

# Boylan's Fugue in 'Sirens'

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## I. Abstract

Recent discoveries in genetic studies require a revision of the fugal structure in 'Sirens.' We hope we can shed light on some of the remaining unsolved questions by applying these studies to an interdisciplinary approach. We will put forward our point of view on the most controversial debate on music in Joyce: does this episode of *Ulysses* contain the eight parts of a *fuga per canonem*, as the author asserted, and how can we find these parts. Our study is based on the The Sirens Copybook manuscript authenticated by Michael Groden, as well as on the further analysis by two scholars, Daniel Ferrer and Susan Brown. We believe that the role of the character Blazes Boylan in 'Sirens' is crucial to divide the episode in eight parts chronologically.

First of all, we must point out that some of the concepts that are being used for this interdisciplinary analysis are not unambiguous and depend on the field of study alluded to. A good example is the notion of "theme," which appears in literature as the main subject of a text, but in music it is understood as a synonym for motif, the musical material that provides a work with its own identity. Some problems of interpretation arise when this term is applied in both music and literature without a clear distinction, such as in the discussion of the eight fugal parts in 'Sirens.' Two authors - Stuart Gilbert and Susan Brown - claim to identify these eight sections by mentioning the "themes." Also, the accuracy of an interdisciplinary study depends on the meticulous use of homogenous sources for the musical concepts. If not, one may argue that the scholar quotes one dictionary or another depending on his/her own interests. Susan Brown recently established that Joyce's musical knowledge was based on the *Grove's Dictionary of Music* (in this paper we will be using the abbreviation *GDM*). Despite detractors of Brown's thesis, like Michelle Witen, we believe that for all practical purposes this encyclopaedia is the most useful source for establishing a standardised musical terminology. Every definition of a musical term for this research has been taken from this source.

# 1. Introduction

Many scholars have analysed the music of 'Sirens,' but we can at least observe that in their conclusions they disagree. One of the most discussed subjects on the role of music in this episode is based on a sentence written by Joyce himself in a letter to Harriet Shaw Weaver on 6 August 1919 where he claimed that in 'Sirens' there are "all the eight regular parts of a *fuga per canonem*."1[1] The acceptance of the author's remark has produced some controversy among critics. For instance, Terence Killeen provides this musical genre with only five sections instead of the eight regular parts alluded to by Joyce. Consequently, he does not agree with the definition used by the author, although he does admit that "all these different voices are interwoven in the episode into a fugal whole."2[2]

Also reluctant is Sebastian D. G. Knowles, who labels the fugal form in 'Sirens' as one of the "bogus statements" regarding *Ulysses*.3[3] Paradoxically enough, he also states in this same work that "Joyce's claim for 'eight regular parts' in the 'Sirens' episode can be satisfied if one thinks of a part as a voice part in an octet [...] Soprano I & II, Alto I & II, Tenor I & II, and Bass I & II."4[4] Knowles's opinion on the division of the "eight regular parts" of 'Sirens' in eight voices does not seem convincing however, especially if we consider Joyce's use of the term "part" instead of "voice," suggesting therefore a structural division of the chapter, rather than the contrapuntal cast of performers. If we accept Knowles's premise we would also have to agree with him in his conclusion that 'Sirens' "may be canonic but is certainly not fugal."5[5] We do agree with Knowles as to the canonic nature of 'Sirens' because we

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1[1] In Ellmann, Richard. *Selected Letters of James Joyce*. London: Faber, 1975 (242).

2[2] In Killeen, Terence. *Ulysses Unbound: A Reader's Companion to James Joyce's Ulysses*. Wicklow: Wordwell Ltd. In association with the National Library of Ireland, 2005 (123-124).

3[3] In Knowles, Sebastian D. G. *The Dublin Helix: The Life of Language in Joyce's Ulysses*. Gainesville, Tallahassee, Tampa: University of Florida Press, 2001 (167).

4[4] *Ibid* (103).

5[5] *Ibid* (86).

are aware of the presence of counterpoint in this episode, but that does not imply that we should exclude the structure of *fuga per canonem*, which is in fact canonic.<sup>6[6]</sup> Apart from this reason, Knowles does not provide any other motivation for excluding the fugal structure from 'Sirens.'

We should also mention Werner Wolf's opinion, who disagrees with the idea of 'Sirens' as a canon "since the rigor of this form would be altogether inappropriate for a musical analogy in narrative fiction,"<sup>7[7]</sup> although he proposes the "possibility of establishing some affinities between 'Sirens' and a three-part fugal composition,"<sup>8[8]</sup> but we can observe that his concept of part – as voice – is the same as Knowles's because he assigns the treble to the barmaids, the tenor to Bloom, and the bass to Boylan.

Andreas Fischer also disagrees with those defenders of the fugal structure in 'Sirens' when he points out that "the result appears to be that it is neither a *fuga per canonem* nor any other explicit musical form and that its most musiclike part is the introduction, a kind of overture that introduces "themes," that is, words and fragments of sentences that will recur in their proper context later in the episode."<sup>9[9]</sup>

Zack Bowen can be considered as the most prolific music specialist of *Ulysses*. In his many articles and books we can see how he defends different theories. One of his opinions is that Joyce intended to write a musical comedy, with 'Sirens' in a music-hall structure.<sup>10[10]</sup> However, in one of his most recent publications, he

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<sup>6[6]</sup> According to the definition of fugue found in the *GDM*, despite the variety of meanings and usage of this concept "imitative counterpoint in some fashion has been the single unifying factor in the history of fugue."

<sup>7[7]</sup> In Wolf, Werner. *The Musicalization of Fiction: A Study in the Theory and History of Intermediality*. Amsterdam – Atlanta, GA: Rodopi, 1999 (129).

<sup>8[8]</sup> Ibid (131).

<sup>9[9]</sup> In Fischer, Andreas. "Strange Words, Strange Music: The Verbal Music of 'Sirens'." In *Bronze by Gold: The Music of Joyce*, ed. Sebastian D. G. Knowles, 245-262. New York: Garland Publishing, 1999

(249).

<sup>10[10]</sup> In Bowen, Zack. "Music as Comedy in *Ulysses*." In *Picking Up Airs: Hearing the Music in Joyce's Text*, ed. Bauerle, Ruth, 431-452. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992.

compares a number of fragments of 'Sirens,' 'Nestor,' 'Proteus,' and 'The Wandering Rocks' with Wagner's opera *Die Meistersinger*.<sup>11</sup>[11]

We must also add that one scholar, Margaret Rogers, interprets the fugal statement rigorously, and in her research on 'Sirens' she proposes to transcribe the inserted musical code in this episode claiming that "when Joyce declared that he was writing 'Sirens' as a fugue, he was playing a difficult game because he had to find a method of giving musical clues to his hidden fugue without actually writing out the music in the text."<sup>12</sup>[12] Rogers suggests that an interdisciplinary study between literature and music should imply the transcription of the words found in the literary text into a musical score. We disagree with such interpretations however, because we believe that, when Joyce was writing *Ulysses*, he was creating literature, and that the music found in the text was inserted in a different way. Although it is possible to observe analogies between the text and musical compositions, we do not think Joyce intended to write a multidisciplinary text that could be read as a work of literature and simultaneously performed by musical instruments and/or voices.

After contrasting all these visions and opinions, we believe that first of all an important distinction must be made: Joyce's intention may well have differed from the final result of his fugal 'Sirens.' What we know is that the author told Harriet Shaw Weaver that the 'Sirens' episode was written in the form of a *fuga per canonem*. However, we must be aware of the difficulties arising from trying to write a literary text following a musical pattern. In our research we do not aim to show how Joyce should have achieved his goal, since such a consideration would produce another kind of discussion in which subjective views may play an important role, mainly because we are dealing with merging two different artistic manifestations without following any instructions previously determined. Instead, we are interested in showing the aspects we believe he took into account in order to make 'Sirens' resemble his own version of a *fuga per canonem* and how that affected his work. We know that this was not his initial intention as we can observe in the first draft of 'Sirens,' because that version, according to Daniel Ferrer's recent discovery, does not yet have a fugal form.<sup>13</sup>[13] We can assume that his last version of the chapter had

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<sup>11</sup>[11] Bowen, Zack. "Libretto for the Hibernian Meistersinger: *Ulysses* as Opera." In *Papers On Joyce*, no. 10/11, 57-70. Murcia: Spanish James Joyce Society, 2004-2005.

