-Dumpty world, fell down. But though I am a toppling poor fool, a lewd and lazy ladder man, I will arise again.” The sense, then, is that all will fall, just as the drunken Tim Finnegan, Humpty Dumpty, and HCE fell, but every fall suggests a rise. Perhaps, in fact, the highest

good (*summum bonum*) in this rum-drum-strum dream-world of ours, in this Humpty-Dumpty-on-a-wall world, comes from the poor fool who falls and rises again. However, the return may come in the form of the sons, the father divided against himself.

The seventh thunderword introduces the tale of the Norwegian Captain and his reluctant marriage to the tailor's daughter, a dream-analogue of Earwicker's own marriage. The eighth thunderword comes at the end of this tale and introduces the comic skit of Butt and Taff recounting “How Buckley Shot the Russian General,” a dream-analogue of the son replacing the father. Commenting on this section, Tindall notes: “Now at our ‘historyend,’ Earwicker ‘put off the kettle and they made three.’ When they put on the kettle and have tea at the end of the Prankquean's story, Vico's second thunder rumbles; for woman's domestic triumph is man's fall. Now the teakettle of A.L.P.'s triumph precedes the eighth thunder . . .”⁴⁰ In the first eight thunders the god-hero falls and becomes domesticated amid the sound of thunder, excrement, and sexual guilt. Just as Vico's thunder institutes religion, agriculture, family life, and filial succession, these thunders show us how Earwicker as the domestic avatar of the fallen god and the Viking sea-rover is tamed. The age of the god and the father is over. Hence, the remaining sections of this third chapter of Book II deal with Earwicker's inability to convince his customers of his innocence, with dream-references to the son displacing the father, and with Earwicker's latest fall at the end of the chapter dead drunk.

The eighth thunderword, then, seems to focus once again on guilt and also on the father-son conflict: “Pappappapparrassannuaragheallachnatullaghmonganmacmacmacwhackfalltherdebblenonthedubblan-daddydoodled” (332.5-7). The word begins with the sound of cannons in the Crimean War and the sound of Buckley shooting the Russian General. These references are important here because, as Tindall notes, “a general, more than a particular man, is all sinners, all fathers—as Buckley or *bouchal* (Gaelic, young man) is every son, who, as the story of the Cad makes plain, must kill the father and take his place.”⁴¹ We can also find in these opening phrases references to the father and the “oldparr” associated with the first thunder (3.17): “Pap pap pap parr” or “Pappa pappa.” Next comes a long section—“parrassannuaragheallachnatullaghmongan”—which Brendan O'Hehir identifies as the Gaelic title *Piaras an Ua Raghailleach na Tulaighe Mongain* for “Piers the descendant of

Raghallach of the Hill of Mongán."⁴² This reference, befitting Earwicker as the Norwegian Captain, plays a variation on the Persse O'Reilly theme by making Persse the son of the foreign invader Sir Walter Raleigh and locating Earwicker-Finn's mountain-like qualities on the Hill of Mongán, which O'Hehir tells us is "recently called Gallows Hills."⁴³ This title—another father-son reference—is followed by mention of the sons' attack in the Gaelic *mac* for "son": "mac mac mac whack fall." The "whack" of the sons brings about the "fall" of the "fallther," the falling father, who is their devil, "therdebble"; this devil is not the twin brothers, "non the dubbl," but is the guilty Dublin father, "the dubbland daddy" who "doodled" in the Park. The father has committed a sexual crime (a blending of creation and the sexual indiscretion in Phoenix Park), and now the twin sons, who identify him as their devil, bring about his fall. And with Earwicker's drunken fall at the end of this chapter, there remains only a brief *ricorso* in the last chapter of Book II before Shaun takes over in the first chapter of Book III where both the ninth and tenth thunderwords appear. As Tindall puts it, looking ahead to Book III and these last two thunderwords, "Not even Vico's thunder, of which there are two in this chapter, wakes him. The eight thunders we have heard so far, associated with H.C.E., have echoed or announced his fall and, sometimes, rise. Now the last two of the ten thunders, announcing fall, rise, and the beginning of a cycle, are Shaun's. What better evidence that son is taking father's place."⁴⁴

