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De Shylock À Cinoc: Essai Sur Les Judaïsmes Apocryphes by
Philippe Zard (review)

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DE SHYLOCK À CINOC: ESSAI SUR LES JUDAÏSMES APOCRYPHES, by Philippe Zard. Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2018. 617 pp. \$93.00, €44.00 cloth.

Has there not been enough consideration of the Jewish question in *Ulysses*? However fascinating Joyce's choice of a Jew for his modernist embodiment of the canonical European hero at a time when the rest of the continent was progressively engulfed in the morass of anti-Semitism, Joyceans may be wondering whether we need yet another evaluation of Jewishness and of the figure of the Jew in Joyce's masterpiece. So much has already been written on the subject that a non-Joycean could hardly be expected to bring anything new to the debates.¹ I believe, however, that Philippe Zard may truly have become a Joycean in the process of writing on *Ulysses*. His research has been thorough, and his bibliography is impeccable.² Furthermore, the added value of his contribution to Joyce studies paradoxically lies in the fact that it does not come from a Joyce specialist, but from a "Joycien de rencontre," as Zard terms himself (129 n2),³ and that it concerns only one chapter in his study, albeit—like other striking chapters in other good books we know—it is the longest one, and it is firmly poised in the middle of the book. The central position of the chapter reflects the core position of *Ulysses* in Zard's argument: its book's subtitle, *An Essay on Apocryphal Judaisms*, is inspired by Joyce's use of the word "anapocryphal" in "Ithaca" (*U* 17.720), conveying the relation of continuity and rupture in the Jewish experience that is at the heart of Zard's study as a whole.

Zard's project is a wide-ranging exploration of the representation of the Jew in European literature, a both diachronic and comparative study that covers a vast span from William Shakespeare and the Renaissance to contemporary writers like Albert Cohen, Patrick Modiano, Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, Franz Kafka, Thomas Mann, Walter Benjamin, Joseph Roth, and Georges Perec, to name but the main courses on the menu.⁴ The chapter on Joyce, entitled "*Ulysse ou l'anatomie du marrane*" ("*Ulysses or the Anatomy of the Marrano*"), is the last stage of a first part on the "[l]es avatars du 'juif charnel'" ("*avatars of the 'carnal Jew'*"—15), which first examines Shakespeare's Shylock and Lessing's Nathan the Wise.⁵ Over the background of a Christian society in crisis, the three books are envisaged as attempts to answer the question posed by the Jewish presence in Europe (10). Although I tend to be wary of widely generalizing studies that attempt to trace an elaborate arc of theorization over several centuries based on only a few works, I must admit that I am convinced by Zard's study, supported as it is by extremely well-informed contextualization in all fields (theological, historical, cultural, literary), and by precise and rich close-readings, particularly

of Joyce. Zard argues that Lessing's philo-Semitism first corrected the anti-Semitism of Shakespeare's play and that "le Shylock inhumain," the "inhuman Shylock," was replaced by "le Shylock surhumain" (258). They are, however, but symmetrical examples of cruelty and virtue to which "[Joyce] oppose un Bloom humain, trop humain" ("human, all too human Bloom"—258), in whom the triple crisis of civilization, of the subject, and of literature may be temporarily resolved, since a place for Bloom the outsider must be made in the democratic group of the city (or *ecclesia*, a word in which Zard reads both the Irish Church and the reason for the choice of Bloom's address on Eccles Street). Joyce "imposer ce drôle de paroissien pour cicérone dans les rues de Dublin" ("imposes this strange parishioner for a cicerone in the streets of Dublin"—258). Bloom is both the one who makes it possible for Joyce to distance himself from his native Ireland, and the one whose acceptance could make his own return possible: "[L]Irlande redeviendra habitable pour autant qu'elle sera hospitalière aux Bloom" ("Ireland will become habitable again so far as she is hospitable to people like the Blooms"—258).