<sup>12</sup>[12] In Rogers, Margaret. "Mining the Ore of 'Sirens': An Investigation of Structural Components." In *Bronze by Gold: The Music of Joyce*, ed. Sebastian D. G. Knowles, 263-276. New York: Garland Publishing, 1999 (265).

<sup>13</sup>[13] "Could Joyce have gone from the early, fugueless draft to the fugal National Library of Ireland + Buffalo draft without an intermediary stage?" (In Ferrer, Daniel. "What Song the Sirens Sang. . . Is No Longer Beyond All Conjecture: A Preliminary Description of the New 'Proteus' and 'Sirens' Manuscripts." *James Joyce Quarterly*. 39.1: 53-68, 2001: 63).

undergone a series of additions, improvements, and corrections, but at the same time that Joyce decided to maintain other features that were already valid for his literary conception of the episode.

## 2. The Importance of Concepts and Disciplines: Fugue and Theme

Before starting with the analysis of the musical structure in 'Sirens' we should try to answer an essential question: can we call 'Sirens' a *fuga per canonem* or a fugue? This question has provoked much controversy in the past. However, it seems now clear from Susan Brown's article "The Mystery of the Fuga per Canonem Solved"<sup>14</sup>[14] that Joyce himself seems to have confused the two terms. Brown's paper is also revealing regarding the source used by Joyce, which corresponds to the entry for "fugue" in the second edition of *GDM* published from 1904 to 1910 and signed by Ralph Vaughn Williams. Brown's identification of this source was carried out comparing the recently discovered draft of the Sirens Copybook with the dictionaries and encyclopaedias Joyce may have checked during the writing process of *Ulysses*.

Michelle Witen<sup>15</sup>[15] questions Susan Brown when she states that the *GDM* is the source on which Joyce based his concept of the *fuga per canonem*. However, she does not offer an alternative. She is also sceptical about Joyce's use of a music dictionary as a source during the writing process of 'Sirens' because, unlike Brown, she believes that Joyce's knowledge of music was broad enough so that he did not need it. Witen suggests that someone like Joyce may not have needed to check information in the *GDM*. However, despite Witen's evidence on Joyce's musical background, we do not agree with her because we believe that the use of a dictionary or an encyclopaedia is not only strictly reserved for those whose knowledge on a specific field is limited. Even if Joyce was a musical expert, he could have made use

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<sup>14</sup>[14] Brown, Susan. "The Mystery of the Fuga per Canonem Solved." In *Genetic Joyce Studies, Issue 7*. Antwerp: 2007: <http://www.antwerpjamesjoycecenter.com/GJS/GJS7/GJS7brown.html>

<sup>15</sup>[15] Witen, Michelle. "The Mystery of the Fuga per Canonem Reopened?" In *Genetic Joyce Studies, Issue 10*. Antwerp: 2010.

of this source when he started the complex transformation process of the initial draft of 'Sirens' into the fugal final version.

Although we agree essentially with Brown's arguments and conclusions, we must also point out that when one really analyses the source Brown has identified as Joyce's inspiration – the *GDM* – different conclusions can be reached. The first question that arises when contrasting Brown's work with Joyce's words in his letter to Harriet Shaw Weaver is whether the most appropriate musical concept to designate 'Sirens' is a *fuga per canonem* or a fugue. Brown states that both definitions are "exclusive" and "not interchangeable":

The *fuga per canonem* is a strict form also known as a round (as in "Three Blind Mice" or "Frere Jacques"; see Honton 41) which, according to *GDM*, is "descended from the contrapuntal experiments of mediaeval monks" in the sixteenth century. The second is a radically complex contrapuntal form developed in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, most innovatively by Bach, and – *Grove's* explains – is "contrary to the rules" (Williams 114-15).

In fact, one could just as well argue that the two terms are related. These two designations, "strict" and "contrary to the rules," are not really "exclusive" as Brown claims, and in some sense the terms *are* interchangeable. We believe that the *fuga per canonem* and the fugue have several crucial features in common, such as their canonic nature and the use of counterpoint. In fact, the differences between them are merely of type and epoch, but not structural, and therefore we must reject Brown's drastic opinion. These two musical genres have much more in common with each other than any of them with other compositions, like an opera or a symphony. In such comparisons we would find that one genre would exclude the other, but this is not the case.

We do agree with Brown, though, in stressing Joyce's mistake either when defining what he intended to do or when he used this particular name for what he had done. But, if the concepts of a *fuga per canonem* and a fugue are so similar that they imply two varieties of canonic compositions, then why should someone like Joyce make use of the one he did not mean? We should remember that the first and only time Joyce speaks about 'Sirens' as a *fuga per canonem* is in the letter to Harriet Shaw Weaver, his sponsor during the writing of *Ulysses*. One could assume that the use of the Latin term *fuga per canonem* to designate the fugue may have been due to Joyce's marketing skills in order to attract Weaver's attention and curiosity, since he

may have thought that the Latin nomenclature would sound more striking. We must not forget that, according to Ellmann, “after reaching Zurich in poverty, Joyce by the end of his stay had capital as well as income” because during the period between 1915 and 1920 he received gifts from Yeats, Ezra Pound, Edith Rockefeller McCormick, and, mainly and permanently, Harriet Shaw Weaver.<sup>16</sup>[16] Joyce may have tried to increase Ms Weaver’s interest for his work by making it sound appealing to avoid her disappointment and a potential cessation of her valuable financial help. This hypothesis seems to be the most probable reason why Joyce may have confused these concepts willingly.

In conclusion, we want to emphasise that we agree with Susan Brown when she states that, even though Joyce used the term *fuga per canonem*, he was, in fact, alluding to the concept of a fugue. However, we do not agree with her when she states that both concepts are “exclusive” and “not interchangeable:” the only difference between them is one of type. Therefore, Joyce did not commit a fatal mistake when confusing both concepts, and despite not being too meticulous with the nomenclature, the differences between applying the form of a fugue or a *fuga per canonem* to this episode of *Ulysses*, would not have produced remarkably different results.

To identify the eight fugal parts mentioned by Joyce in his letter to Harriet Shaw Weaver, Susan Brown’s theory seems to be the most tantalizing option due to her convincing arguments in “The Mystery of the *Fuga per Canonem* Solved,” in which she accepts the author’s remark on the *fuga per canonem* as a composition with eight parts, instead of a different number of sections like Wolf and Killeen state.<sup>17</sup>[17] Another convincing reason to follow Susan Brown’s theory is that it is based on the discovery of some notes written by James Joyce himself on the inside cover of a copybook, catalogued as II.ii.3 in the new Joyce manuscripts and notes in the National Library of Ireland and which represents the missing first half of the ‘Sirens’ draft, Buffalo MS V.A.5. (JJA 13: 32-56). This ‘Sirens’ Copybook was authenticated by Michael Groden in 2001, and one of its most exciting features is the fugal division of ‘Sirens’ into the eight parts alluded to by the author. These are the eight terms or phrases written by Joyce himself in Italian in that manuscript:

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<sup>16</sup>[16] In Ellmann, Richard. *Selected Letters of James Joyce*. London: Faber, 1975 (213).

<sup>17</sup>[17] See former section “Interpretation of Joyce’s statement on the *fuga per canonem* found in ‘Sirens’: according to Terence Killeen there are five fugal parts in this episode; Werner Wolf believes there are three.