Book III, then, focuses primarily on the Shaun figure as Shaun-Jaun-Yawn. In Chapter 13, the first in this third book, he appears as Shaun the Post before the people. He is the demagogue who carries the "Word" to the people, but neither understands nor believes the mysteries contained in it. Since this first chapter corresponds to Vico's divine age within the larger human age, Shaun attempts to deify himself and to attack his twin brother Shem as the source of all evil. In order to win favor and votes, he tells in his Christ-like pose a fable or parable. The ninth thunderword appears in the middle of the sentence announcing his intention: "Let us here consider the casus, my dear little cousins (husstenhasstencaffincoffintussemtosemendamandamnacoscaghcusaghobixhatouxpeswchbechoscashlcarcaract) of the Ondt and the Gracehoper" (414.19-21). The word itself, as we shall see, is really an extended cough. Shaun, as his father's favorite, has taken over the father's position;

he has also taken over, this time in the form of a cough instead of a stutter, his father's sense of guilt.⁴⁵ And like his father, Shaun as the Ondt of the fable does not convince his audience of his good intentions. Perhaps they notice, as we do, that "ondt" contains both "don't" and the Danish word *ondt* for "evil."

As for the cough of the ninth thunderword, we find:

- hussten-, the German *Husten* for "cough"
- hassten-, the Danish *Hosten* for "cough"
- caffincoffin-, the English "coughing," here almost a death rattle
- tussem-, the Latin *tussem* for "a cough"
- tossem-, the French *tousser* for "cough"
- damandamn-, a couple of "damns"
- nacoscaghcusagh-, the Gaelic *na casachta* for "of the cough" and *casacht* for "cough"
- bix-, the Greek *bêx* for "a cough"
- toux-, the French *toux* for "cough"
- cashl-, Russian for "cough"⁴⁶
- carcaract-, the sound of the cough itself

Clearly, then, we hear Shaun the lecturer clearing his throat and coughing before beginning his fable.

This shift from the original thunder in the first thunderword to the cough in the first of Shaun's thunderwords demonstrates to us how Shaun, in imitating the voice of the thunder, is presenting himself as the new father-god; the politician of the people, not understanding the great message hidden in the thunderword, misuses it in the form of a cough to get attention during his apparently self-serving speech. Shaun is also identifying his conflict with Shem in the very rhythm of the cough itself, which seems to be arranged as a series of opposites, much like the cheers at a rally:

- hussten—hassten
- caffin—coffin
- tussem—tossem
- dam—an—dam (pause)
- na
- cosagh—cusagh

hobix—hatoux
 peswch—bechos
 cashl—car
 car—car—act

In the human age and in the hands of the politicians, the voice of the divine thunder and the phoenix fall have become a football cheer or a slogan chant to win the popular vote. This is the secularization of the divine creativity Joyce forecast earlier as the "setdown secular phoenish" (4.17).

After the fable of "The Ondt and the Gracehoper," Shaun is shown Anna Livia's letter and is asked if he can read it. This is the famous letter which Biddy the hen scratched up in the midden heap, referred to here as the "Letter, carried of Shaun, son of Hek, written of Shem, brother of Shaun, uttered for Alp, mother of Shem, for Hek, father of Shaun" (420.17-19). It is analogous to ALP's other letter, the Delta, which as an upright equilateral triangle refers to the fertile river delta and as an inverted triangle refers to the female pubic mane, both primary sources of creation. Thus, so Benstock suggests, "On an allegorical level, the letter is a record of universal history, written by the artist-prophet Shem (apparently at the behest of the archetypal woman A.L.P., the source of the secrets of the creation, procreation, and perpetuation of the species) and stolen by the bourgeois politician brother Shaun for the purpose of passing it off as his own in order to reap the reward of making the universal secrets accessible to and palatable for his constituents and followers."⁴⁷ The political Shaun, with this letter now in his possession, does not tell his followers whether or not he can interpret it; instead, he delivers a fiery attack against his brother Shem, originally portrayed as the sexually abusive Gracehoper and now portrayed as the sexually salacious artist. Shaun ends this attack, now in the guise of the Pope, with "Ex. Ex. Ex. Ex." (424.13), suggesting both excommunication and exorcism.