It would be difficult to do justice to the rich, well-informed readings developed by Zard, interwoven as they are with his remarkable knowledge of cultural, religious, and literary traditions and of complex historical contexts, and difficult also to give an idea of his elegant language and his art of formulas, subtle punning, and playing with French phrases and images. The book should definitely be translated into English (as well as into several other languages), but it will take a brave translator to tackle Zard's pages. Here I can only hope to give a whiff of its powerful thinking and fascinating close readings—notably concerning "Cyclops," "Circe," and "Ithaca." The latter provides a particularly thought-provoking interpretation of the Jew's daughter's ballad sung by Stephen (*U* 17.802-28), a theme Zard traces back to Shakespeare's Jessica in *The Merchant of Venice*, Christopher Marlowe's Abigail in *The Famous Tragedy of the Jew of Malta*, and Lessing's Recha in *Nathan the Wise*; in relation to these identifications, he notes the constant lack of a male heir for the Jewish characters, the escape of the daughter from her father's religion, and the father always a willing or unwilling vector of emancipation and assimilation.⁶

Zard's study of *Ulysses* opens on the fascinating imbroglio of Bloom's identity and carefully examines the exact measure of indeterminacy Joyce has brought to his character's genealogical tree and religious affiliations. However, "Bloom est toujours vu (et donc lu) comme un Juif, fût-il renégat, apostat ou 'perversi'" ("be he renegade, apostate or 'perverted,' Bloom is always seen [and therefore read] as a Jew"—141). Zard interprets *Ulysses* as a study of "l'irréductible

énigme de sa présence au monde" ("the irreducible enigma of [Bloom's] presence to the world"—146), and Joyce's philo-Semitism as presenting Jewishness as "une plus-value morale" ("a moral value added"—165), a political challenge to the national community in its attempt to reconstruct itself. But beyond Ireland, the challenge is also presented to Europe. Bloom's hesitations about his Jewish identity (he makes mistakes about the sacred texts as well as about Zionist hymns) say something about the material and spiritual condition of the modern Jew, whom Zard identifies as a Marrano (171). The concept of Marranism is central to Zard's argument, and although he is fully aware that the word itself never appears in *Ulysses*, he views Bloom as a Marranic Jew, because he never ceases being a Jew and yet never stops having doubts about his Judaism. Bloom comes in fact to represent Marranism, i. e., modern Jewish identity in Europe—an interpreted, adulterated, bastardized, diluted—or as Zard puts it, an almost "schizophrenic" Judaism (218), but nevertheless a remnant that survives and is always identified as Judaic. Furthering his investigation into Joyce's writing practice, Zard convincingly relates to Marranism what he calls Joyce's "fausse maîtrise qui dissimule son désarroi par la profusion, son impuissance par son éclectisme" ("fake mastery, which dissimulates its disarray behind its profusion and its impotence behind its eclecticism"—251).

Zard considers that "nul, dans la littérature moderne, y compris dans ce que l'on a pu appeler la 'littérature juive,' n'a su donner au mythe marrane une incarnation aussi convaincante que Joyce" ("no one in modern literature, including what has been called 'Jewish literature,' has given the Marranic myth such a convincing incarnation as Joyce"—244), and provocatively claims that "*Ulysse* est peut-être la première œuvre marrane écrite par un romancier catholique" ("*Ulysses* is perhaps the first Marranic work written by a Catholic novelist"—260). Marranism indeed becomes far more than Bloom's identity—a form of symbolic revelation and moral demand for all: "en écrivant cette Bible-Odyssée *jewgreek*, [Joyce] réalise quelque chose comme des Écritures apocryphes, hérétiques, à l'usage des marranes que nous sommes tous devenus" ("by writing this *jewgreek* Bible-Odyssey, [Joyce] achieves something like an apocryphal, heretic Scripture, for the Marranic Jews we have all become"—251). Although he makes but few allusions to Jacques Derrida's work, and although his approach is not that of the philosopher, I find Zard's study has interesting echoes of Derrida's reflections, throughout his work, on hospitality, Marranism, and, of course, more specifically of his essay on Joyce.⁷ Although very different, Zard's essay is both a counterpoint and a complement to Derrida's, with the emphasis more decidedly placed on cultural and historical considerations. In his powerful con-

clusion, Zard offers a both hopeful and chilling reading of Joyce's book as a moratorium in the nightmare of history: "dans *Ulysse*, l'Europe et les Juifs sont en sursis" ("in *Ulysses*, Europe and the Jews are on respite"—261).

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NOTES

¹ See, for instance, Neil R. Davison's *James Joyce, "Ulysses," and the Construction of Jewish Identity: Culture, Biography, and "the Jew" in Modernist Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1996); Ira B. Nadel's *Joyce and the Jews: Culture and Texts* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Publishers, 1988); and Marilyn Reizbaum's *James Joyce's Judaic Other* (Stanford: Stanford Univ. Press, 1999), as well as Margot Norris's "Stephen Dedalus's Anti-Semitic Ballad: A Sabotage Climax in Joyce's *Ulysses*," in *De-familiarizing Readings: Essays from the Austin Joyce Conference*, ed. Alan Warren Friedman and Charles Rossman, *European Joyce Studies*, 18 (Amsterdam: Rodopi Press, 2009), 65-86, or Morton P. Levitt's "'The Greatest Jew of All': James Joyce, Leopold Bloom, and the Modernist Archetype," *Papers on Joyce*, 10-11 (2004-2005), 143-62. Ironically, in the latter, Levitt remembers that, when he was a student, J. Mitchell Morse had attempted to discourage him from pursuing the subject because "everything that might be written about Jewish motifs in Joyce had already been written" (p. 144).