1. soggetto
2. contrasoggetto  
(reale in altro tono: in raccorciamento)
3. soggetto + contrasoggetto in contrapunto
4. esposizione (exposition)  
(proposto codetta)
5. contraesposizione (counter-exposition)  
(nuovi rapporti fra detti: parecchio)  
(divertimenti)
6. tela contrappuntistica  
(episodi)
7. stretto maestrale  
(blocchi d'armonia)
8. pedale

Susan Brown points out that this structure corresponds to a fugue instead of a *fuga per canonem*, so we should have to accept that Joyce had actually confused the two terms. According to Brown, however, Joyce made another error, which is the correspondence between these parts and the text. She identifies this mistake in Joyce's words paraphrased by Stuart Gilbert, who claims that Joyce himself uttered the following statement regarding the eight fugal parts inserted in 'Sirens':

The various themes are introduced in the fugal manner: the *Subject* is obviously the Sirens Song; the *Answer*, Bloom's entry and monologue; Boylan is the *Counter-Subject*. [...] The *Episodes* or *Divertimenti* are the songs by Mr Dedalus and Ben Dollard. The Episodes, Subject, Answer and Counter-Subject



are often bound together contrapuntally in the narrative or in the texture of Mr. Bloom's monologue."<sup>18</sup>[18]

Brown agrees with Gilbert and she interprets this statement as follows:

The *subject* as female seduction; the *answer* as Bloom in the despondent tone of the betrayed; and the *countersubject* as Boylan, the cocky male version of the seducer; and the episodes and divertimenti as the songs actually sung at the Ormond.

Brown and Gilbert agree on the identification of the eight parts in the fugal 'Sirens.' Susan Brown believes that first we must ask this question: "Since Joyce jotted the note "(reale [answer] in altro tono: in raccorciamento)" under "contrasoggetto," has he confused the answer with the countersubject?" Brown indicates that Joyce may have confused the terms, and that is her only disagreement with Gilbert's view. Her opinion is that such a mistake could be due to the complexity of the musical concepts involved. We will deal with the answer-countersubject discussion proposed by Brown further on when we propose our own division of this episode, but we would like to emphasise that for the rest there are no crucial differences between Brown and Gilbert regarding the identification of the fugal parts in 'Sirens.'

However, even though both scholars seem to be convincing in their arguments with respect to the fugal structure, there are two reasons why from an interdisciplinary point of view we cannot agree with either of them. The first contradiction in Gilbert's concept of fugue - and consequently in Brown's as well - can be noticed earlier in his study, when Gilbert states that in 'Sirens' "there are generally two, three, or four overlapping *parts*, which, synchronized by intertwinement in the same sentence, or closely juxtaposed, produce the effect of a chord of music."<sup>19</sup>[19] If we take into consideration the concept of "chord,"<sup>20</sup>[20] we

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<sup>18</sup>[18] In Gilbert, Stuart. *James Joyce's Ulysses: A Study*. London: Faber & Faber, 1930 (221).

<sup>19</sup>[19] Ibid.

<sup>20</sup>[20] Chord (Fr. *accord*; Ger. *Akkord, Klang*; It. *accordo*): The simultaneous sounding of two or more notes. Chords are usually described or named by the intervals they comprise, reckoned either between

have to conclude that Gilbert's statement resembles the abovementioned theory of eight parts as "voices" defended by Sebastian D. G. Knowles.<sup>21</sup>[21] However, if we go back to the last quotation from Gilbert's study, when indicating these *parts*, he refers to the *themes* he identifies in 'Sirens,' which can be positively interpreted as either a contradiction or as a mistake. Gilbert's theory is ambiguous because of the different uses he makes of the word *part* in these two statements.

There is an additional detail that makes Gilbert's study – and, again, Brown's work too – vague and ambiguous, which is his use of the concept "theme": Gilbert employs this notion ignoring the difference between a *musical theme* and the *hermeneutical theme*. These two concepts are not interchangeable in an interdisciplinary study between music and literature. The result of Gilbert's indiscriminate use of a term that can be either used in literature or music with different connotations is misleading. In a first reading we may agree with his proposal, but if one intends to carry out an interdisciplinary study, in which the use of musical terms cannot be ambiguous, we must underline that his musical analysis of the text is not accurate, or rather non-existent, since what he does is to provide a literary interpretation of a text based on a musical concept without a precise application of the specific terms from one artistic discipline to the other.

As a result, in lieu of the expected interdisciplinary analysis in which the musical study of a literary text occurs with musical concepts, the reader is provided with an imprecise literary explanation of how music was inserted into literature. A definition of the concept of theme in both music and literature must be established in order to avoid ambiguity. *GDM* offers us a precise definition of the term "theme":

**Theme:** The musical material on which part or all of a work is based, usually having a recognizable melody and sometimes perceivable as a complete musical expression in itself, independent of the work to which it belongs. It gives a work its identity even when (as is frequently the case with a theme and variations) it is not original to the work.

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adjacent notes or from the lowest: the triad, for instance, consists of two 3rds (reckoning between adjacent notes) or, equally, a 3rd and a 5th (reckoning from the lowest note). In functional harmony the root of a chord is the note on which it seems to be built. If the lowest note of the chord is also its root, it is said to be in root position; if not, it is said to be in inversion (*GDM*).

<sup>21</sup>[21] See former section in this research "Interpretation of Joyce's statement on the fuga per canonem found in 'Sirens.'" In Knowles, Sebastian D. G. *The Dublin Helix: The Life of Language in Joyce's Ulysses*. Gainseville, Tallahassee, Tampa: University of Florida Press, 2001 (167).

However, if we look for this same term in a conventional dictionary under a context related with hermeneutics, the results are not identical:

**Theme:** 1. a. The subject of discourse, discussion, conversation, meditation, or composition; a topic. b. *transf.* A subject treated by action (instead of by discourse, etc.); hence, that which is the cause of or for specified action, circumstance, or feeling; matter, subject. *Obs.* c. *Logic.* That which is the subject of thought. d. *Linguistics.* That part of a sentence which indicates what is being talked about. Cf. RHEME.22[22]

When we compare these two definitions, we can observe that the theme referred to by Gilbert in his study bears more resemblance to the one quoted from *The Oxford English Dictionary*, because this scholar refers to the subjects that are being discussed at specific points in *Ulysses*. However, this broad interpretation of “theme” will not be useful in an interdisciplinary approach, when another concept appears: the leitmotif. Joyce does apply Wagner’s leitmotif technique to his narrative. This technique consists of a recurring motif that is associated with a theme, in the sense of an idea. Joyce borrows the device from Wagner’s music, in which a musical phrase refers to the presence of a thought or a character. The proposals suggested by Gilbert and Brown would provoke ambiguities in a further analysis of leitmotifs, so we want to emphasise that this distinction must be clear between the two concepts of *theme*, the musical and the hermeneutic. We can either think about the possibility of making a clear distinction between the use of these terms in both disciplines, or about the search of alternative terms for an unambiguous interdisciplinary analysis. The problem with this second option is that the use of synonyms – such as “idea,” “concept,” “subject,” or “issue” for “theme” – may add further confusion to the study. For that reason, we prefer to be as specific as possible by using either “hermeneutical theme” or “musical theme.”

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22[22] *The Oxford English Dictionary*. Vol. XVII (891).

### 3. Boylan's Progression in Eight Fugal Parts

We believe that the author's initial purpose when he mentioned the eight parts of the *fuga per canonem* may have been different from Gilbert's proposal, when we consider that Joyce's schedule was based on Michael Groden's recently authenticated Sirens Copybook. The *parts* that appear in this draft refer neither to voices, as Knowles suggests, nor to themes, as Gilbert states. Gilbert's *themes* – understood in a hermeneutical sense – reappear throughout 'Sirens,' but if we focus on the parts that were written by Joyce in the Sirens Copybook, we observe a number of segments into which the *fuga per canonem* is divided. In Gilbert's proposal we can see a contradiction because the "parts" he mentions, the Sirens Song, Bloom as betrayed, Boylan as seducer, Mr Dedalus, and Ben Dollard, make several different appearances in this episode. Nevertheless, according to the Sirens Copybook written by Joyce, the *fuga per canonem* is divided into a series of eight parts that are sequential divisions with both voices and ideas as key elements that keep coming back, so we should not confuse these concepts.