When then asked by his followers why he hates Shem so, Shaun replies, "For his root language" (424.17). The popularizing Shaun hates the artist-prophet Shem because of his "rude" language, his ability to use an earthy and vigorous vocabulary effectively. He also hates Shem for his "rood" language, his ability to understand the significance of the "rood" or "cross" and hence to penetrate the mysteries of religion. But primarily Shaun the Post hates Shem

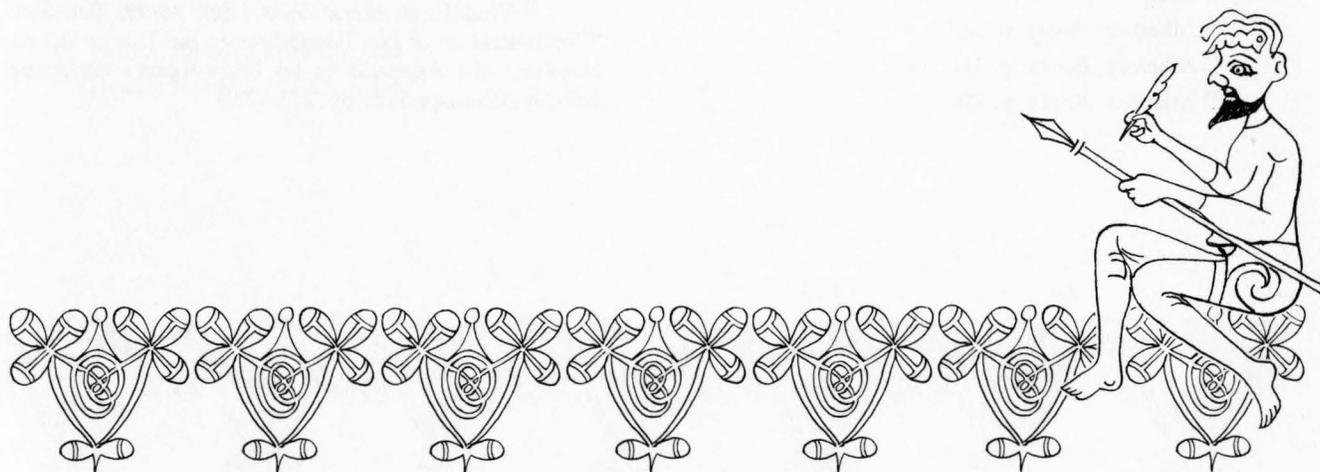
the Penman because the artist understands the "root" of language and can interpret both his mother's "letter" and his father's "thunder." "We remember," Burgess adds, "that Vico taught that language was an attempt to make meaning out of God's thunder. Shem has the gift of language: he can explain what the thunder said. But the political leader thrives on vague speech, the antithesis of truth and clarity. The artist is the demagogue's true enemy; the truth made many a great man fall."⁴⁸ Shaun's hate finds full expression when, as Thor the Thundergod himself, he blasts Shem with the last thunderword. Thus, at the beginning of the Ondt-Gracehoper fable, Shaun expropriates for his own political purposes the Father's thunder in the form of a cough. Next, he expropriates the Mother's secret letter and the artist's vision of that letter as his own. Finally, he expropriates the very voice of the thunder itself, used here as an expression of both power and revenge. The cycles must be near the end, for surely this is "The Twilight of the Gods."

We are not surprised, then, when we find in Shaun's imitation tenth thunderword references to the downfall of the gods in Norse mythology: "Ullhodturdendweirmudgaardgringnirurdrmolnirfenrirlukkilokkibaugimandodrrerinsurtkrinmgernrackinarockar! Thor's for yo!" (424.20-22). Following both Christiani and Atherton,⁴⁹ we can therefore identify:

- Ull-, Thor's stepson
- Ullhod-, the Norse *ulvehode* for "wolf head": "the head of Fenrir, the wolf who opens the attack upon the gods in the fatal battle"
- hod-, the blind god Hod who kills Balder
- tordenweir-, the Danish *Tordenveir* for "stormy weather"
- tur-, the god Tyr who warned of the gods' downfall
- weir-, the Norse *weird* for "Fate"
- mudgaard-, the Norse *Midgaard* for "Earth"
- gringnir-, Grimnir, another name for Odin
- urdr-, the Norse Norn Urd, meaning "the Past"
- molnir-, Mjollnir, Thor's hammer
- fenrir-, the wolf Fenrir—the Destroyer—, son of Loki
- lukkilokki-, Loki
- baug-, the giant Bauge who helped Odin steal the cauldron Odreri