² In addition to some of the books and articles mentioned in the previous endnote, Zard has made excellent use of Hans Walter Gabler's edition of *Ulysses*, as well as of the two French translations: the original translation by Auguste Morel edited in the Pléiade collection by Jacques Aubert, and the more recent translation by Aubert and others—see James Joyce, *Ulysses*, ed. Gabler et al. (New York: Vintage Press, 1986); *Ulysse*, ed. Aubert, trans. Morel (Paris: Gallimard, 1993); and *Ulysse*, trans. Aubert et al. (Paris: Folio, Gallimard, 2004). Further references to the Gabler edition will be cited parenthetically in the text by *U* and the episode and line numbers. Zard systematically quotes the English text as well as the two translations and employs the extensive notes and annotations in Aubert's translated edition as well as those in Don Gifford and Robert J. Seidman's "*Ulysses*" *Annotated: Notes for James Joyce's "Ulysses,"* in its revised edition (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1989).

³ The phrase, like so many of Zard's felicitous formulas, is almost impossible to translate in its subtle polysemy (or perhaps this would require a Joyce portmanteau), referring as it does to a chance encounter and therefore amateur rather than professional expertise, but with additional hints of a romantic meeting, or even of a one-night stand. From here on, I will nevertheless display my poor attempts at translating Zard, and all translations in this review are therefore mine.

⁴ The Cinoc mentioned in Zard's book title is a Jewish character in Georges Perec's *La Vie mode d'emploi: Romans*, whose name, due to the "c"s that open

and close it, has twenty different possible pronunciations, according to the language or dialect to which one chooses to relate it—see *La Vie mode d'emploi: Romans* (Paris: Hachette Publishers, 1978), p. 360.

⁵ William Shakespeare, *The most excellent historie of the Merchant of Venice* (London, Heyes, 1600), and Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, *Nathan der Weise* (Berlin: Döbbelinsches Theater, 1783).

⁶ Christopher Marlowe, *The Famous Tragedy of the Jew of Malta* (London: n.p., 1590).

⁷ Jacques Derrida, *“Ulyssse” Gramophone: Deux mots pour Joyce* (Paris: Éditions Galilée, 1987).

AT FAULT: JOYCE AND THE CRISIS OF THE MODERN UNIVERSITY,
by Sebastian D. G. Knowles. Gainesville: University Press of
Florida, 2018. xv + 296 pp. \$79.95.

Two decades back, I wrote about the diminishment of graduate specializations in a single author and the fading of jobs in English departments across the land.¹ Sebastian D. G. Knowles’s own subtitle, *Joyce and the Crisis of the Modern University*, suggests a conundrum as complex as the intricate readings of Joyce with which Knowles dazzles us in the body of his book and as resistant to resolution as his thesis: that risk has been removed from university education to the detriment of faculty and students. At stake in Knowles’s argument is the conviction that the studies of humanities generally, and of Joyce in particular, are not for the faint of heart. Rather, they must be approached boldly, innovatively, and without constraints placed by a system-wide culture that inhibits teacherly expression and student exploration. What we stand to gain from taking such risks is the subject of his book.

Since I wrote my essay a generation ago, the “crisis” in Knowles’s title has become indisputable. Most recently, Stephen Marche wrote in the *Times Literary Supplement* about his brief return foray into academia, only to find that the profession he left for the career of writing had become one of grotesque obsequiousness, advertising culture (such as graduate students gaming the names of their dissertations in order to attract hiring eyes), systems of patronage and favoritism that rival medieval Italian city-states, and all-but-vanished employment prospects that leave young (and not so young) Ph.D.s working for scraps from the academic table.² Such screeds are not unique, but in the last decade or so they have appeared with regularity, alongside other pieces that decry curricular shifts away from canonical literature or criticisms of syllabi that have been sanitized to protect students’ feelings.

Marche’s position is that the decay of academia both produced, and is the product of, the decline in the humanities, and his remedy is that