The question then is how we can mark the segments of the eight parts of the *fuga per canonem* in this episode. Is there a way to identify them? We cannot be sure about Joyce's intentions if he did not express them himself, but we can suggest a possibility. If we divide 'Sirens' into the eight parts proposed by Joyce that follow a chronological order, then we should focus on the linear evolution shown by an axial variable. There exists an element in this episode that can be used for such a purpose, Blazes Boylan, and there are two arguments to support this suggestion. First of all, this is meant to be the main character in this episode considering that, according to Daniel Ferrer, the other male protagonist, Leopold Bloom, was "entirely absent" in the original version found in the lately discovered Sirens Copybook.<sup>23[23]</sup> Boylan can also be considered the central element of 'Sirens' for another reason: he is the only one whose development throughout the episode can be divided into eight segments, equivalent to the eight fugal parts referred to by Joyce, due to his chronological evolution as axial variable. We can state that Boylan is the only character whose linear progress in 'Sirens' is comparable with the one of the *fuga per canonem* in temporal terms because of his movement from 1) an initial absence, to a 2) slight introduction by means of his "jingle" leitmotif, then to 3) his actual presence in the Ormond Hotel and his interaction with the rest of the characters, to a further

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<sup>23[23]</sup> In Ferrer, Daniel. "What Song the Sirens Sang. . . Is No Longer Beyond All Conjecture: A Preliminary Description of the New 'Proteus' and 'Sirens' Manuscripts." *James Joyce Quarterly*. 39.1: 53-68, 2001 (58).

progress implying 4) his departure, later on 5) his movement through the streets of Dublin, followed by 6) parking his own car and taking a hackney cab, then 7) his arrival at 7, Eccles Street, until, finally, 8) a fading is suggested after knocking on Molly's door. This seems to us the most suitable possibility to distinguish the eight parts Joyce referred to in his letter to Harriet Shaw Weaver. The first fugal part is the *soggetto*, which the *GDM* defines as follows:

**Soggetto:** As defined in *Le istituzioni harmoniche* (1558) by Zarlino, who was among the first to apply the word 'subject' to music, a *soggetto* was any existing material on which a piece was based, including either a chosen theme for imitative treatment or a borrowed cantus firmus. A later Italian, G.B. Martini, defined it in part ii of his *Esemplare, ossia Saggio fondamentale pratico di contrappunto* (1775) as a fugue subject of medium or average length, in contrast to *Andamento* (a subject of extended length) and *Attacco* (an extremely brief subject). In the latter sense the word remains in use in Italy today. The only musical context in which contemporary English speakers commonly use the Italian form is the term *Soggetto cavato*. See also *Subject*.

Three kinds of fugal subject are referred to in this definition – *soggetto*, *andamento*, and *attacco* – and among all the research studies on this issue, Gifford is the only scholar who mentions this detail.<sup>24</sup>[24] The reasons for Joyce's choice of the *soggetto* instead of the other two, may have been his preference for a not too extended passage that could be easily identifiable thanks to a characteristic interval as well as his refusal to introduce a whole melody (like in an *andamento*). Another important factor for the selection of the *soggetto* may have been its insertion in a larger composition – unlike the *andamento*, which has an extended length itself –, or the absence of a section in *staccato*,<sup>25</sup>[25] like in an *attacco*, since the percussive

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<sup>24</sup>[24] "(1) *Andamenti*, a complete melody, beautiful in itself; (2) *Soggetti*, a short passage with a characteristic interval; and (3) *Attaco*, a short figure, usually *staccato*. In the opening section of the fugue the subject is presented together with the answer and a repetition of the subject in a different key (if there is to be a countersubject it is introduced in this section). The next section, the exposition, is a complete statement of the subject(s) and/or answer(s) by all the voices. This is followed by the "free" middle section; the climax then presents the subject in its most exciting aspect; and the coda concludes the fugue with the "desire for home." Gifford, Don and Robert J. Seidman. *Notes for Joyce: An Annotation of James Joyce's "Ulysses."* New York: E. P. Dutton, 1974 (290).

<sup>25</sup>[25] *Staccato* (It.: 'detached'): Of an individual note in performance, usually separated from its neighbours by a silence of articulation. The separation may be, but is not invariably, accompanied by

element that characterises Boylan – the “jingle” leitmotif – is not present yet in the initial part of ‘Sirens.’ We can then identify the *soggetto* as this first part, in which the context of the scene is being described before Boylan’s appearance is even suggested. The segment finishes with the first “jingle” (*U*, 11.212), which is the first time Boylan is being evoked with the percussive sound associated with his carriage. This “jingle” can also suggest the sounds coming from Molly’s bed, and, consequently, Bloom links it with the idea of Molly’s extra-marital affair with Boylan. From then on this sound will be associated in Bloom’s interior monologue with his wife’s fling. The atmosphere in the *soggetto* is a calm setting with a reduced number of characters, namely the two “sirens,” Miss Douce and Miss Kennedy, observed by Bloom. We believe that we can even identify the interval,<sup>26</sup>[26] or distance between pitches, in the “bronze by gold” leitmotif, in which some contrasts can be observed depending on the discourse level. The gap between these two female characters is established in the *soggetto*, since Miss Lydia Douce is depicted as bronze and Miss Mina Kennedy as gold. Despite sharing principal metals from the Homeric world as Gifford remarks,<sup>27</sup>[27] each of them is characterised in a distinctive way in this initial fugal part. In fact, the musical interval that separates these two characters appears repeatedly in the “exquisite contrast” (*U*, 11.68, and 11.105) that can be interpreted as the aesthetically charming parallelism perceived by Bloom while watching them. We must add that apart from the interval, they also have much in common. That can be understood in the next two occasions in which this motif reappears in ‘Sirens,’ first in “She drew down pensive (why did he go so quick when I?) about her bronze over the bar where bald stood by sister gold, in exquisite contrast, contrast in exquisite nonexquisite, slow cool dim seagreen sliding depth of shadow, *eau de Nil*” (*U*, 11.464), and then in “exquisite contrast: bronzelid minagold” (*U*, 11.1213). Gifford

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some degree of emphasis, and occasionally the term may imply emphasis without physical separation. The term may be regarded as the antonym of *legato*; a degree of articulation intermediate between *staccato* and *legato*, which has sometimes been represented by the term ‘non legato’, was regarded by certain 18th-century authorities as the normal method of playing melodies with life (according to C.P.E. Bach in his *Versuch*, 1753, it implied playing with ‘fire and a slight accentuation’). It is not always clear, however, that the use of the term ‘non-legato’ implies something different from *staccato* marks; in late Beethoven, for instance, the use of the term ‘non-legato’ or *staccato* marks, often occurring after *legato* passages, may both merely be intended as indications not to slur (*GDM*).

<sup>26</sup>[26] Interval: The distance between two pitches. The term ‘harmonic interval’ (as opposed to ‘melodic interval’) indicates that they are thought of as being heard simultaneously. Intervals are traditionally labelled according to the number of steps they embrace in a diatonic scale, counted inclusively: thus from C up to D or down to B is a 2nd, another step up to E or down to A makes a 3rd, etc. (*GDM*).

<sup>27</sup>[27] Gifford, Don and Robert J. Seidman. *Notes for Joyce: An Annotation of James Joyce’s “Ulysses.”* New York: E. P. Dutton, 1974 (290).

interprets these characters' interchangeability of roles, or rather the identification of their respective metals, bronze and gold, alluding to their juxtaposition.<sup>28</sup>[28] However, from an interdisciplinary perspective, we can also understand Joyce's interest in suggesting the harmony between Miss Douce and Miss Kennedy as a duality in which one entity complements the other. One of the points in which they agree is their view of men, which they introduce in this *soggetto* by means of their negative aspects, like when Miss Douce asks rhetorically: "aren't men frightful idiots?" (*U*, 11.79), during her confrontation with the busboy on his "impertinent insolence" (*U*, 11.99), or when they refer to Bloom as "old fogey" (*U*, 11.125), "hideous old wretch" (*U*, 11.140), "O greasy eyes! Imagine being married with a man like that!" (*U*, 11.169).

Bloom's focalisation of this scene provides, as a result, a view of women as an attraction or a goal that will – like in a *soggetto* – act as essential element to establish the fundamental contrasts between the two main male characters: Boylan, as the successful male who wins over someone else's wife and refuses the company of the other barmaids at the Ormond; and Bloom, as the cuckold whose wife is stolen from him and as the voyeur whose only contact with women occurs either visually or by means of clandestine correspondence in which he hides his identity. Bloom is evidently aware of the insuperable barrier that implies a comparison between Boylan and himself, and for that reason, the mood of this section transmits his frustration during his observation of Miss Douce. That moment is introduced "with sadness" (*U*, 11.80), a tone that is subsequently alliterated in:

Miss Kennedy sauntered sadly from bright light, twining a loose hair behind an ear. Sauntering sadly, gold no more, she twisted twined a hair. Sadly she twined in sauntering gold hair behind a curving ear.<sup>29</sup>[29]

In fact this mood can also be understood as the key of this section, and, considering the definition of this musical term found in the *GDM*, one can state that the *soggetto* was written in a minor key:

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<sup>28</sup>[28] *Ibid* (294).