- baugiman-, perhaps "bogeyman"
- odrrerin-, the cauldron Odreri; perhaps also Oddrun, sister of Atli
- surt-, the Norse fire-giant Surt, who fought against the gods in the final battle
- krinmgern-, the giantess Hrimgern
- rackinarockar!, the Norse *Ragna rokkr* for "the twilight of the gods"

These references bring to mind both the twilight and the downfall of the gods. Shaun, who has already in this phase taken over and debased the secrets of the Father and the Mother, becomes the god of the people: "Thor's for yo!" he tells his audience after pronouncing the last thunderword. The people reply, "The hundred-lettered name again, last word of perfect language" (424.23-24). But this last thunderword has one hundred and one letters. Shaun, as a thundering political Thor, does not understand the true meaning of the powerful message he delivers. As unity falls further and further into diversity, the original meanings become blurred and corrupted. As the secrets of the archetypal Father and Mother are expropriated, contaminated, and popularized by the political Shauns during Vico's human age, we will hear the thunder no more as we plunge toward the end of *Finnegans Wake*. Still, after the final *ricorso* in the single chapter of Book IV, we have only to turn back to the beginning to see the whole of the cyclical world start again with the first thunderword.



NOTES

¹ James Joyce, *Ulysses* (New York: Random House, 1961), p. 34; subsequent references to this work will appear in the text parenthetically.

² Anthony Burgess, *Joysprick* (London: Andre Deutsch, 1973), p. 139.

³ Burgess, *Joysprick*, pp. 139-140.

⁴ A. Walton Litz, "Vico and Joyce," in *Giambattista Vico: An International Symposium*, ed. Giorgio Tagliacozzo (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1969), p. 251.

⁵ William York Tindall, *James Joyce: His Way of Interpreting the Modern World* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1950), p. 72.

⁶ Anthony Burgess, *Here Comes Everybody* (London: Faber and Faber, 1965), p. 191.

⁷ Bernard Benstock, *Joyce-Again's Wake* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1965), p. 198.

⁸ Benstock, *Joyce-Again's Wake*, pp. 198-199. Benstock's references to Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* (New York: Viking Press, 1962) appear parenthetically in his text and give both page and line numbers; my own subsequent references to the *Wake* will also be to this edition and will give page and line numbers in the text.

⁹ Burgess, *HCE*, p. 191.

¹⁰ James S. Atherton, *The Books at the Wake* (New York: Viking Press, 1960), p. 32.

¹¹ Atherton, *Books*, p. 32.

¹² Atherton, *Books*, p. 31.

¹³ Atherton, *Books*, p. 174.

¹⁴ Atherton, *Books*, p. 31.

¹⁵ Atherton, *Books*, p. 196.

¹⁶ Atherton, *Books*, p. 197. See pages 194-197 for his full argument.

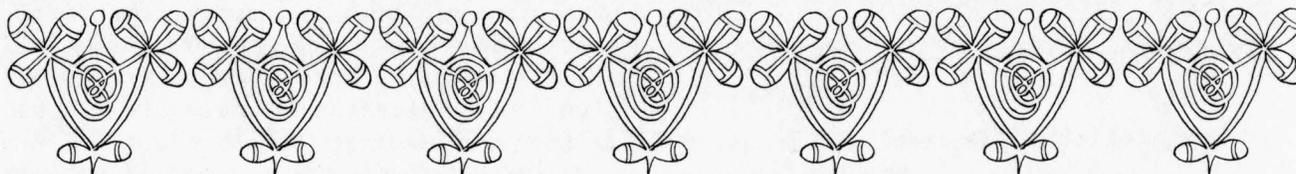
¹⁷ Atherton, *Books*, pp. 195-199.

¹⁸ References to most other languages are found in: Helmut Bonheim, *A Lexicon of the German in FINNEGANS WAKE* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967); Dounia Bunis Christiani, *Scandinavian Elements of FINNEGANS WAKE* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1965); Brenden O'Hehir, *A Gaelic Lexicon for FINNEGANS WAKE* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970); Brendan O'Hehir and John M. Dillon, *A Classical Lexicon for FINNEGANS WAKE* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977). Subsequent references to these languages and lexicons will not be cited. References to the Japanese and to those involving Thor are from Adaline Glasheen, "Part of What the Thunder Said in *Finnegans Wake*," *The Analyst*, 23 (Nov. 1964), 1-29. See also L. A. Wiggin, "The First Thunderword," *James Joyce Review*, 3 (Feb. 1959), 56-59, for other "possibilities."