<sup>29</sup>[29] *U*, 11.81-83.

**Key (i)** (Fr. *ton*; Ger. *Tonart*; It. *tono*): In tonal music, the abstract arrangement of musical phenomena such as melodies, harmonies and cadences around a referential or tonic pitch class. [...] Keys are often said to possess characteristics associated with various extra-musical emotional states. Though highly specific with respect to different repertoires and listeners, these expressive qualities fall into two basic categories, which conform to the basic difference – often asserted as an opposition – between major and minor: major is heard to be brighter and more cheerful than minor, which in comparison is darker and sadder.

Joyce seems to present the *soggetto* of the fugue in a minor key to emphasise the contrast between the initial part, in which Boylan is absent, and the following opposing countersubject, in which his imminent presence is being suggested. Bloom's role as conductor of the 'Sirens' fugue becomes crucial, since he refers to the moods of the characters, while he simultaneously switches the focus of the characters correspondingly.

The second part corresponds to the *contrasoggetto*. We must start this section by expressing our agreement with Susan Brown when she identifies Joyce's musical sources.<sup>30</sup>[30] She states that Joyce makes use of translations of the musical terms he requires. Therefore, the missing definition of *contrasoggetto* in the *GDM* must be sought under the one of countersubject:

**Countersubject:** In a fugue, a second theme that figures prominently but is subordinate in importance to the Subject. A countersubject proper is presented in the exposition in orderly fashion, that is, each voice immediately follows its opening statement of the subject by stating the countersubject in counterpoint with the next statement of the subject in the next voice to enter. In order for the combination of subject and countersubject always to produce good counterpoint, the two must be composed in invertible counterpoint so that they work properly together no matter which is above the other.

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<sup>30</sup>[30] Brown, Susan. "The Mystery of the Fuga per Canonem Solved." In *Genetic Joyce Studies, Issue 7*. Antwerp: 2007: <http://www.antwerpjamesjoycecenter.com/GJS/GJS7/GJS7brown.html>



According to Gilbert, Boylan is the countersubject,<sup>31</sup>[31] but we have already explained our disagreement with this viewpoint considering the interdisciplinary differences between the concepts 'part' and 'theme.' We rather believe that this section can be identified with the period in which Boylan's arrival has not yet taken place but is certain and imminent, until it becomes real. We can then establish the borders of this *contrasoggetto* between the first "jingle" (*U*, 11.212) and when "Blazes Boylan's smart tan shoes creaked on the barfloor where he strode" (*U*, 11.337). Considering the definition of countersubject found in the *GDM*, we can observe that this section introduces a motif from different perspectives, in other words, by each partaking voice. Consequently, one can expect that every one of the characters that appear in the countersubject is going to assist in Boylan's description. This kind of portrayal, in which several views of the same object are inserted, bears fundamental analogies with parallax, one of Joyce's most recurrent devices in *Ulysses*.

The first sentence of this section, "with the greatest alacrity" (*U*, 11.213), is uttered by Miss Douce when she refers to the way she is going to serve Simon Dedalus' whiskey. It is significant how this can also be understood as a stage direction - or musical directive - that indicates a tempo similar to the concept of "allegro":

**Allegro** (It.: 'merry', 'cheerful', 'lively'): The most common tempo designation in Western music. It was often abbreviated, particularly in the 18th century, to *all*°. Practically all the lists of tempo marks in musical dictionaries and handbooks give *allegro* as the standard moderately fast tempo, though its very ubiquity has led to its use with a variety of different shades of meaning: as early as 1703 Brossard (*Dictionaire*) needed to say that it sometimes meant 'quick' and sometimes meant 'moderately fast.' [...] Its earlier musical uses were purely adjectival with absolutely no implication of tempo. Ganassi (*Fontegara*, 1535) used it to characterize a certain trill. Zarlino (1558) noted that singers should follow the sense of the words: 'quando le parole contengono materie allegre, debbono cantare allegramente & con gagliardi movimenti' ('when the words contain cheerful matter, they should sing cheerfully and with vigorous movement'). [...] Quantz (*Versuch*, 1752) had warned that 'Whatever speed an Allegro demands it ought never to depart from a controlled and reasonable movement'. And a similarly moderate tempo was also implied in Koch's *Musikalisches Lexikon* (1802): The performance of *allegro* requires a masculine tone and a rounded, clear articulation of the notes, which

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<sup>31</sup>[31] In Gilbert, Stuart. *James Joyce's Ulysses: A Study*. London: Faber & Faber, 1930 (221).

in this movement should only be slurred together either when this is explicitly marked or when a prominent cantabile section makes it necessary.<sup>32[32]</sup>

It is significant that Koch refers in his *Musikalisches Lexikon* to the masculine tone in the performance of the allegro and to the prominent cantabile section, features that match with the general description of Boylan. Miss Douce's portrait of Boylan as a lively and vigorous man can be seen as the opposite of Bloom, who represents the conventional man found in the *soggetto*.

Then we find the third part, called *soggetto* and *contrasoggetto* in *contrapunto*, which shows the period of time in which Boylan appears in the scene. This section reintroduces the two former parts by means of counterpoint, which is a concept that according to the *GDM* has different connotations:

**Counterpoint:** First, the concept of counterpoint has been equated with the 'art of strict composition' (J.P. Kirnberger, 1771-9), thus being used to describe regulated part-writing regardless of whether the style is polyphonic or homophonic ('counterpoint' is a technical category, 'polyphony' a stylistic concept). Second, more narrowly, counterpoint has been taken to refer to the technique of polyphonic, as distinct from homophonic, writing. Third, still more narrowly, the concept of counterpoint has been confined to the technique of vocal polyphony before 1600 (and in addition Bach's instrumental polyphony). Fourth, a number of 20th-century theorists have proposed a distinction between polyphony, the combining of equal voices, and counterpoint, a type of writing in which the voices are brought into relief against each other functionally and by virtue of their relative importance. Generally, however, 'polyphony' has been used to refer to matters of style or aesthetics, and 'counterpoint' to refer to matters of technique: polyphony is an end, counterpoint a means.

Polyphony is present in this section when the characters recall motifs from the two previous parts in a contrapuntal arrangement. In that polyphony, one can expect – as a final effect – a contrast between the motifs that represent Boylan in opposition

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<sup>32[32]</sup> *GDM*.

with the ones that correspond to men in general. This can be seen in the two sirens' excitement and fascination coinciding with Boylan's arrival, an evident change of mood in comparison to the two former passages in which Boylan's presence was only suggested by means of the "jingle" leitmotif. One of the aspects in which the difference between Boylan and the rest of the men becomes noticeable is his ability to defeat the sirens: whereas all men seem to be in the Ormond because they are attracted to the barmaids, Boylan is the only character whose stay at the hotel seems to be uncertain. Boylan's presence at the Ormond at four o'clock implies missing his rendezvous with Molly in Eccles Street. Here we find conflicting elements from both former segmentations, like Boylan remaining in the hotel after four o'clock, a fact that is interpreted by Bloom as either Boylan's forgetting his date or as whetting his appetite. In this section we can find a series of percussive sounds like the "clock clacked" (*U*, 11.366) and the "smack" (*U*, 11.396) made by Miss Douce after the "Sonnez la cloche" motif requested by Lenehan. This occurs when Boylan gets ready to go because it is four o'clock. Boylan's departure is revealed after the "bells" leitmotif that represents one of the main ideas in *Ulysses*, fate. This portrayal occurs covertly, in French: "sonnez la cloche." We find a parallelism between this character and the protagonist of Homer's *Odyssey* when he finally manages to leave the Ormond Hotel because he is the only male character who is able to ignore the sirens' song and leave in search of Penelope, played by Molly.

The following section, called the **esposizione**, is defined by the *GDM* as:

**Exposition:** In a composition or movement, the section at or near the beginning during which one or more themes on which the rest of the movement or piece is to be based are first presented according to a particular plan. The term has two principal uses, in fugue and in sonata form. The exposition of a fugue is the opening section in which the voices enter one by one, each stating the principal theme, or subject, of the fugue, followed by the countersubject if present.

This part involves subject and countersubject, so it refers to an upper structural level in the fugal division. It seems likely from Joyce's notes that he may have confused this concept when he included it in the same list together with the rest of the fugal parts.<sup>33[33]</sup> As mentioned above, the *GDM* states that the exposition is

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<sup>33[33]</sup> The insertion of exposition in the same level of the subject and the countersubject implies either a contradiction or that the author made a mistake if we consider the sources he used. Any discussion

the initial section in which the subject and the countersubject are inserted. In this part the sirens establish the contrast between Boylan and the other male characters. Regarding the next element, the *contraesposizione* or counterexposition, the *GDM* does not provide any entry on this term, but it refers to an opposing account of the facts narrated in the exposition, or, in other words, it shows simultaneously the subject and countersubject so that the major differences appear contrasted. This section is placed at the same level as the *esposizione* and it involves the third part, the *soggetto* and *contrasoggetto* in *contrapunto*, in which both subject and countersubject interweave.

In the Sirens Copybook Joyce refers to the next fugal part as **tela contrappuntistica**, and adds between parentheses: **episodi**. The *GDM* does not mention the concept “tela contrappuntistica,” but the term “episode” is defined as follows:

**Episode:** a portion of a fugue during which the subject as a complete entity is not sounding, although motifs derived from it may be present. [...] Of all the characteristics of a ‘classic’ fugue, the episode is historically one of the last to appear in fugal composition. A great preponderance of 17th-century fugues include virtually no passages at all during which the subject is absent. Interest in the use of episodes seems to have arisen simultaneously with the rise of tonal harmony and its application to fugue at the beginning of the 18th century. Consequently episodes often have a modulating function in that they take the fugue to a related key in preparation for thematic statements in that key. Some writers particularly prize thematic unity in fugue and recommend that all episodes be based in some way on material from the subject, but the episodes of a great many fugues include no such derived material. [...] Some writers use ‘episode’ to designate that which others call a ‘codetta’, namely, the brief segment of free counterpoint that sometimes separates the first two thematic entries at the beginning of the exposition from the next one.

The episodes deal with the issues revealed in the former sections in a veiled manner. In fact, if we go back to Gilbert’s study we can read that “the *Episodes* or

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on Joyce’s intentions seems to us futile because no manuscript will clarify what Joyce’s purpose was. In fact, we intend to carry out an interdisciplinary study of the text, so, for this reason we will try to identify these eight fugal parts according to the *GDM*.

*Divertimenti* are the songs by Mr Dedalus and Mr Dollard.”<sup>34</sup>[34] We can then assume that the musical allusions acquire a crucial role. We must be aware of the huge number of references to songs included in ‘Sirens,’ which is 158 allusions related to 47 songs in only 34 pages. Out of all those overtones, we must select only the ones that can be classified as episodes in terms of their relevance and suggestions of the subject in Bloom’s stream of consciousness. Considering these requirements we can identify three main songs, and, consequently, we can conclude that this “tela contrappuntistica” is divided into three episodes.

The first song is “Love and War” (*U*, 11.459-561) and it corresponds to Bloom’s conflicting feelings towards his wife. There is an occasion in which he refers to Molly disrespectfully with “Mrs Marion met him pike hoses” (*U*, 11.500). This utterance acquires the level of leitmotif and it shows Bloom’s scorn towards his wife by recalling repeatedly her ignorance over the meaning of “metempsychosis.” However, there are two other passages in which a certain degree of harmony in good and bad moments can be observed. For instance, when they were “on the rocks” and had to sell secondhand clothes in Holles Street (*U*, 11.485-489), or when they were laughing together in bed thinking of Ben Dollard’s attire for a concert (*U*, 11.552-561).

The next song is performed by Father Cowley, “*M'appari*” from *Martha* (*U*, 11.587-760). Zack Bowen explains the relevance of the song:

Joyce makes full use of the ambiguity inherent in these cross references to the women to reflect the two issues on Bloom’s mind throughout the chapter. Molly, at this hour, is the lost one to whom Lionel-Leopold addresses his plaintive notes, but Lionel’s song is sung to Martha, and it is Martha to whom Leopold appeals for deliverance from the ignominy of cuckoldry.<sup>35</sup>[35]

This parallelism suggests that Bloom’s attempt to start an extramarital affair with Martha Clifford is a reaction to Molly’s adultery with Boylan, and Bloom’s yearning for revenge. The metaliterary references to the characters of this opera are essential to understand supplementary aspects of Joyce’s characters in *Ulysses*. The question is that, if the central idea is faithfulness, one can observe that neither Molly

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<sup>34</sup>[34] In Gilbert, Stuart. *James Joyce’s Ulysses: A Study*. London: Faber & Faber, 1930 (221).

<sup>35</sup>[35] Bowen, Zack. *Musical Allusions in the Works of James Joyce: Early Poetry Through “Ulysses.”* Albany: State University of New York Press, 1974 (185).

nor Bloom has a clean record. And, consequently, considering that this is also a fundamental notion in Homer's *Odyssey*, a parallelism between the protagonists from both works – i.e. the equivalence between the Blooms and the couple formed by Odysseus and Penelope – acquires a rather ironic overtone.

Father Cowley improvises on the piano after the end of this song until Ben Dollard and Simon Dedalus start with the next and final episode of this *tela contrappuntistica*, which corresponds to "The Croppy Boy" (*U*, 11.991-1145). This song about betrayal and war plays an important role in Bloom's subconscious, and parallelisms between the croppy boy and himself are evident. The trio's performance of this song takes place while Boylan has just arrived at 7 Eccles Street. Accordingly, one can observe that the timing of the song suggests the vision of Bloom as the betrayed one by the community gathered at the Ormond Hotel. The connotations of this song provoke Bloom's melancholy, which will be decisive for his departure.

One can see that the *tela contrappuntistica* consists of three episodes that describe *grosso modo* Bloom's relationship with his wife. In the first episode the trio formed by Father Cowley, Ben Dollard, and Simon Dedalus sings "Love and War," a song that illustrates the Blooms' bittersweet marriage. Then, the aria "*M'appari*" represents the second section, and the idea of mutual infidelity is suggested under an apparent façade of stereotypical social convention. The final episode shows the Ormond trio singing "The Croppy Boy," that makes Bloom conscious of two matters: first, his marital situation, and at the same time, Bloom notices how everyone else at the Ormond knows about it. These three sections constitute a part in which the relevance of music lies in its category as metaliterature. We observe how musical allusions are essential in the *tela contrappuntistica*, an exceptional device that does not occur in the other fugal parts.

The episodes of the "*tela contrappuntistica*" are followed by the "*stretto maestrale*." The *GDM* defines the term "*stretto*" as:

**Stretto** (i) (It.: 'narrow', 'tight'; past participle of *stringere*: 'to tighten', 'to compress'): In fugue, the procedure of beginning a second statement of the subject before the preceding statement has finished, so that the two overlap (in German the technique is known as *Engführung*). The value of this technique for fugal composition has been recognized since the mid-17th century, when musicians including G.M. Bononcini and Reincken began to advocate its use near the end of a piece as a means of increasing excitement and intensity and thus leading the piece towards a suitable close. [...] Sometimes a composer

will create what may be called a 'false stretto' by abandoning the first thematic statement after the second statement has begun. This procedure makes the compositional task much easier and can be at the same time of little concern to the listener, who, after hearing the first few notes, tends to supply the rest of the subject mentally. Although most teaching of fugue recommends that thematic statements not be overlapped in the exposition, this technique, which produces what is sometimes referred to as a 'stretto exposition', is occasionally found.

First of all we should point out that, according to this definition, the stretto is not exactly a fugal part, but a musical procedure typically found in fugues. Also, its insertion does not seem to be compulsory in this genre, but rather facultative. Gilbert identifies this stretto at the end of 'Sirens' (*U*, 11.1269-1272):

Near bronze from anear near gold from afar they chinked their clinking  
glasses all, brighteyed and gallant, before bronze Lydia's tempting last rose of  
summer, rose of Castille. First Lid, De, Cow, Ker, Doll, a fifth: Lidwell, Si  
Dedalus, Bob Cowley, Kernan and Big Ben Dollard.