¹⁹ William York Tindall, *A Reader's Guide to FINNEGANS WAKE* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1969), p. 32.

²⁰ Glasheen, "What the Thunder Said," p. 1.

²¹ Tindall, *Reader's Guide*, pp. 48-49; Benstock, "Demonstration of Pun Possibilities in the Tale of Jarl van Hooher," the Appendix to his *Joyce-Again's Wake*, pp. 267-296. (See especially pp. 272-273.)



²² Adaline Glasheen, "Synopsis of *Finnegans Wake*," *Third Census of FINNEGANS WAKE* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), pp. xxviii-xxix.

²³ Benstock's Appendix in his *Joyce-Again's Wake* contains L. A. Wiggin's "possibilities" for the second thunderword on page 295.

²⁴ Burgess, *HCE*, p. 202.

²⁵ Tindall, *Reader's Guide*, p. 62.

²⁶ The following references are from Glasheen, "What the Thunder Said": -adda-, p. 15; -sammih-, p. 26; and -ammihnouithapp-, p. 16.

²⁷ Joseph Campbell and Henry Morton Robinson, *A Skeleton Key to FINNEGANS WAKE* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1944), p. 88, footnote 12.

²⁸ Tindall, *Reader's Guide*, p. 89.

²⁹ Marshall McLuhan and Quentin Fiore, *War and Peace in the Global Village* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1968), p. 47.

³⁰ Bernard Benstock, "Concerning Lost Historeve: Book I, Chapter v," in *A Conceptual Guide to FINNEGANS WAKE*, eds. Michael H. Begnal and Fritz Senn (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1974), p. 45.

³¹ Benstock, "Lost Historeve," p. 45.

³² Glasheen, *Third Census*, p. xlvi.

³³ Glasheen, "What the Thunder Said," p. 13.

³⁴ Tindall, *Reader's Guide*, p. 165.

³⁵ Tindall, *Reader's Guide*, p. 165.

³⁶ Burgess, *Joyce-again*, p. 20.

³⁷ Tindall, *Reader's Guide*, p. 174.

³⁸ Benstock, *Joyce-Again's Wake*, p. 198; Campbell and Robinson, p. 201, footnote 12.

³⁹ Campbell and Robinson, p. 201, footnote 11.

⁴⁰ Tindall, *Reader's Guide*, p. 195.

⁴¹ Tindall, *Reader's Guide*, p. 196.

⁴² O'Hehir, *Gaelic Lexicon*, p. 176.

⁴³ O'Hehir, *Gaelic Lexicon*, p. 69.

⁴⁴ Tindall, *Reader's Guide*, p. 225.

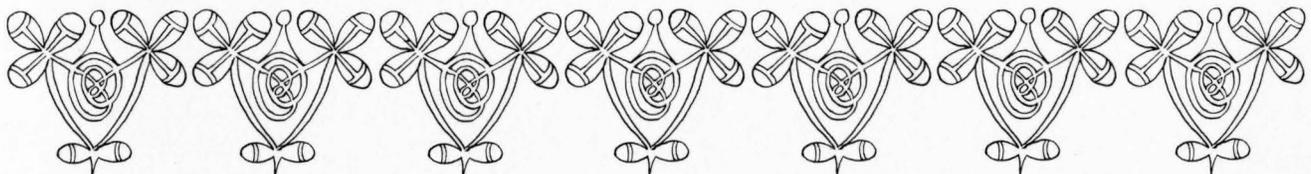
⁴⁵ Burgess, *HCE*, p. 240.

⁴⁶ James S. Atherton, "Shaun A: Book III, Chapter i," in Begnal and Senn, *A Conceptual Guide*, p. 160: "The word includes the German, English, Latin, Portuguese (or Italian) for 'cough,' then a couple of damns, then the Gaelic, Chinese (cough and spit, this time), French, a language I cannot identify, Russian, again all meaning 'cough.'" Atherton unfortunately does not specify any of these words, especially the Portuguese, Italian, and Chinese.

⁴⁷ Benstock, *Joyce-Again's Wake*, p. 9.

⁴⁸ Burgess, *HCE*, p. 242.

⁴⁹ Christiani, *Scandinavian Elements*, p. 190; Atherton, "Shaun A," pp. 168-169.



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