Gilbert's proposal seems quite convincing considering the definition of the term as outlined above. We find certain overlapping motifs from the subject, such as the references to the barmaids and other characters. At the same time, the absence of Boylan suggested by the change of percussion, "clinking" instead of his leitmotif "jingle", makes the reader aware of the sirens' partial success: they succeed in attracting men in general, but Boylan, who plays the role of Odysseus, escapes from their musical allure since he prefers Penelope's charms, euphemistically and musically represented in *Ulysses* as the rehearsal of a duet performance with Molly.

Joyce's last fugal part in 'Sirens' is also an issue for debate. According to the *GDM*, the concept of pedale has different meanings, although none of them refers to a fugal section but mainly to ornaments and musical effects:

**Pedal** (Fr. *pédale*; Ger. *Pedal*; It. *pedale*): Any of several types of lever, operated by the foot and used for a variety of purposes on musical instruments: (1) to

change tuning, as in the pedal harp. (2) To operate the bellows of a chamber organ, reed organ or the like; to operate the bellows and playing mechanism of a player piano, barrel organ or other mechanical instrument. (3) To sound the bass drum and high-hat cymbals in the performance of popular music. (4) To produce expressive effects, to change the tone-colour, or to alter the volume, as on the pianoforte, types of organ and harpsichord, the vibraphone and some electronic instruments. On the modern piano, the pedal at the right (the 'loud', 'sustaining' or 'damper' pedal) acts to move all the dampers away from the strings so that notes being played continue to sound even after the keys are no longer depressed; strings for other notes may also vibrate sympathetically with those being played. The pedal at the left (the 'soft' or 'una corda' pedal) on grand pianos acts to shift the entire action sideways so that the hammers do not strike all of the strings provided for each note (on upright pianos this pedal moves all the hammers closer to the strings so as to shorten their stroke, producing a sound of less volume). The middle pedal, where present, on grand pianos is a 'sostenuto' pedal. Notes already being produced when this pedal is depressed continue to sound after the fingers have left the keys. On upright pianos the middle pedal is sometimes a sostenuto pedal and sometimes a 'muffler' or a 'moderator' pedal that mutes the sound of the instrument by interposing a strip of cloth between the hammers and the strings. [...] (5) The term is used most widely for a series of pedals, arranged somewhat like the keys of a piano, to form a keyboard played by the feet rather than by the hands. This has been provided at various times for the harpsichord, clavichord, piano, carillon, and, above all, for the organ. On this instrument, the pedals are either keyboards for the feet (pedal keys, contained in a pedal-board) or levers operating an accessory device such as that to change stops (e.g. composition pedal).

We can deduce that Joyce's classification of this final section as the pedale must be due to Bloom's flatulence. Paradoxically, this sound bears resemblance to two effects, the muffling and the "sostenuto." Bloom leaves the Ormond Hotel and tries not to be loud in his flatulence. Simultaneously, this "performance" cannot be classified as restricted considering the length it occupies, since he starts the search of the suitable acoustics ("Tip. An unseeing stripling stood in the door. He saw not bronze;" *U*, 11.1280), until he utters the last note of his performance thirteen lines later ("*Done*;" *U*, 11.1293).

After the interdisciplinary comparison of the text with the definitions of the musical terms in the *GDM*, we can conclude that when Joyce alluded to eight parts



he did not only imply the ideas they refer to, but also the procedures and effects suggested. However, we believe that the most relevant conclusion is that the fugue in 'Sirens' consists of a two-levelled structure. On the one hand, we find an upper level that comprises five sections: esposizione, contraesposizione, tela contrappuntistica, stretto maestrale, and pedale. But on the other hand, there exists a lower level which contains the eight fugal parts Joyce referred to in his letter to Harriet Shaw Weaver, which also correspond to the evolution of the axial variable, Boylan:

- 1) Soggetto: initial absence of Boylan.
- 2) Contrasoggetto: introduction by means of "jingle" leitmotif.
- 3) Soggetto e contrasoggetto in contrapunto: arrival, presence at Ormond Hotel, and interaction with other characters.
- 4) First episode: his departure.
- 5) Second episode: further development through the streets of Dublin.
- 6) Third episode: parking his car and taking a hackney cab.
- 7) Stretto maestrale: his arrival at 7, Eccles Street.
- 8) Pedale: subtle fading after knocking on Molly's door.

Boylan's covert progress towards Molly occurs musically in eight fugal parts, and Joyce depicts the sequence of actions focusing on the contrast between this character and the other males ("esposizione and contraesposizione" which consist of "soggetto," "contrasoggetto," "contrasoggetto" and "contrasoggetto in contrapunto"), his journey to the Bloom residence, his growing impatience and tempo merged with Bloom's marital reflections (three episodes of "tela contrappuntistica"), his arrival and achievement revealed by the other characters' "clinking glasses" ("stretto maestrale" - *U*, 11.1269-1270), and his entrance in Molly's home with its multiple associations ("pedale"). Now we can see how the consideration of the new discoveries in genetic studies of a number of manuscripts, together with the use of the *GDM* as homogenous source for the contrast of the musical terms used in 'Sirens' can be helpful in order to analyse this episode.

Before the *fuga per canonem* starts we find a preliminary section in which Joyce introduces a series of motifs that will be present throughout the rest of the chapter. In the Sirens Copybook authenticated by Michael Groden Joyce does not include this opening fragment, so we can suppose he added it at a later stage. What Joyce writes in this manuscript is in fact what we could call a directive: “repeat phrases episode.” This command makes us aware of Joyce’s intention of providing his Sirens *fuga per canonem* with a musical introduction. Gifford considers that the musical “form” found in the episode may also be developed by regarding this first part of ‘Sirens’ (until “Done”<sup>36</sup>[<sup>36</sup>]) as a sequence of sixty fragments or “keyboard” on which the fugue is to be performed.<sup>37</sup>[<sup>37</sup>] This fragment is what some scholars call the ‘overture,’ which is a short musical introductory piece that is performed at the initial stage of a longer or major composition such as a concert or an opera. Some of the defenders of the ‘overture’ term are Michael Groden, A. Walton Litz, Margaret Rogers, Karen Lawrence, John Gordon, Daniel Ferrer, Andreas Fischer, or Stanley Sultan.<sup>38</sup>[<sup>38</sup>] Zack Bowen uses the term ‘overture’ when commenting on the musical allusions in ‘Sirens,’<sup>39</sup>[<sup>39</sup>] but he goes a step further in his essay “The Bronzegold Sirensong,” arguing that “the first two pages of the episode, which clearly constitute an overture, tend to discredit the fugal idea. If the chapter is fugal it would not be likely to have an overture preceding it.”<sup>40</sup>[<sup>40</sup>] One can argue against that interpretation, and in fact Bowen’s reasoning can be applied against it as well: if the chapter is fugal it would be unlikely to have an overture preceding it. Since we cannot use the term ‘overture’ for this introduction, we suggest to make use of an alternative concept used by some scholars like Werner Wolf, Laurent Milesi, Brad

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<sup>36</sup>[<sup>36</sup>] U, 11.1293.

<sup>37</sup>[<sup>37</sup>] Gifford, Don and Robert J. Seidman. *Notes for Joyce: An Annotation of James Joyce’s “Ulysses.”* New York: E. P. Dutton, 1974, (290).

<sup>38</sup>[<sup>38</sup>] Groden, Michael. “The National Library of Ireland’s New Joyce Manuscripts: A Statement and Document Descriptions.” *James Joyce Quarterly*. 39.1 (2001): 29-52 (44), Litz, A. Walton. *The Art of James Joyce: Method and Design in “Ulysses” and “Finnegans Wake.”* London: Oxford University Press, 1968 (68), Lawrence, Karen. *The Odyssey of Style in Ulysses*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981 (90), Gordon, John. *Joyce and Reality: The Empirical Strikes Back*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2004 (75), Ferrer, Daniel. “What Song the Sirens Sang. . . Is No Longer Beyond All Conjecture: A Preliminary Description of the New ‘Proteus’ and ‘Sirens’ Manuscripts.” *James Joyce Quarterly*, 39.1: 53-68, 2001 (57), Fischer, Andreas. “Strange Words, Strange Music: The Verbal Music of ‘Sirens’.” In *Bronze by Gold: The Music of Joyce*, ed. Sebastian D. G. Knowles, 245-262. New York: Garland Publishing, 1999 (249), and Sultan, Stanley. *The Argument of Ulysses*. Middleton: Wesleyan University Press, 1987 (220).

<sup>39</sup>[<sup>39</sup>] Bowen, Zack. *Musical Allusions in the Works of James Joyce: Early Poetry Through “Ulysses.”* Albany: State University of New York Press, 1974 (160).

<sup>40</sup>[<sup>40</sup>] Bowen, Zack. *Bloom’s Old Sweet Song: Essays on Joyce and Music*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1995 (26).

Bucknell, and David Cole, 41[41] who prefer to call it “prelude,” and in fact that is the name given to the preceding section of a *fuga per canonem*. Although there is no written evidence of Joyce using the term (he does not use “overture” either), we will stick to it. After analysing The Sirens Copybook, Daniel Ferrer confirms that Joyce inserted this initial part in the text after finishing the *fuga per canonem*, which would provide evidence of the author’s intention to create a literary passage that would resemble as much as possible this musical composition, with the eight parts he mentions in his preliminary draft and the prelude.<sup>42[42]</sup> In this ‘prelude,’ sounds play a most important role in communicating one of the implicit aims Joyce seems to be trying to convey in this episode, a reverberating polyphony of suggestions with a series of connections among characters and sketches are inserted by means of musical devices. We should also mention John Gordon’s original view, which describes this initial section as “an orchestra tuning up, waiting for the conductor to begin.”<sup>43[43]</sup> However, when we check the concept of prelude in the *GDM*, we can observe that:

The earliest notated preludes are for organ, and were used to introduce vocal music in church. Slightly later ones, for other chordal instruments such as the lute, grew out of improvisation and were a means of checking the tuning of the instrument and the quality of its tone, and of loosening the player’s fingers (as was the “tastar de corde”). The purpose of notating improvisation was generally to provide models for students, so an instructive intention, often concerned with a particular aspect of instrumental technique, remained an important part of the prelude. Because improvisation may embrace a wide

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41[41] Wolf, Werner. “Can Stories Be Read as Music? Possibilities and Limitations of Applying Musical Metaphors to Fiction.” In *Telling Stories: Studies in Honour of Ulrich Broich on the Occasion of his 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday*, eds. Lenz, Bernd, Elmar Lehmann, 205-231. Amsterdam: Grüner, 1992 (227), Milesi, Laurent. “The Signs of the Si-ren Seal: Textual Strategies in Joyce’s ‘Sirens.’” In *‘Ulysses’ à l’article: Joyce aux marges du roman*, eds. Ferrer, Daniel, Claude Jacquet, André Topia. Tusson: Éditions du Lérot, 1992 (134), Bucknell, Brad. *Literary Modernism and Musical Aesthetics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001 (133), and Cole, David. “Fugal Structure in the Sirens Episode of *Ulysses*.” In *Modern Fiction Studies* 19. 221-226. 1973 (225). Also, David Pierce uses both “overture” and “prelude” in the beginning of his analysis of Joyce’s language in ‘Sirens’ (In Pierce, David. *Joyce and Company*. London - New York: Continuum, 2006: 116).

42[42] Ferrer, Daniel. “What Song the Sirens Sang. . . Is No Longer Beyond All Conjecture: A Preliminary Description of the New ‘Proteus’ and ‘Sirens’ Manuscripts.” *James Joyce Quarterly*. 39.1: 53-68, 2001 (57).

43[43] Gordon, John. *Joyce and Reality: The Empirical Strikes Back*. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2004 (75).

range of manners, styles and techniques, the term was later applied to a variety of formal prototypes and to pieces of otherwise indeterminate genre.

From this definition the prelude is an improvisation dealing with particular aspects of technique. In fact, this opening fragment resembles a performer rehearsing a series of important or technically difficult passages of the musical score. We can then conclude that its connection with the fugal composition and its improvised nature are the reasons that make us believe that the most accurate interpretation of this opening fragment is the prelude. It seems likely that Joyce's purpose for making use of such a device borrowed from music may have implied practical reasons, like the introduction of all motifs found in this episode so that they can produce a sort of echo later on in the reader at a subconscious level. This way, this fragment reveals a chronologically arranged order that provides it with a meaning that will be revealed in the narration of 'Sirens.' This reduced version of the fugue provides a structure for the chaotic sounds produced by the performer's rehearsing improvisation, and as a result, the audience perceives an intelligible cacophony.

An important issue remaining is why Joyce makes use of a musical composition as a technique when writing this chapter, or the author's purpose when he stated that he was writing following the musical pattern of a *fuga per canonem*, and consequently applying a canonic or contrapuntal technique. We believe that the best way to understand the author's purpose when providing this chapter with such a musical form is found in the earlier versions. The most striking element is that Joyce's initial draft of this episode from the Sirens Copybook surprised the two scholars who had the occasion to study it in detail, Michael Groden and Daniel Ferrer. As they remark in their reports, despite the inclusion of musical terms, it did not include any fugal features. In fact, Daniel Ferrer describes the first draft of this episode as 'Sirens' before it became fugal.<sup>44</sup>[44] Joyce had already written this first version of 'Sirens' when he decided to include the fugal form. Daniel Ferrer proposes Bloom's cuckoldry as the reason. Ferrer's remark comes as a conclusion after discovering that apart from the fugal form, Bloom is also absent from the first draft of 'Sirens.' According to Ferrer, by inserting the character of Bloom in 'Sirens,' "malicious gossip" is avoided, because introducing Molly's "husband's voice seems like a good way to counterbalance the *vox populi*. Thus, it may have been here that the idea of a new departure in the development of *Ulysses* – the introduction of more

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44[44] Ferrer, Daniel. "What Song the Sirens Sang. . . Is No Longer Beyond All Conjecture: A Preliminary Description of the New 'Proteus' and 'Sirens' Manuscripts." *James Joyce Quarterly*. 39.1: 53-68, 2001 (62-63).

than one point of view in the episode in the form of counterpointed voices – came about.”<sup>45</sup>[45] This is indeed a convincing argumentation that can be linked with the leitmotifs we believe Joyce inserted in ‘Sirens.’

Another relevant opinion on this issue had already been advanced by A. Walton Litz, as early as 1968:

The overture is a refashioning of the leitmotifs which gives the following narrative a special perspective and increases our understanding of the episode’s structure. It also initiates the reader into the episode’s distinctive ‘overlapping’ style, the repetition of suggestive phrases and running motifs through which Joyce seeks to simulate polyphony.<sup>46</sup>[46]

Taking into account these two scholars’ remarks, we believe that the contrapuntal nature of the *fuga per canonem* seems to be the most suitable strategy for Joyce to depict Molly, Bloom, and Boylan, since it provides a series of perspectives that otherwise would not allow relativity. In fact, we could understand the counterpoint found in ‘Sirens’ as a musical expression of the uncertainty that is being transmitted by Bloom with the quotation of the Shakespearean motif “to be or not to be” (*U*, 11.905). Joyce’s *fuga per canonem* in ‘Sirens’ is a way to emphasise the parallax effect in this musical episode. Such a composition with multiple viewpoints provides the narration with the significant amount of objectivity, allowing readers to come up with their own understanding depending on the perspective they focus on.

We want to stress the importance of recent discoveries in genetic studies to trace the different stages and changes during the writing process of *Ulysses*, which, logically, have a significant effect in other fields of study. By applying genetic studies to an interdisciplinary approach that focuses on music we have proved that the avant-gardism of ‘Sirens’ is noticeable. Boylan’s relevance as a character in this scene is highlighted when we observe the fugal nature of this episode, mainly considering that, according Daniel Ferrer, neither Bloom nor the fugal aspect were present in the first draft of this episode. The eight parts of the *fuga per canonem* of the published

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<sup>45</sup>[45] Ibid (59).

<sup>46</sup>[46] Litz, A. Walton. *The Art of James Joyce: Method and Design in “Ulysses” and “Finnegans Wake.”* London: Oxford University Press, 1968 (68).

version of 'Sirens' display Boylan's movement and his subsequent influence on Bloom. Joyce was right: "Words? Music? No: it's what's behind."47[47]

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47[47] *U*, 11.703.

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